Wordtrade.com

386 East Street/ PMB 165/
Pittsboro NC 27312/ USA

ph 9195425719/ fx 9198691643/ www.wordtrade.com

SPOTLIGHT 117

April 2024

Wordtrade Reviews: Allusions to Argument

Contents

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. <>

PHILOSOPHICAL ALLUSIONS IN JAMES JOYCE'S FINNEGANS WAKE by Robert Baines [Oxford University Press, ISBN 9780198894049]

PHILOSOPHICAL ALLUSIONS IN JAMES JOYCE'S FINNEGANS WAKE is the first study to offer complete and comprehensive explanations of the most significant philosophical

references in James Joyce's avant-garde masterpiece.

Philosophy is important in all of Joyce's works, but it is his final novel which most fully engages with that field. Robert Baines shows the broad range of philosophers Joyce wove into his last work, from Aristotle to Confucius, Bergson to Kant. For each major philosophical allusion in *Finnegans Wake*, this book explains the original idea and reveals how Joyce first encountered it. Drawing upon extensive research into Joyce's notebooks and drafts, Baines then shows how Joyce developed and adapted that idea through repeated revisions. From here, the final form of the idea as it appears in the *Wake* is explored.

In carefully examining the *Wake*'s key philosophical allusions, essential themes within the novel come into focus, including history, time, language, being, and perception. We see also how those allusions combine to create a network of ideas, thinkers, and texts which has a logic and an integrity. Ultimately, **Philosophical Allusions in James Joyce's Finnegans Wake** shows that the more one knows of the *Wake*'s philosophical allusions, the more one can find meaning and reason in this famously perplexing book of the night.

CONTENTS

Index

There are two primary ways to approach James Joyce's relationship to philosophy. One is to regard Joyce as a philosopher. Philip Kitcher offers an example of this approach when he writes:

> Joyce's mature fiction is much concerned with a reworking of the oldest, most central philosophical question, Socrates' "How to live?" Joyce hopes to understand how to avoid the factors that confine our lives, how we might find some direction when we inevitably go astray, how we might come to terms (honestly) with our inevitable faults, missteps, and misdeeds.

If to be a philosopher is to address the question "How to live?," then Kitcher is certainly right that Joyce is a philosopher. One thinks here first of Ulysses and the "good man" Leopold Bloom, but all of Joyce's works explore that question, including Finnegans Wake. The other way to consider Joyce's relationship to philosophy, which is the approach of this book, is to examine the philosophical allusions within his works. One finds references to philosophy in Dubliners, Portrait, Exiles, and Ulysses. Yet none of those works point to philosophy as often as Joyce's last. The Wake contains more philosophical allusions than any of Joyce's other works, and it references a broader range of thinkers than any other text in Joyce's oeuvre. For this reason, Finnegans Wake criticism has frequently explored the philosophical allusions within Joyce's last novel. The very first work to do this was Samuel Beckett's "Dante. . . Bruno. Vico.. Joyce" That essay was the first piece in the collection Our Exagmination Round His Factification for Incamination of Work in Progress, which was published in 1929, ten years prior to Finnegans Wake, when that novel was still known as Work in Progress. While Our Exagmination ascribes its twelve essays to twelve different authors, there was one man who guided them all. In a letter to Valery Larbaud, Joyce said, "I did stand behind those twelve Marshals more or less directing them what lines of research to follow" (Letters I, 283). This was certainly the case with Beckett's essay. Joyce commissioned that essay

from the young Beckett, gave him the subject matter, and provided him with many of the essay's key ideas. Beckett's title includes the names of two Italian philosophers, Giordano Bruno and Giambattista Vico, and the latter dominates the essay. The bulk of "Dante. . . Bruno. Vico.. Joyce" is devoted to explaining Vico's philosophy and to showing how Work in Progress references that philosophy. Beckett's essay led the way in a field whose central works include James Atherton's The Books at the Wake: A Study of Literary Allusions in James Joyce's Finnegans Wake (1959), Clive Hart's Structure and Motif in Finnegans Wake (1962), John Bishop's Joyce's Book of the Dark: Finnegans Wake (1986), and Donald Phillip Verene's Knowledge of Things Human and Divine: Vico's New Science and Finnegans Wake (2003). Like "Dante. . . Bruno. Vico.. Joyce," these books focus primarily on Vico. The other philosopher in the title of Beckett's essay receives little to no attention within them. The privileging of Vico over Bruno in these books is broadly representative of how Wake studies has approached those two philosophers. The only book devoted to Bruno's influence on the Wake is Frances Boldereff's 1968 work, Hermes to His Son Thoth: Being Joyce's Use of Giordano Bruno in Finnegans Wake. This is an idiosyncratic text that has little in common with the aforementioned studies of Vico's role in Joyce's last novel. Yet, while the definitive book on Joyce and Bruno remains to be written, that relationship has been successfully examined in book chapters and articles by critics like Gareth Joseph Downes, Federico Sabatini, and Theoharis C. Theoharis. The most recent major exploration of the philosophical allusions in Finnegans Wake is Verene's 2016 work, James Joyce and the Philosophers at Finnegans Wake. As one would expect from a celebrated Vico scholar, Verene's book focuses primarily on Vico. Two of the five chapters are devoted to him, and the chapter on Beckett's "Dante. . . Bruno. Vico.. Joyce" mostly discusses the third figure within the title of that essay. At the same time, Verene's book also has a chapter on Bruno and Nicholas of Cusa, as well as a chapter that considers many of the other philosophers to whom the Wake alludes. After the book's five chapters, there is a very helpful appendix titled "Register of Philosophers at the Wake" that offers a list of the philosophers referenced in Joyce's last novel. My book builds upon the insights of the works mentioned above. Its approach is not to elucidate every philosophical reference

within Joyce's last novel, but rather to examine how the Wake references the philosophers who feature most prominently within it. In conducting this examination, the book carefully explores the Wake's allusions to a range of great philosophers including Aquinas, Aristotle, Bergson, Berkeley, Nicholas of Cusa, Hegel, Spinoza, Plato, and, of course, Vico and Bruno. When considering the myriad philosophical references within Joyce's final work, it is helpful to have a sense of Joyce's knowledge of philosophy. As Fran O'Rourke observes, while Joyce only formally encountered philosophy during his time at University College Dublin through his classes on logic, all of Joyce's studies at that university "took place within an atmosphere permeated by Aristotelian Scholasticism." This sparked an abiding interest in philosophy within Joyce, and that interest can be seen in his works, his notes, his libraries, and his numerous utterances on that field. That being said, as Sam Slote observes, Joyce did "not actively engage in the history of philosophy in a sustained manner." For this reason, while Joyce knew of many different philosophers, he lacked a detailed understanding of how those philosophers fit into the larger philosophical tradition. Furthermore, his education did not give him the skills to interpret works of philosophy or to engage with philosophical ideas as a trained philosopher would. One can therefore understand why O'Rourke says that "Joyce's attitude to philosophical questions was that of the amateur: fascinated, wondering but still puzzled." When Joyce drew upon the discipline of philosophy during the writing of Finnegans Wake, he did so as an artist utilizing a resource to enrich and develop an artwork. Joyce was happy to transform philosophers and philosophical ideas to suit his aesthetic and conceptual purposes. Accuracy of representation was not one of his goals. One must therefore be careful in how one interprets the philosophical allusions in Finnegans Wake. For example, within the Wake there are three recurring structures that point to philosophical ideas: the thunderwords allude to the fact that, in Vico's historical scheme, the first era begins with the first storm after the mighty flood of the Book of Genesis; the four-part cycles reference the cycles of Vico's model of history; and the numerous plays on the name "Browne and Nolan" evoke Bruno's principle of the coincidence of contraries. On first glance, the relationships between those structures

and those ideas seem straightforward. Yet, when one examines those relationships more carefully, one can recognize their complexity. The thunderwords point to a key moment in Vico's conception of history, but they do not embody an idea within Vico's thought. The cycles of the Wake derive from those of Vico, but they are different to them in a number of important ways. Joyce's novel consistently alludes to Bruno's principle of the coincidence of contraries but, when it offers that principle, what is offered is quite different to Bruno's principle. On each occasion, Joyce redefines the idea he has borrowed. Furthermore, within the Wake the most significant philosophical allusions are often those that connect philosophers or philosophical ideas to characters within the novel. These characters are usually versions of Shem or Shaun. Linking philosophers and philosophical ideas to particular characters helps Joyce to define the identities and worldviews of those characters. It also often allows him to define his own position. This is because Shem and Shaun frequently represent Joyce and Wyndham Lewis. Joyce's relationship with Lewis collapsed during the writing of Finnegans Wake, and so Lewis is regularly presented within that novel as Joyce's antagonist. There are consequently a number of scenes within the Wake in which the philosophers and philosophical ideas that are connected to Shem are also connected to Joyce and the thinkers and ideas that are aligned with Shaun are also aligned with Lewis and, thereby, against Joyce. These scenes offer insights into how Joyce saw his relationship to particular philosophers and philosophical ideas. At the same time, the manner in which Joyce connects characters to thinkers and ideas is not always so helpful. There are characters within the Wake who principally represent philosophers. The best known such character is book four's Balkelly, a Wakean rendering of George Berkeley. What makes these characters difficult to fully define is that, while Joyce ties each of them to a particular philosopher, he often ascribes to these characters ideas and actions that do not accord with the philosophies of the thinkers they represent. One must therefore be cautious in how one characterizes the relationship between such a character and the philosopher that inspired them. As can be seen, the Wake's philosophical allusions offer many challenges. In this book, I respond to those challenges by examining such allusions using a form of the following procedure. First, I

offer a concise introduction to the original form of the referenced philosophical idea that explains where and when that idea first appeared and how it was understood by its originator. After this, I look at Joyce's initial interaction with that idea and show both how he acquired it and how he first understood it. Joyce's notes and non-fiction writings are invaluable resources for locating his initial impressions of philosophical ideas. When necessary, I then demonstrate how Joyce's conception of the idea in question developed over time. This is often required because Joyce gathered most of the philosophical ideas referenced in the Wake years before he began that work, and, when Joyce retained a philosophical idea for a long period of time, that idea invariably evolved in his mind. In the last stage of the process, I turn my attention to the piece of text within the passage under examination that references Joyce's conception of the idea in question at the time of writing. In examining that piece of text, I offer its earliest version, show how Joyce incorporates that version into a draft, and then follow the evolution of that piece of text as it moves across drafts and into the Wake. The purpose of this methodical approach is to illuminate every stage in the production of a philosophical reference. This is the only means of fully demonstrating how such references operate. Just as it is important to consider how the Wake's philosophical references function in themselves, so it is equally important to assess how they work together. This is because the Wake's philosophical references frequently appear in clusters that bring together the ideas of different philosophers. While Joyce sometimes connects philosophers in order to suggest parallels between their ideas, he at other times unites philosophers in order to set them in opposition. In examining a passage in which philosophers are connected, I follow a similar procedure to the one described above. After considering the passage's philosophical references in the usual manner, I then explain the relationship between the philosophers that the passage connects. This explanation focuses on the aspects of their philosophies that are referenced in the passage under analysis. In the next phase of the procedure, I follow the development of Joyce's conception of the relationship between the philosophers in question. This is not always possible, but there are a number of thinkers that Joyce continually groups together. Aristotle and Aquinas is the classic example of this. Lastly, I explore how the

passage under consideration defines the relationship between the philosophers it connects. To offer a basic example of this, if one thinker within a pair is aligned with the character of Shem and the other with that of Shaun, then, by virtue of the largely antagonistic relationship between those characters, those two thinkers are primarily defined as being opposed to one another. What differentiates this book from most prior studies of the philosophical allusions in Joyce's last work is less how it explores those allusions and more how it reads the Wake. Most of the critics who have examined the Wake's philosophical allusions—and this includes the likes of Atherton, Hart, Bishop, and Verene—have read the Wake by looking at particular words and phrases from throughout the novel. They rarely look at clauses or sentences, let alone larger units like speeches or paragraphs. In the works of these critics, individual words and phrases are either considered by themselves or woven together. Here is an example of the latter approach from Bishop:

> The Wake, in turn, not simply resists visualization, but actively encourages its reader not to visualize much in its pages, where "it darkles . . . all this our fun-naminal world" (244.13). Because HCE passes through the night "with his eyes shut" (130.19), he regards the world from the interior of "blackeye lenses" (183.17) sunk in "eyes darkled" (434.31) and kept firmly "SHUT" behind "a bind of black" (182.32-3); through the "eyewitless foggus" of this "benighted irismaimed" (489.31 [his eyes "benighted," each "iris maimed"]), we regard a universe of profound "unsightliness" (131.19).

The words and phrases quoted in this passage do not derive from a single section of the Wake, but are rather drawn from chapters from across the novel. What's more, as can be seen from the page and line references, the quoted words and phrases are not used in the order in which they appear in the Wake. There are two good reasons why the studies of Joyce's last work that have exam-ined its philosophical allusions have frequently read that novel by focusing on particular words and phrases from across its whole span. The first is that the Wake's references to philosophy are distributed unevenly throughout the novel. It is often the case that references to a particular philosopher can be found in sev-eral different chapters. To offer just one example of

this, the chapters that contain references to Aristotle include I.5, I.6, II.2, III.1, and III.3. It is therefore difficult to speak of any one philosopher's role within the text by focusing on only one section or even one chapter of the novel. Since the density of the Wake makes it extremely difficult for regularly sized monographs to discuss large sections of it in any detail, it is understandable that critics looking to examine the Wake's scattered references to a particular philosopher have frequently chosen to read that novel by focusing on textual fragments drawn from multiple chapters. The second reason why studies of the Wake's philosophical allusions have frequently read that novel through words and phrases rather than clauses or sentence relates to the manner in which the Wake was written. In Structure and Motif in Finnegans Wake, Hart observes that "the sentence in Finnegans Wake is hardly ever the unit of composition."8 For all that Joyce's compositional methods during the writing of the Wake were numerous, complex, and unstable, Hart is not wrong here. The sentences of the Wake are usually long, elaborate sentences that contain many parts. Joyce generally did not write these sentences from beginning to end. Most often, he began with a comparatively simple core sentence and then expanded it repeatedly through the addition of words, phrases, and clauses. This is why the sentences of the Wake are usually heterogenous masses that have homogenous sections within them. Critics of all kinds, not only those interested in philosophy, have often responded to the Wake's sentence structures by focusing on individual words and phrases, as this allows a critic to look at particular parts of a sentence without having to work through the whole. I take a different approach to reading the Wake in this book. Each chapter focuses on a section of Joyce's novel that contains a number of significant philosophical allusions. These sections are generally only a few pages long. This approach was inspired by one of the best recent books on the Wake, Finn Fordham's Lots of Fun at Finnegans Wake: Unravelling Universals. My reading style is similar to that of Fordham, but it is not entirely the same. Whereas he reads the sections on which he focuses genetically, which is to say that he follows the composition of each section from its first draft to the version that appears in the Wake, I focus on the text of the Wake and read each of my chosen sections from beginning to end. For the purposes of space, I do not consider every

sentence or even every paragraph within a section. Rather, I privilege the passages within each section that contain philosophical allusions. I use this reading style because it allows the Wake's philosophical allusions to be considered within their contexts. When one isolates a philosophical allusion by plucking a word or phrase from a sentence, there is no way of accurately judging the nature of that allusion because there is no way of knowing how it is informed by the surrounding text. As regards Hart's idea that "the sentence in Finnegans Wake is hardly ever the unit of composition," this is undoubtedly an important idea that should influence every reading of the Wake. At the same time, it is also important to acknowledge that Joyce's novel is largely made up of sentences. Long, complex, challenging sentences certainly, but sentences nonetheless. Therefore, rather than abstracting particular words and phrases and regarding them as independent units, it is more appropriate to treat the Wake as consisting of sentences made up of parts that have an integrity of their own. In examining a sentence within Joyce's last novel, one should consider its parts, its whole, and the relationship between the two. Happily, thanks to the greater availability of the Joyce archive and the heroic efforts of genetic Joyce scholars, it is now easier than ever to understand how the sentences of the Wake operate. In looking at the drafts of a sentence, one can see how the sentence evolved during the composition process and so gain an understanding of both the parts into which the sentence is divided and how those parts unite to form the whole. This is one of the main reasons why the readings in this book consistently draw upon archival materials, such as Joyce's drafts and notes. Naturally, the downside of my approach to reading the Wake is that, in discussing how that novel alludes to a particular philosopher, I cannot examine all of the Wake's allusions to that philosopher. I respond to this problem within the book by focusing on the sections of the Wake in which Joyce most consistently and purposefully references the key philosophers of the novel. For example, Chapter 1 considers the role of Vico in the Wake by looking at a section of I.5. That section contains two paragraphs in which Joyce repeatedly references Vico and points to numerous aspects of his thought. While the Wake contains a multitude of references to Vico, there is no other section of the novel that so frequently alludes to Vico's ideas. Consequently, while one cannot obtain

a complete sense of how the Wake references Vico from examining those paragraphs, one can certainly gain an understanding of many important facets of how it does so. This book's methodology allows it to demonstrate that the Wake's references to philosophy collectively create a network of ideas, thinkers, and texts. For all the intricacy of this network, it has a logic and an integrity. At its center sit Joyce's interpretations of Vico's model of history and Bruno's principle of the coincidence of contraries. All of the other philosophical ideas that play a significant role within the text are defined in relation to Joyce's conceptions of those ideas. This is principally done through the characters of Shem and Shaun. Joyce connects Vico, Bruno, and all the philosophers he views as their kin to Shem. Since Shem and Shaun are in many ways opposites, it makes sense for Joyce to associate Shaun with all the thinkers he views as opposing Vico's model of history and/or Bruno's principle of the coincidence of contraries. Joyce gives the reader a sense of his stance toward to this division by repeatedly associating himself with Shem and his antagonist Lewis with Shaun. In presenting and explaining this network, this book shows how the Wake's philosophical allusions function, how they fit together, and how Joyce uses them to define his relationships to the ideas referenced by them. <>

William Blake's Religious Vision: There's a Methodism in His Madness by Jennifer Jesse [Lexington Books, ISBN 9780739177907]

In this innovative study, Jesse challenges the prevailing view of Blake as an antinomian and describes him as a theological moderate who defended an evangelical faith akin to the Methodism of John Wesley. She arrives at this conclusion by contextualizing Blake's works not only within Methodism, but in relation to other religious groups he addressed in his art, including the Established Church, deism, and radical religions. Further, she analyzes his works by sorting out the theological "road signs" he directed to each audience. This approach reveals Blake engaging each faction through its most prized beliefs, manipulating its own doctrines through visual and verbal guide-posts

designed to communicate specifically with that group. She argues that, once we collate Blake's messages to his intended audiences—sounding radical to the conservatives and conservative to the radicals—we find him advocating a system that would have been recognized by his contemporaries as Wesleyan in orientation. This thesis also relies on an accurate understanding of eighteenth-century Methodism: Jesse underscores the empirical rationalism pervading Wesley's theology, highlighting differences between Methodism as practiced and as publicly caricatured.

Undergirding this project is Jesse's call for more rigorous attention to the dramatic character of Blake's works. She notes that scholars still typically use phrases like "Blake says" or "Blake believes," followed by some claim made by a Blakean character, without negotiating the complex narrative dynamics that might enable us to understand the rhetorical purposes of that statement, as heard by Blake's respective audiences. Jesse maintains we must expect to find reflections in Blake's works of all the theologies he engaged. The question is: what was he doing with them, and why? In order to divine what Blake meant to communicate, we must explore how those he targeted would have perceived his arguments.

Jesse concludes that by analyzing the dramatic character of Blake's works theologically through this wide-angled, audience-oriented approach, we see him orchestrating a grand rapprochement of the extreme theologies of his day into a unified vision that integrates faith and reason.

Reviews

[T]his is an interesting and provocative book.... Jesse has opened up important and unexpected areas of inquiry that are likely to yield a greater understanding of Blake's polyphonic work in a heterogeneous religious milieu.
— **Blake/An Illustrated Quarterly**

Jennifer Jesse has written an accessible introduction to William Blake. It encompasses an admirable assembly of critical learning and acumen, assessing the achievement of several generations of Blake scholars. The book will be a reference point for all those seeking a profound consideration of issues related to Blake's work and its contexts.

— Robert W. Rix, assistant professor, Department of Culture and Global Studies, University of Aalborg

Blake studies is in crisis and has been for many years. Blake scholars long ago decided that Blake was to be summed up as a dissenter and an antinomian. These terms were never properly defined; indeed, no distinction was made between religious dissent and political dissent. And any evidence contradicting the 'dissenter' Blake was ignored. As for 'antinomian', in much eighteenth-century polemic this is just a meaningless term of abuse — for instance as a routine libel on the Moravians. The distinguished historian E.P. Thompson, in Witness Against the Beast (1991), makes much of the antinomian Blake. Thompson refers repeatedly to what he terms 'the antinomian doctrine of justification by faith alone' (Witness, 164). But justification by faith alone is the central tenet of Luther's Protestantism and forms Article 11 of the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England. Furthermore, Article 11 would have been assented to by any non-conformist wishing to licence a Dissenting Meeting-House. Thompson would thus make every Christian in England an antinomian apart from the Roman Catholics. Jennifer Jesse's important new book reveals a Blake 'neither antinomian nor anti-rational in his religious thought ... who defended a moderate, evangelical faith, which becomes visible when viewed in the context of the early Methodism of John Wesley' (7). Jesse stresses that Blake's works are entirely unlike those of Thompson's Muggletonians, rejecting 'their strident anti-rationalism, their strict Calvinism, and their autocratic self-righteousness (178). She argues compellingly that Blake and Wesley stand in similar positions in relation both to the rationalists and to the radicals. 'Both men would have been perceived as much too enthusiastic to be acceptable to the rationalists, and far too rationalistic to be claimed by the radicals' (200). Jesse proposes that Blake worked with specific audiences in mind, 'drawing on the most distinctive theological arguments of each audience' (247), and reads Blake through his audiences, sorting out his theological 'road signs' (24 et passim). She asserts that these road signs 'can only be interpreted accurately when seen through the eyes of those audiences for whom the signs are designed, and that these signs signify different meanings to different audiences' (72). Once we collate Blake's messages to his intended audiences, we find him advocating a system that would have been recognized by his contemporaries as remarkably similar to a Methodist theological vision. The book is divided into thirteen chapters. Four of these: 'Rationalist Road Signs: The Bible and Creation' (Chapter 5); 'Anglican Road Signs: Christology and Atonement' (Chapter 7); 'Radical Road Signs: Sin and the Last Judgment'

(Chapter 9); and 'Methodist Road Signs: Justification and Sanctification' (Chapter 11) elucidate Blake's approach to his different audiences. But Chapter 10: 'Blake and the Religious Moderates' is, I think, Jesse's key chapter, allowing for intriguing new interpretations of his works, particularly in the area of reason: 'we see him affirming not only the same basic axioms as a Wesleyan view of reason, but also the logical insights and implications of those principles' (209). Within this framework, Blake emerges as much a 'reasonable enthusiast' as Wesley. And as for the vexed issue of 'dissent', Jesse makes clear that Wesleyans and Moravians registered their preaching houses in the 1740s as dissenting under the Act of Toleration for practical considerations (to avoid prosecution for unlawful assembly under the Conventicle Acts), but that theologically they continued to insist on unity with the Established Church. I would have wished for a fuller discussion of the Moravians — the only sect with which the Blake family can be associated and for which the evidence is compelling and irrefutable. This is a significant gap in an otherwise comprehensive study. Jesse, of course, acknowledges that Wesley's religious thinking was 'deeply shaped by the Moravian The BARS Review, No. 49 (Spring 2017) tradition' (9). We know from Wesley's accounts that his own faith was awakened on 24 May 1738 at a meeting of the Moravian Society in Aldersgate; he then became active in the Fetter Lane Society in London, though he left after only two years in its company, and progressively distanced himself from their theology over time. Jennifer Jesse's audience-oriented approach is a powerful hermeneutical tool. At last we can see clearly the M/methodist aspects of Blake's religious thought. Blake would have known Methodism as the major social and religious movement of his time. The sermons, hymns, and other writings of Methodists would have contributed to the ever more apparent emphasis in Blake on inward vision, spiritual renewal, and the creative imagination. It may be too much to claim that Blake is responding specifically to Wesley, as opposed to using ideas and rhetoric current in evangelical circles, but there is much to value in Jesse's very welcome account of the relationship between Blake and Methodism. Keri Davies

CONTENTS

The Problem of Blake's Religion

I can think of few authors who generate such fundamental interpretive disparities among scholars as does William Blake. Nowhere is this more evident than in his religious thought. There has been no dispute over the vital importance of religion to Blake. In a letter dated 10 January 1803, he expresses to his patron Thomas Butts a sentiment that echoes throughout his artistic corpus: "The Thing I have most at Heart! more than life or all that seems to make life comfortable without. Is the Interest of True Religion & Science." Readers of Blake would be hard-pressed to identify a work of his poetry, prose, or painting that does not address religious themes, either explicitly or implicitly. Those works also evangelize, in numerous ways, for "the Religion of Jesus." But these rudimentary points of agreement provide us with an exceedingly rough foundation, which has been used to support a dismaying variety of structures. What specific traditions do Blake's works promote? Which ones might he himself have favored?

Answers to these questions have been decidedly diverse. In fact, interpreters have confronted us with a confounding multiplicity of Blakes, often with little resemblance between them. For Thomas Altizer, Blake is "the first Christian atheist," a forefather of the death of God tradition. Kathleen Raine, M. O. Percival, George Mills Harper, and Desiree Hirst find Blake drawn to the neoplatonic and theosophical traditions. Many critics, including A. L. Morton, M. H. Abrams, Morton D. Paley, Michael Ferber, Edward Larrissy, A. D. Nuttall, Jon Mee, E. P. Thompson, Pierre Boutang, Robert Rix, and Christopher Rowland locate Blake within the radical, antinomian, Gnostic, and/or Manichaean conglomeration of traditions. S. Foster Damon and Leopold Damrosch treat him as a mystic. J. G. Davies, Nancy Bogen, Margaret Bottrall, and Robert Ryan suggest he is closest to the Anglican tradition—Davies strenuously portrays Blake as a champion of Christian orthodoxy, notwithstanding some unfortunate heterodox blunders. Others, like John Beer, choose to describe Blake only as "an enthusiast" in order to avoid further (presumably fruitless) theological analysis. And of course, we are still being treated to intriguing research from Keri Davies and Martha Keith Schuchard on the Moravian history of Blake's mother, and on possible Moravian strains in Blake's own works. Following those implications, Schuchard further characterizes Blake as advocating radical Swedenborgian, Sabbatian Kabbalist, Illuminist Freemason, and Tantric beliefs, while Magnus Ankarsjö places him within Moravian and radical Swedenborgian circles.

In the past, the critical mainstream has been satisfied to treat Blake vaguely as a religious "dissenter," which does not convey much more than the fact that he had difficulty conforming to the doctrines of the Established Church. More recently, the weight of scholarship favors the antinomian interpretation, associating Blake with the radical religions of his time. These movements were well-known for their eccentric vilification of reason as an enemy to true religion, and scholars who locate Blake in this context find him sympathetic to that perspective. This goes hand in hand with ruminations about Blake's madness, which resurfaced again in the works of W. J. T. Mitchell, Paul Youngquist, Robert N. Essick, and David Fuller. As a result, this radical,

anti-rationalist "mad Blake" is the one we tend to read into all of his works, including their religious dimensions.

Anyone fearless and, perhaps, foolish enough to wander knowingly into this dark wood is compelled to admit that this bewildering predicament is justified for many reasons. One is that we know so little, in terms of historical facts, about Blake's religious life. The biographical records we have are singularly unrevealing. We know he was baptized and married in the Church of England and was said to have requested its funeral service. In the church-state establishment of English society, however, these facts are hardly significant for discovering what Blake's own religious practices may have been. Indeed, he was buried not in a Church cemetery but in the dissenting burial ground of Bunhill Fields. Davies and Schuchard have uncovered intriguing evidence of a two-year affiliation (1750-1751) of Blake's mother, Catherine Wright Armitage Blake, with the Moravian congregation at Fetter Lane during her marriage to Thomas Armitage, but, so far, that trail vanishes into a mist of questionable inferences, unsubstantiated innuendoes, and highly debatable interpretations of Blake's texts.? We also have a record of William's and Catherine's signatures in the Great Eastcheap Swedenborgian Society minute book, showing their attendance at the first session of the general conference of the New Jerusalem Church in 1789, but there is no evidence Blake joined this church, and we know from his writings that he turned away from the doctrines of Swedenborg soon after. John Thomas Smith, Blake's first biographer, tells us that from that time on, Blake did not attend a church of any denomination. And yet we know from his works that he was deeply concerned with Christianity.

His works, however, are also part of the problem. Far from giving us a clear picture of Blake's religious belief, they present us with complex dramas of many voices that propose multiple conflicting positions—in the same work and often on the same page—through contradictory arguments and perplexing contrapuntal interactions between text and illustrations. As Robert Ryan says, "his verses can be quoted convincingly on both sides of any important religious question." These dramas portray characters in conflict with one another and with themselves, and are partly designed to show how easily our most elemental perceptions become perverted. Which characters,

then, are voicing ideas Blake believed were mistaken, and at what exact point in the drama do these figures become enlightened, if ever? The same question confronts us simply in attempting to identify the narrator of each tale. In The Book of Urizen, for example, whose voice are we hearing? Is it a book written by Urizen to explain his point of view, or is it a book about Urizen written by another figure, possibly Los, to present another perspective? Or could it be both at the same time? Further, we are clearly led to believe all characters in question are fallen in some of their most elemental perceptions, so how does any such identification help us negotiate the conflicts? Where is Blake's voice in all this? The same dynamic is at work in the other Urizen

books (The Book of Los and The Book of Ahania): Blake's use of the genitive "of" in those titles presents us with fundamental questions he is not about to answer for us. He deliberately obscures his own voice in order to present

every reader with an extended parable, inviting us to enter into the story and discover our own voices, our own truths—truths that will differ depending on where we locate ourselves and who we recognize in that story. As Blake notes about his Vision of the Last Judgment, "to different People it appears differently as every thing else does" (VLJ68-69; E 555).

Another complicating factor is Blake's penchant for altering the story he tells in various editions. In The Book of Urizen for example, we are left not only with the unanswerable question of the narrator's identity, but with the fact that Blake produced all eight of the known editions of the book with different page orders. These variations alter the basic storyline, connecting pronouns to different characters depending on which version we read. What interpreter could hope to engage adequately more than the strand of Blake's thinking woven into his production of that one edition? And even then, there is never just one story being told. Whatever religious narratives we may be able to pin down in these works, they are always integrally intertwined with psychological, spiritual, social, political, and aesthetic tales in ways that drastically affect our understanding of the religious stories.

Furthermore, one of the primary colors on Blake's methodological palette is creating ambiguity through misdirection. He is extraordinarily adept, especially in the epics, at taking readers unawares before they know what hit them, raising questions calculated to pry into the chinks of their own specialized ideological armor, creating new imaginative and logical possibilities in their minds in seemingly innocuous ways. This strategy of misdirection takes center stage in those works in which Blake addresses several religious factions at once. In Jerusalem, for example, he often sets the bait for any given audience by beguiling them into thinking they are reading an author who agrees with their ideological assumptions, sometimes by creating the pretense of criticizing a common enemy. By the time he trips the apocalyptic trap for each audience, it is too late for readers to extricate themselves from what they already would have seen revealed about themselves. But again, this creates extraordinary difficulties for any would-be interpreter. What hope is there for us who have awakened in such a wood, full of diversions and deceptive detours, where no single "right road" even exists to be found?

Perhaps the most intractable difficulty in producing an accurate interpretation of Blake's ideas is the mystical quality of his works. They tell us about flowers that open to heaven, finding eternity in an hour and the world in a grain of sand, and the sun appearing as "an innumerable company of the Heavenly host crying Holy Holy Holy is the Lord God Almighty." These kinds of descriptions abound in Blake's works, especially in Milton and Jerusalem. He is trying to communicate and generate not merely ideas, but a transforming experience beyond all ideas, which cannot be captured in ideas. As we find in the mystical theological traditions of all religions, including Christianity, paradox and other forms of obfuscation are often (paradoxically!) the most accurate and effective way of expressing insights revealed in those illuminating moments. These are insights that cannot be accessed by discursive reason alone, so we must be taken to a place beyond the reach of such reasoning before we can recognize them. If the deliberate purpose of these complexities in Blake's works is to invite us to embark on that mystical journey, then the point is not to try to smooth out the paradoxes or to reconcile the contradictions, but to pack our bags for the trip.

It is certainly understandable, given these difficulties, that some scholars have once again seriously engaged the question of madness in Blake. At the same time, when viewed with Blake's purposes in mind, these problems have an uncanny way of leading us to some very interesting discoveries. Once we follow Blake's lead and pick up our end of the Golden String and start winding, we often arrive at an existential place in which these works make perfect sense, even though that "sense" cannot be reduced to forms that cohere neatly in "the Sea of Time & Space." I take heart from the fact that, as incommunicable as these experiences themselves remain, Blake spent his whole career trying to communicate them, and he expressed them partially in ideas--ideas that have very practical consequences, which can be either life-giving or death-dealing. As an interpreter, I hope to understand those ideas accurately, as far as possible, so as to participate in the life-giving vision I have experienced as a result of following Blake's travel guides through eternity. At that experiential level, what qualifies each of us as an interpreter is our willingness to take our trip and to communicate what it was like to Be There.

In that vein then, this book is my attempt to proffer one educated guess about the religious insights expressed in Blake's works on the basis of what I have seen upon winding up my end of the String, because the disclosures that have happened on that trip make sense of some crucial aspects of Blake's epics that have not appeared coherent to me before, using previous interpretive filters. Chief among these aspects is Blake's puzzling attitude toward reason. For example, when addressing those ultra-rationalists he calls "Deists," he condemns their use of reason, but when depicting representatives of the Established Church (in his context, not so very different from the deists), he faults them for not being reasonable enough. Why does he identify natural religion, which prized reason and the abolition of superstition above all else, as "Mystery"? And if he rejects natural religion, how could he approve of Thomas Paine's deistic interpretation of Christianity, and equate natural religion with the voice of God? Why do we find the figure of Urizen ("your reason") depicted in the guise of figures Blake seems to view in heroic terms, like Job, Samson, and Jesus? And what accounts for the fact that Urizen is the first of the zoas to arise at the apocalyptic end of

Jerusalem? Even when one accounts for conflicting dramatic perspectives and shifting narrative voices, Blake himself appears to advocate quite forcefully for both negative and positive views of reason, but the connective logic between these positions is hard to fathom.

While explanations have been hazarded by scholars for many of these conundrums, they never formed a very convincing picture for me. Either something was missing in our interpretive lenses, leaving us unable to understand crucial features of Blake's religious universe coherently, or maybe there really was no coherence there to find. I found myself becoming more intrigued by those discussions of Blake's madness. However, those puzzling features came into clearer focus when I viewed the religious dimension of Blake's narratives through a wide-angled, eighteenth-century English theological lens (described further below). What I see now through that lens is a Blake who appears neither antinomian nor anti-rational in his religious thought. I see a Blake who defended a moderate, evangelical faith, which becomes visible when viewed in the context of the early Methodism of John Wesley.

This interpretation emerges out of three insights. The first is the theologically informed recognition that Wesleyan rhetoric, images, and ideas abound in Blake's epics, and that Blake consistently endorses Methodist doctrines and values in his works in a manner uncharacteristic of his treatment of any other religious movement (including antinomianism). 13 The second is that an accurate theological portrayal of eighteenth-century English Methodism reveals a rationalistic theology that prized the authority of reason, though it was caricatured as one of purely emotional "enthusiasm." The third insight results from returning to Blake's works with this Methodist framework in mind: one recognizes a Wesleyan pattern reflected in Blake's treatment of reason. In contrast to the prevailing scholarly view of Blake as anti-rational, I will argue that he constructs a worldview in which reason functions as an apocalyptic and messianic faculty whose authority is crucial to any authentic religion.

What I am not trying to do in this project is to squeeze Blake into a Methodist box. Beside the fact that we lack any historical evidence that Blake attended Methodist

services or meetings, one thing we certainly know from his works is that he was adamantly opposed to advocating a theological position (either a traditional one or his own) to which others must conform. However, achieving this freedom from the systems of others entails creating our own systems. We see Blake, especially in the epics, developing dynamic, organic systems by drawing on insights of contemporary theologies, some of which were clearly better than others in Blake's mind. What I find particularly intriguing is the extraordinary lack of Blakean denunciations of distinctively Methodist figures or beliefs of that time. When he does correct doctrines as used in the Methodist traditions (such as their understanding of the nature of "sin" and "holiness"), his criticisms take on a milder character. They are not the forceful attempts to subvert an entire worldview that we see in his addresses to his rationalist and radical audiences, accusing them of becoming their opposite. Rather, they propose subtle but crucial adjustments, tweaking a system that already functions in a way Blake appears to approve. This fact is, in itself, highly suggestive. Not only does he not take on the Methodists; he expresses very similar, or even the same, messages and beliefs, using a rhetorical style, tone, and diction that, in some instances, are virtually indistinguishable from Wesley's. Instead of images and criticisms directed at Methodists, what we find in Blake's works are defenses of Methodist attitudes, and expressions of a Methodist type of faith and experience.

My central question in this project, then, is not: was Blake a Methodist? My question is: if we look at Blake's works in relation to an accurate understanding of turn-of-the-century Methodist theology and practice in England, what does it reveal about his religious thought expressed in those works? Does it disclose insights that are not evident when viewed in other contexts? I will suggest that this avenue of inquiry ties up some loose ends left dangling because they lay outside the scope of previous interpretative lenses, especially with regard to Blake's treatment of reason. This project is particularly timely now in light of works published by Keri Davies and Marsha Keith Schuchard that have uncovered intriguing Moravian associations in the history of Blake's maternal family. Wesley's theology was deeply shaped by the Moravian

tradition, and I believe we have ample evidence in Blake's own works that reflect these Wesleyan themes.

WINDING THE THEOLOGICAL STRANDS OF THE STRING

In order to distinguish Blake's treatment of Methodism from the way he dealt with other Christian traditions, we need first to view his works in relation to the historical actualities he was engaging through those works. As David V. Erdman cautions us, neglect of properly contextualizing Blake misleads many critics: "The difficulty comes at least as much from a failure to enter imaginatively into Blake's times as it does from a failure to enter Blake's imagination." Writing forty years later, Steve Clark and David Worrall note that, while scholars have hailed the ground-breaking character of the historical contextualization Erdman inaugurated in his Prophet Against Empire, those scholars' works, by and large, have not integrated that historical consciousness. Instead of bringing the light of historical inquiry to bear on the text, they treat historical allusions within the text "as yet another dimension of the text." Their work has served as a rallying call to scholars and, in recent years, we have seen many more critical works attending to this vital dimension of the interpretive process.

In this project, I take up that call in a theological vein, exploring Blake's religious thought by historically reconstructing the religious currents and controversies out of which his works emerge and which they address. While it is not possible to separate completely the theological from the psychological, aesthetic, social or political dimensions of his works, these are discrete aspects of his thought, and the religious issues should not be confused with these other concerns. The religious dimension can be difficult to assess, and sometimes even to recognize, for those not familiar with the theological cultures of that era. One can easily be perplexed over all the energy these communities invested in what appear to us to be the most arcane and inconsequential doctrines. But Blake engaged many of these doctrines in his works, and failing to understand what was at stake in these ideas leaves significant aspects of his thought unexplored and perhaps even undetected.

The interpretive difficulty does not stop there. Once we single out the religious context, we must take account of the enormous diversity that environment presents, from ultra-rationalistic to fideistic, spanning the spectrum of deism, Established Church orthodoxy, rational dissent, evangelicalism, and a bewildering concatenation of radical, antinomian, hermetic, theosophical, and millenarian traditions. In my judgment, one of the main critical factors that has exacerbated the difficulties in comprehending Blake's theological position is scholars' neglect of the multidimensional nature of this context, with its many competing worldviews, each one evoking its own polemical response in Blake. In other words, when scholars do focus on theology, they have tended to approach Blake's works from within the context of a single religious position, viewing passages through Blake's entire corpus solely through the lens of one group. For example, Altizer views all of Blake's works through the kenotic tradition, Hirst and Raine compare them with the neoplatonic and hermetic traditions, Schuchard and Ankarsjö see them as expressing Moravianism and radical Swedenborgianism, and Morton, Mee, Thompson, Rowland, and many others place them within antinomianism. The understanding of Blake that results naturally reflects the perspective of that one viewpoint, passing over texts that challenge or contradict it. I will argue, for instance, that scholars viewing all of Blake's passages indiscriminately through an antinomian lens misinterpret many of his antirational arguments as advocating antinomianism. But once the theological vocabulary is sorted out, we realize many of those arguments are more likely directed toward deists or Established Church theologians. And in many places where Blake explicitly addresses antinomians, a much different, and thoroughly rationalistic, argument takes shape.

We do not ask often enough about the identity of Blake's intended audiences. Even when scholars engage in genuine historical contextualization, they still tend to ignore this question so crucial to negotiating the rhetorical purposes of those works. This neglected element is the key to my interpretive approach in this project. I argue that Blake's works provide ample evidence that he is attempting to engage all of these audiences, so of course we find reflections of all their theologies in his works. The question is: what is Blake doing with those images in those particular works? Whose

theology is he endorsing and whose is he criticizing or correcting, and how can we tell which tack he is taking in any given passage? Failing to attend to this problem accounts partly for the apparent inconsistencies scholars have identified in Blake's religious positions: when he addresses groups on opposite ends of the liberal-conservative spectrum, his arguments sound self-contradictory on their face, but they begin to cohere when we factor in the identities of his shifting audiences. When addressing theological conservatives, Blake's arguments sound radical indeed, but when speaking to radicals, his positions appear downright conservative. John Linnell noted the same in his 1855 Memoir, describing Blake as "a saint amongst the infidels & a heretic with the orthodox."16 In spite of the fact that we have been forewarned by Blake of the dangers of "single vision," this is still the method that characterizes most studies of Blake's religious thought. But given the breadth of Blake's eclecticism, it is guaranteed to lead us astray, producing vastly diverse and often incommensurable interpretations, all of which seem perfectly coherent within the limited framework of the inquiry.

Strangest of all, these critical handicaps have rendered Methodism practically invisible when it comes to theological analyses of Blake's works. This is truly remarkable considering the prominent public profile of this movement in Blake's environment, not simply in terms of its extraordinary popularity and explosive growth during his lifetime, but because of its enormous impact on the religious, social, intellectual, and literary dynamics of his culture. Even scholars who shine a light directly on the canvas of Blake's epistemology habitually neglect any mention of Methodism, though this is where his Wesleyan palette is most vivid. When Methodism does find its way into Blake criticism, it's not often an accurate historical portrayal of the movement, but more frequently an unreflective acceptance of standard eighteenth-century public caricatures. Those caricatures were designed to discredit Methodists because of the threats they posed—religiously, intellectually, psychologically, economically, socially, morally, and politically—to establishment ideologies. And while the public perception of Methodism (its role as a trope in the culture wars of the eighteenth century, if you will) certainly has an important role to play in interpreting Blake's messages to his

contemporaries, we must be careful to distinguish the tropes from the realities if we are to understand those messages.

In this study, I challenge previous critical approaches by offering a wide-angled view of Blake's position within the broader religious milieu of eighteenth-century England, discussing his religious images and ideas not only in light of Methodism but of the other major Christian movements he addresses in his art, including the Established Church of England, deism, evangelicalism (including Methodism), and radical religions of several varieties (including antinomianism). Such a panoramic survey is necessary to interpret his works accurately: if we can discern which passages are expressive of, and directed primarily to, which historical religious figures, organizations, or movements, and with what purpose in mind, we may be able to sort out some (though not all) of the apparent contradictions. Of course, Blake was hardly ever describing or addressing only one group at a time. If he were, our task would be much easier! Part of Blake's extraordinary genius was his ability to construct parabolic storylines, to confront each audience simultaneously with the specific, and sometimes very different, messages he wanted each of them to hear (a strategy he may have learned from the writers of the New Testament gospels). These contextual distinctions give us a better chance of identifying what theological arguments Blake was trying to win in any given passage. I propose that, once we view the theological dimensions inside Blake's works in light of the audiences they address outside—appropriately collating the different arguments to their apposite audiences—a coherent pattern emerges in the theological message communicated through those works, which reveals a distinctly evangelical apologetic.

Sorting out the theological issues that specify not only Blake's thought but that of the relevant religious parties shows the extent to which their worldviews were shaped by their conceptualizations of reason. The apotheosis of reason, and the new empiricist epistemologies and scientific modes of inquiry it generated, are well known to scholars of the eighteenth century. The literature of the time shows a staggering confidence in a self-sufficient reason. In The Age of Reaon, Paine says, "The most formidable weapon against errors of every kind is reason. I have never used any other, and I trust I never shall." This confidence was well-justified: it restored religious tolerance and, to a great

extent, real peace to countries that had been torn apart by religious wars for two hundred years. During the same period, however, the limits of reason were laid bare, both philosophically through the Cartesian awareness of the subjective character of our knowledge of the objective world, and socially and politically in the failure of the French Revolution to realize the philosopher' ideals. In his Prelude, William Wordsworth expresses the disillusionment shared by so many:

> ... so I fared,
> Dragging all precepts, judgments, maxims, creeds,
> Like culprits to the bar; calling the mind,
> Suspiciously, to establish in plain day
> Her titles and her honours; now believing,
> Now disbelieving; endlessly perplexed
> With impulse, motive, right and wrong, the ground
> Of obligation, what the rule and whence
> The sanction; till, demanding formal proof
> And seeking it in every thing, I lost
> All feeling of conviction, and, in fine,
> Sick, wearied out with contrarieties,
> Yielded up moral question in despair.

The changing face of Enlightenment reason profoundly affected inherited religious systems. Blake clearly recognized this had become the central theme of the religious drama of his century. The figure of Urizen was the crux of the religious problem for Blake; this was the vital key, not only to whether one's religion was valid, but to whether one achieved salvation, and to what it meant to "be saved." It was here, on the fulcrum of reason, that Blake sorted out the religious ideas of his contemporaries. Distinguishing traditions on this basis—their theological understanding of reason—discloses some of the crucial differences between these groups and helps us identify to whom Blake was talking in various works and what specific arguments he was trying to win.

Given the pivotal place of reason in this context, I have organized my presentation of that religious milieu into three major categories configured according to their dominant attitudes toward reason. Natural religion, deism, and the Established Church represent those who took reason to be definitive of religion; the radical, Moravian, antinomian, and millenarian religious groups form the movements that saw reason destroying true religion; and the evangelicals are those that sought a middle way balancing the demands of faith and reason, accepting reason as redemptive of religion. In each section, I present Blake's images of reason in light of those prevalent in the religious groups under discussion. Then I draw out some of the major theological implications of these images in order to show the impact of those interpretations of reason on Blake's thought and on the religious worldview of each group. Setting Blake in the context of these systems altogether not only clarifies his understanding of reason but elucidates how that understanding shapes the religious thought expressed in his works.

In most of the following chapters, Blake's thought is contextualized within the intellectual structures that shaped his contemporary religious worldviews. One difficulty of this approach is that the structures we find in Blake's intellectual cosmos are not usually those functioning in the religious communities. For instance, all institutionalized Christianity, whether Established Church or dissenting chapel, could be included in his condemnation of clericalism. And both the Roman and Anglican churches fit the Blakean categories of "Mystery" and "State Religion." As we go along, I will clarify how Blake's categories work in relation to each of these groups.

I have chosen this format rather than one that proceeds according to Blake's own categories because I take the criticism of Clark and Worrall seriously: if we treat the historical persons, events, and ideas we use to illuminate Blake as more than just another dimension of the text, we must begin our study by attending to those persons, events, and ideas as we actually find them in historical records. In doing so, I have found that, in spite of the structural dissimilarities between the categories of Blake and those of his contemporaries, distinct Blakean emphases come to the fore in relation to each group. His revisionist interpretation of the millennium takes shape mainly in

relation to the popular radical culture, for example, though it affects his attitude toward all the religious groups. Likewise, his understanding of human perfection comes into focus in conversation with the Methodists, though it profoundly affects his distaste for deism. Again, I do not mean to suggest that Blake was necessarily describing or addressing only one party at a time in any portion of his works. Yet I do think this panoramic method helps us recognize that he very likely had some parties in mind more than others when he voiced certain concerns because those were the "hot-button" issues driving those particular movements. Then, as now, particular parties tended to control the theological agenda in certain debates, compelling other groups to refute them. In today's parlance, it would be like recognizing that someone addressing the issue of "family values" was either talking to or about the Religious Right in America (though that phrase, no doubt, will sound completely innocuous two hundred years from now). So while it is necessary to treat Blake's understanding of some issues in more than one context, nevertheless, different Blakean doctrines take on particular clarity against the background of distinct groups, and only by correctly identifying those contexts are we able to interpret Blake's ideas accurately.

It should be clear from this preliminary description of my method that I will not be able to treat any of Blake's theological arguments exhaustively in this project. However, once we have historicized his ideas in these broader parameters, we can then go back to the works themselves and analyze with more success the specific Blakean categories as they appear in relation to each relevant audience. I attempt a modest beginning in that direction in part V.

THE METHOD IN HIS MADNESS

The jury has always been, and probably always will be out on the matter of Blake's own mental status. Speculations about his possible madness have been part and parcel of reviews of Blake's works, both in his own day and ours, and were de rigueur in most early biographies. Blake himself publicly acknowledged in his 1809 exhibition advertisement that some (like those uppity royal academicians and their ilk) viewed his works as "a Madman's Scrawls" (E 527-28). Anecdotal and archival evidence suggests similar conjectures by contemporaries such as Henry Crabb Robinson, William

Wordsworth, Charles Lamb, Robert Southey, Henry Fuseli, George Cumberland, and William Hayley, among others. John Linnell and Samuel Palmer attributed this aspect of Blake's reputation to his habit of making outrageous statements deliberately to upset the orthodox assumptions of his conversation partners, particularly (in Linnell's words) "the superstitious the crafty or the proud." Alexander Gilchrist tells us that Linnell, Palmer, Edward Calvert, James Ward, Francis Oliver Finch, Cornelius Varley, and Thomas Butts, among others, had no doubts at all about Blake's sanity, despite his obvious eccentricities. But it is not difficult to see how Blake's penchant for upsetting obtuse party guests and freely broadcasting bizarre claims both publicly and in personal correspondences might justifiably have led to doubts about his mental stability—claims, for example, that he was Socrates and God; that he had committed many murders; that he was accosted by the ghost of a flea who sat for a portrait (though in opening its mouth, prevented Blake from finishing the sketch until it had closed it again); that he was not only visited by, but engaged in rather impertinent repartee with the archangel Gabriel; that he heard harps before sunrise; 27 that he wrote by dictation from heavenly messengers; that he frequently enjoyed visitations from the dead, including Cowper who communicated his earnest wish to be truly mad (presumably in some way other than the ones for which he was committed to a mental institution); and many like comments.

Critical scholarship is also a mixed bag. Traditionally, the rhetorical pressure has been on exonerating Blake from the charge of madness, or at least explaining why the charge no longer needs to be considered. S. Foster Damon goes to great lengths to explain all of Blake's oddities as normal phenomena and concludes that "everything Blake painted, wrote, and even said (as far as we have any records) sprang entirely logically from premises that are essentially sane." He insists that "Blake lived an entirely normal, quiet life," and that the question of Blake's madness is itself a "senile" one. Northrop Frye remarks: "A modern writer on Blake is not required to discuss his sanity, for which I am grateful." In Blake Records, G. E. Bentley Jr. limits such questions to a particular period:

> The only period in his life when Blake does not seem to have a firmer grasp than ordinary of the nature and limits of reality is just before and after his 1809

> exhibition. Between 1807 and 1812 he sometimes seems to have thought of the spiritual world as supplanting rather than supplementing the ordinary world of causality. More and more frequently the spirits seem to have been controlling Blake rather than merely advising him.

However, in Stranger from Paradise, Bentley also speculates on the basis of letters by Blake and Hayley between 1800 and 1804 that Blake may have suffered from a mild form of manic-depression.

Max Byrd typifies the traditional opinion that Blake was unquestionably sane and that he used madness as a literary trope for his social and moral critiques, to break through cultural prejudices. Further, Paley, Beer, Joseph Burke, and others have hypothesized that Blake had an eidetic imagination that actually projected images into his field of vision, and that this may account for the vividness of his visionary experiences.

Along with this line of thinking, we must also consider comments by his biographers and passages in Blake's works indicating he knew full well what he was about and that he regarded his visions as imaginative in nature. Examples of this include two descriptions by Gilchrist. First, citing the dangers with which Thomas Paine gambled in 1792, he contrasts Blake's caution: "Spite of unworldliness and visionary faculty, Blake never wanted for prudence and sagacity in ordinary matters." Second, Gilchrist recounts Blake's conversations at the Aders' parties (and other instances) in which "he would candidly confess that [his visionary experiences] were not literal matters of fact; but phenomena seen by his imagination: realities none the less for that, but transacted within the realm of the mind." In his own works, we can turn to many passages in which he describes the imaginative nature of visionary experience, such as his Descriptive Catalogue, or the "Memorable Fancy" in which Isaiah and Ezekiel identify their visions as imaginative—a "fancy" that is itself recorded, of course, by Blake's imagined narrator of The Marriage of Heaven and Hell. We also have numerous glimpses into Blake's life that indicate a ready grasp of reality. For one, his business dealings throughout his career exhibit a solid hold of commercial necessities and, for another, his behavior during the period of his sedition trial shows a man who understands with stunning clarity the consequences of his words and actions. His

letters about this event also describe what others of a balanced mentality would recognize as a healthy dose of anxiety in face of the possible outcomes of that trial. Especially at such a time, Blake could hardly have been indifferent to the fate of such kindred spirits as Richard Brothers and Christopher Smart, who were committed to mental asylums after publicly making outlandish religious claims or displays not so unlike his own. I agree with Byrd's comment that "it is one of the measures of his real sanity (in the ordinary sense) that he responds to abuse with such wry, confident irony." Blake often replied to his critics with a biting wit, quite unlike the humorless harangues of Brothers.

More recently, some critics have reconsidered the possibility that Blake did suffer from some form of mental disorder, though they do not devalue his art on that account. W. J. T. Mitchell urges us "to deepen and particularize our historical sense of madness and Blake's place in it," to question the "safe and sanitized Blake" we have critically constructed, and to confront "the dangerous, difficult figure he really was." Youngquist argues that Blake's works and what we know of his biography "lead to the disquieting conclusion that, in certain respects, Blake's visionary experience falls into a category we today consider at least potentially pathological." While he says we cannot claim Blake was mad based on the evidence we have, his main argument through the book is that Blake "displaced much of his own psychological ordeal onto the drama of his myth," using his art as a therapeutic remedy: "By hammering madness into myth, Blake secures health in the face of illness." Youngquist goes so far as to claim that the "real subject" of The Four Zoas is a study of what is recognized today as schizophrenia and that Blake's work on this poem "nearly drove him mad," though he does not offer convincing evidence for such a claim. David Fuller agrees with Youngquist that madness is "a constant subject of Blake's work" and that his art gives us ample reason to speculate about his mental status, although he is more concerned to show how Blake converts madness into a trope for genuine inspiration that liberates us from oppressive Enlightenment notions of rationality. Robert N. Essick interprets Jerusalem as a possible indicator of "unusual brain chemistry": "Blake may have suffered from a mild form of schizophrenia which he could control on a daily basis by channeling its special

energies and insights into poems like Jerusalem." And while Fred Dortort does not discuss Jerusalem as a representation of madness or Blake's own mental state, I find his reading of that text suggestive in this regard: he identifies three main "perspective frames" portrayed in the poem and argues that each one shows only limited awareness of the other frames, a condition suggestive of dissociative disorders.

Certainly Blake's works reveal an artist of enormous genius, and genius often turns out to be the gift of a mind not entirely settled. Those earlier critics who would vindicate Blake's sanity at all cost certainly sound to my ears like scholars who "protest too much." Still, I have seen no compelling evidence to warrant informed diagnoses about Blake's own mental capacities. What we do have are fascinating works that have a well-established record of revealing rare and astonishing glimpses of the deep tracks of the mind that continue to be recognized by supposedly sane readers, which perhaps renders speculation about Blake's own mental state irrelevant. These are also works that mirror the mental and emotional dynamics of madness for very productive purposes, including theological ones. As Youngquist, Fuller, and others have argued, madness functions as one of the central tropes in many of his works. In Blake's theological worldview, the fall of humanity results from the fracturing of the mind, and our salvation emerges from the mind's restored integration. This trope informs the whole complex of overarching storylines in Blake's myths of creation/fall and redemption. One of the principal actors in that storyline is Urizen. Again, Blake recognized that the critical theological issue of his time had to do with the health or disease of reason. He deliberately challenged the standards of rationality prevalent in his culture, which entailed redefining the criteria of "sanity" and the nature of reason.

We see this challenge posed again and again from different angles in The Marriage of Heaven and Hell, the Urizen books, the epics, The Ghost of Abel, the Illustrations of the Book of Job, and others. These works are designed to catch the theological interest of as many readers as possible. And once we view these works in that panoramic light, I believe we begin to see the method in his madness: we see Blake exposing to his audiences what he perceived as the irrational nature of the beliefs and practices of both theological extremities of his time—deists on one side and fideists on the other—in

order to lure them into recognizing the deeper synthesis of reason and faith that characterized the mediating theology found in Methodism. He exposed that irrationality, in part, by giving voice to those theological systems, drawing out their logical implications in the starkest terms. Blake's works reveal how each polar extreme represents only a fragment of the whole and how, if given dominance, it has the effect of creating its opposite and deepening the dissociation. Thus, these works manifest the individual and collective forms of insanity that result from those systems, "Giving a body to Falshood that it may be cast off for ever" (J 12.13). I will argue that Blake's art functions both prophetically and pastorally to reveal to all parties that both faith and reason yield "empirical" knowledge, but that neither can do so without integrating the other, an integration that reconnects those fragments and prompts us to recognize our common identity in the One Human Form Divine.

In this work, then, I see myself taking up Mitchell's call "to make Blake strange again, which at the present time will not be to make him a modernist. It will be to distance him historically, to see his difference from us, and then to see what his poems are and do." I will show that contextualizing the theological aspects of Blake's works within the wide range of their contemporary religious circumstances reveals unexpected conclusions about "what his poems are and do." <>

Emanuel Swedenborg, Secret Agent on Earth and in Heaven: Jacobites, Jews and Freemasons in Early Modern Sweden by Marsha Keith Schuchard [Series: The Northern World, Brill, ISBN: 9789004183124]

Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772) won fame and infamy as a natural scientist and visionary theosopher, but he was also a master intelligencer, who served as a secret agent for the French king, Louis XV, and the pro-French, pro-Jacobite party of "Hats" in Sweden. This study draws upon unpublished diplomatic and Masonic archives to place his financial and political

actitivities within their national and international contexts. It also reveals the clandestine military and Masonic links between the Swedish Hats and Charles Edward Stuart ("Bonnie Prince Charlie"), providing new evidence for the prince's role as hidden Grand Master of the Order of the Temple. Swedenborg's usage of Kabbalistic meditative and interpretative techniques and his association with Hermetic and Rosicrucian adepts reveal the extensive esoteric networks that underlay the exoteric politics of the supposedly "enlightened" eighteenth century, especially in the troubled "Northern World" of Sweden and Scotland.

CONTENTS

ESOTERIC INTELLIGENCE AND EXOTERIC POLITICS

In February 2007, as I endured the hour-long subway ride to the British National Archives at Kew, where I spent many months reading diplomatic and espionage reports

on eighteenth-century Sweden, I was startled by the headline of a front-page article in The Guardian: "The brain scan that can read people's intentions."1 Ian Sample, the science correspondent, reported on new computer imaging techniques that allow scientists "to probe people's minds and eavesdrop on their thoughts," by identifying patterns in the brain that reveal "what a person planned to do in the near future." Though many neuroscientists urge caution "and say we can't talk about reading individual minds," they acknowledge that they will soon be able to tell whether someone is making up a story or intending to commit a crime or act of terror. The technology is already leading to thought-controlled artificial limbs, wheelchairs, and computer writing. At Kew, as I opened the great leather-bound volumes of spy reports, I was overwhelmed with a sense of dejá vu, for such cerebral feats of mind-reading and thought-transfer were the stock-in-trade of Emanuel Swedenborg, the mysterious scientist-seer, who was also a master intelligencer.

Like the neuroscientists, I was for a long time cautious about what I was learning in diplomatic and Masonic archives, for Swedenborg was renowned and revered as a brilliant scientist, visionary theosopher, benign mystic, and inspiration for the founders of the New Jerusalem Church. For some conservative New Churchmen, the idea of Swedenborg's undertaking a decades-long career as a secret intelligence agent contradicted their often hagiographical version of his biography, and they rejected any secular-political interpretations of his visions. However, as more and more evidence emerged about his very active but very secret political and diplomatic activities, the need to produce a historically-based, internationally-contextualized biography became a scholarly desiredatum.

Certainly, as a literary historian, I had never intended to write such a book, for my interest in Swedenborg had been provoked by his influence on authors such as William Blake, William Butler Yeats, and James Joyce. In the process of trying to learn where Swedenborg gained access to themes of Jewish Kabbalism, I stumbled upon his participation in Masonic and Rosicrucian networks, in which Kabbalistic techniques of meditation on the Hebrew scriptures were used to achieve states of clairvoyance, ecstatic vision, and spirit-communication. And, finally, I learned that these esoteric

sciences played a key role in much exoteric diplomacy, in which an extensive "mystical underground" existed beneath the surface of the "enlightened" eighteenth century. Within this diplomatic underground, nationalistic agendas were implemented within international contexts, which was especially true for Sweden, a small kingdom which was buffeted by the power plays of much larger nations, who embroiled Sweden in international crises.

Given the deliberate secrecy shrouding the activities of intelligence agents, who must remain almost invisible, the researcher must work with the fragments of evidence which survive in unexpected as well as official sources. Moreover, the international scope of Sweden's diplomatic outreach and of Swedenborg's travels means the the investigation must cross national borders and delve into local contexts that seem distant from and even alien to his homeland. Dr. Karl de Leeuw, a Dutch historian of eighteenth-century espionage and cryptography, observes that this kind of research is "highly complicated by the scarcity of material," for in Dutch archives one looks in vain for "any clues on the activity of a Black Chamber during this period." But the secret chamber definitely existed, and the paucity of surviving documents makes clear

> how difficult the treatment of a subject like this can become if any references in other sources are lacking. It may put the historian of espionage in the eighteenth century in a position similar to the historian of antiquity who, most of the time, is left with only bits and pieces; too much to ignore, but too little to give an account that is fully satisfying for one's curiosity.

To overcome such limits, the biographer must reconstruct in minute detail the historical context of the secret agent's month-by-month activities.

Despite the enormous volume of Swedenborg's writing, both published and unpublished, and the questions raised by his contemporaries about the "real" purpose of his many journeys and international financial transactions, a consensus emerged among his later biographers that he lost interest in political and scientific affairs after his great "revelatory" visions in 1744–1745. Moreover, believers in the purely divine origin of his dreams, visions, and spirit-communications (including those which

reported detailed political information) made no attempt to interpret them within their real-world political and diplomatic context. Fortunately, the important examination of his financial records and political collaborators, undertaken by F.G. Lindh in 1927–1929, and supplemented by Lars Bergquist in 1999, opened the doors to a further chronological investigation of his clandestine intelligence activities.3 Their relatively brief but provocative arguments that Swedenborg was personally and secretly subsidized by Louis XV to serve the political and military policies of the pro-French party of "Hats" in Sweden made possible my more extensive examination of his decades-long career as a secret agent. Moreover, I learned that Swedenborg's service to the Hats' pro-French agenda included service to the pro-Jacobite agenda, which further complicated his clandestine activities.

In recent years, similar questions about the esoteric and exoteric motives of various philosophical and scientific figures have piqued the interest of historians. For example, the British philosopher A.C. Grayling has stirred up controversy with his argument that the association of René Descartes with the Rosicrucians was not motivated by sympathy for the mysterious fraternity. Instead, he suggests, Descartes served his fellow Jesuits as a spy on the Rosicrucians, which led him to enroll in a Protestant army and university as a cover for intelligence gathering. Explaining that "my principal aim is to recount what is known of Descartes' life, and to situate his life in its tumultuous times," he notes that this kind of approach has been neglected by previous biographers, "with the result that they miss what is possibly a significant aspect of this story." The notion that Descartes was a spy "is by no means far-fetched and, if correct, goes a long way to explain some of the many curiosities and inexplicabilities of Descartes's life and doings." After Descartes's death in Stockholm in 1650, questions about the relation of his alleged Rosicrucianism to his "modernizing" scientific methods reverberated in Sweden during Swedenborg's student days.

Closer to Swedenborg's adult experience, his cousin-by-marriage— the great botanist Carl Linnaeus—combined modern experimental methods with explorations of mystical and esoteric subjects. On the basis of Linnaeus's statement that it is necessary to keep silent about his inquiries into "the most secret mysteries of nature" and the

large number of occult and magical books in his library, A.J. Cain, the eminent historian of science, has even raised the question, "Was Linnaeus a Rosicrucian?" Like Swedenborg, Linnaeus drew upon the theories of sexual polarities and equilibriums in the Hermetic and Kabbalistic traditions to develop his philosophy of the natural and supernatural worlds. Cain concludes that "It would not surprise me to learn that there was in the Swedish (and other) universities an occult underground, in which Linnaeus was a participant." Rather than an exponent of Aufklärung, Linnaeus "thought himself to be one of the great illuminati," who penetrates "the arcana of Nature." The very strange manuscript, Nemesis Divina, that Linnaeus began writing in 1740 provokes further questions about his supposedly "enlightened" views of man and nature.6 Wolf Lepenies observes that the dedication which Linnaeus wrote to his son, "resembles the introduction of a novice to a secret cult."

Neither Linnaeus nor Swedenborg sensed any contradiction between their early modern world-view and their modern scientific practices. While Swedenborg struggled to find divine "correspondences" in the minute articulations of the natural world, Linnaeus sought "signatures" of spiritual significance in fauna and flora. Both men also searched for spiritual "signatures" in the daily lives and political affairs of their countrymen. As Linnaeus traced the workings of divine nemesis throughout human history, he explored portents, dreams, hauntings, ghosts, spell-binding, and clairvoyance. In the process, he revealed a peculiarly spiritualistic view of Swedish political history. Like Swedenborg, he was consulted by politicians and diplomats about the meaning of these "supernatural" phenomena. Swedenborg went even further, for he believed that the waves and tremulations emitted by metals and minerals were also emitted by the human brain and body, and these emanations could be interpreted by the alert and sensitive (or "illuminated") observer. Thus, he assured his political allies and readers that he possessed the physiognomic and telepathic skills to read minds. Moreover, he utilized these skills to decipher the secret intentions and hidden motives of political and diplomatic opponents.

In these claims, Swedenborg was not unique, for the employment of intelligencers gifted with psychic skills was considered a necessity by nearly every eighteenth-century

ruler, including sceptics like Frederick II of Prussia. The practice of up-dated versions of the "science" of physiognomy, which enable the observer to analyze facial expressions and body postures to reveal concealed thoughts, functioned much like the computerized brain scans and facial-body profiling used today by CIA, MI5, and airport security officials. The analyses and predictions found in the voluminous eighteenth-century diplomatic and spy reports function much like the prognostications of today's "think tanks."

Many of Swedenborg's accounts of dream-visions and spirit-communications were not published until the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, when the inclusion of detailed political and diplomatic information provoked controversies about the sincerity and authenticity of his supernatural revelations. However, he certainly did not view his clandestine, secular work as contradicting his religious principles. In fact, he viewed it as his patriotic and moral duty. In this sense, he acted much like John le Carré, the twentieth-century British secret service agent, who became the best-selling author of erudite espionage novels. In a late-life interview, Le Carré affirmed that patriotic intelligence work had a moral, almost spiritual appeal to him. He explained that becoming a secret agent suited his sense of vocation: "It was if the whole of life prepared me for this moment. It was like entering the priesthood; it was the call . . . I really believed that I had found a cause I could serve."

Swedenborg similarly connected the roles of priest (Sacerdoti) and diplomatist (politico), and he viewed his secret intelligence work for the French king as a spiritual calling, for Louis XV was "God's instrument."

The following study of the role of esoteric intelligence in exoteric politics will raise many questions about our preconceptions of the rationalist, scientific mentality of the "enlightened" eighteenth century. In tracing Swedenborg's long career, we come upon the persistence of early modern–even pre-modern—religious and philosophical beliefs, which fueled the imaginations of major thinkers as well as the machinations of major political players.

***

EMANUEL SWEDENBORG AND "THE TROUBLES OF THE NORTH": AN HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

This revisionist historical study of Emanuel Swedenborg (1688–1772), the famous Swedish scientist and visionary, places him in the international political and diplomatic context that developed in the wake of the Williamite "Glorious Revolution" and Hanoverian Succession in Britain, which had an unusually intense and long-lasting impact on Sweden. In 1714, when the Elector of Hanover became King George I of Britain, he set his new kingdom on a collision course with Sweden, for he was determined to occupy the Swedish possessions of Verden and Bremen, which would give Hanover an outlet to the North Sea. From his prison camp in Turkey, the Swedish warrior king, Charles XII, began to shift his foreign policy away from Hanoverian England and to support a Franco-Jacobite diplomatic and military agenda. Charles's most trusted diplomats undertook serious negotiations with the Jacobites, supporters of James III, the exiled Stuart claimant to the British throne. After Charles's escape from Turkey, he was supported by Swedenborg's family and political allies, who undertook various pro-Jacobite projects. However, the participation of Emanuel Swedenborg in these events virtually disappeared from history, as later "Whig-Protestant historiography" steadily minimized and even suppressed the role of Lutheran Sweden in the Stuarts' campaign—a role that continued throughout Swedenborg's lifetime.

Though much has been written about Swedenborg's scientific and theological beliefs, his biographers and critics have tended to shy away from the vague but persistent claims that he participated in secret political, diplomatic, and Masonic affairs. The first small opening into this clandestine underworld was provided by F.G. Lindh, a Swedish member of the Swedenborgian New Church, in a series of articles published in Nya Kyrkans Tidning (1927–1929). After making an extensive and scrupulous examination of Swedenborg's banking and financial records, Lindh came to the conclusion that he served as a secret intelligence and financial agent for the pro-French party of Swedish "Hats" and, more surprisingly, for the French king, Louis XV, who personally funded the anonymous publication of his famous work, Arcana Caelestia (London, 1749–1756). However, Lindh's articles, published in Swedish in an obscure church journal, were

virtually unknown to scholars and were not cited by any biographers of Swedenborg until 1999.

Lindh's revelations about Swedenborg's political and financial collaborators made possible my further examination into the strong Franco-Scottish influence on Swedish politics, for the Carolinian, Holstein, and later Hat parties were strong supporters of the Stuart cause. The links between these political agendas intensified after the death of Charles XII in 1718 in Norway, from where he had planned to launch a Swedish-Jacobite invasion of Scotland. Swedenborg and his political allies believed that the king was murdered by a Hanoverian agent (as Samuel Johnson wrote, by "a dubious hand"). The subsequent disputed succession, which made Prince Frederick of Hesse the king of Sweden, despite the more popular claim of Duke Charles Frederick of Holstein, led to a thirty-year struggle by the Holstein partisans, who played the role of Jacobites in Swedish political affairs. Swedenborg and his family were strong supporters of the Holstein faction and of its later embodiment in the pro-French "Hat" political party (versus the pro-Hanoverian "Cap" party).

Over the next decades, foreign supporters of rival political parties in Sweden would deal with "The Troubles of the North," in which they aimed at rival versions of "The Tranquility of the North." These terms of diplomatic cant, which were repeated by all politicians dealing with Sweden, were given opposite definitions by the competing nations. To the French and Jacobites, the "Tranquility of the North" was to be achieved by strengthening initially the Hat party and ultimately the Swedish monarchy, so that the formerly powerful kingdom could regain its role as a major player in international affairs. To the Hanoverians and Russians, the "Tranquility" would be achieved by preserving and even weakening Sweden's divided government and demoralized military, so that she could never again play the disruptive role of her former warrior kings, Gustavus Adolphus and Charles XII. Foreign bribes and secret subsidies fed the extensive corruption of the misleadingly named Swedish "Age of Freedom." With considerable courage, finesse, and discretion, Swedenborg negotiated his way through these complex and often dangerous political byways.

Underlying “The Troubles of the North” were the competitive systems of Freemasonry, in which Hanoverians and Jacobites utilized their clandestine networks to carry out their international political agendas. According to conventional English Masonic history, “authentic” or “modern” Freemasonry began in 1717 when four London lodges formed the supposedly apolitical Grand Lodge of England.5 What has been missing from that official history is the role that Sweden played in the Tory-Stuart Masonic networks that contributed to the Swedish-Jacobite plot of 1715–16. With the exposure and suppression of that plot in January 1717, England’s Whig ministry worried about the Jacobite-Tory influence within Freemasonry; thus, the loyalist Grand Lodge was organized in June as a Hanoverian-Whig countermove. According to the Enlightenment historian Margaret Jacob, “In Hanoverian England, Whiggery provided the belief and values, while Freemasonry provided one temple wherein some its most devoted followers worshipped the God of Newtonian science.” However, this was not the form of Freemasonry that attracted Swedenborg and his Swedish and European colleagues. Instead, they joined Franco-Scottish (Écossais) lodges developed by exiled supporters of the Stuarts, which drew upon older traditions of Kabbalistic and Rosicrucian symbolism, while they utilized secret international networks to fraternally bind their “dispersed brethren,” ensure security, and maintain mystical morale.

In a case where “the victors wrote the history,” for over two centuries there was little scholarly work on Jacobite Freemasonry (with some English Masonic historians claiming that it never existed). The conventional wisdom that Jacobitism was predominantly a Catholic cause led to the omission and even suppression of Protestant Sweden’s important support of Stuart claims and contribution to Écossais Masonry. Fortunately, over the past two decades, an important revisionist movement has emerged in Jacobite studies. Moving beyond the Anglo-centrism of much earlier scholarship, “Diaspora scholarship” has become “one of the most exciting new fields which are opening up the history of Jacobitism.” A French Masonic historian points to recently discovered, eighteenth-century Scandinavian documents that reveal the “intense Masonic activity by diplomats in the Baltic areas,” and he urges scholars to pay much more attention to the diplomatic and military context. This international

approach is especially relevant to Sweden, a small nation caught up in a complex web of alliances with France, Poland, Spain, Turkey, and, intermittently, Russia and Prussia. Complicating these alliances were Sweden's relations with the global-ized Jacobite networks and various heterodox Jews and Moslems. However, despite the promising growth of "Diaspora scholarship," historians could still lament in 2010 that the role of Jacobites in Sweden "has barely been touched" and that the Swedish archives "are virtually unexplored territory." This study aims to fill those gaps.

The limits of Whig historiography were compounded by the modernist bias of many academics, who viewed the eighteenth century as predominantly one of Aufklärung, the steady march of rational enlightenment. The continuing importance of Renaissance ideas of spiritually-infused nature, of correspondences between macrocosm and microcosm, of esoteric and exoteric sciences, of belief in angels and spirits, was often ignored or marginalized when dealing with the complex intellectual and political worlds of early modern thinkers. Moreover, the role that secret societies, such as the Rosicrucians and Freemasons, played in preserving these traditional occult and spiritual beliefs was often minimized or even mocked. That they retained political potency throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was generally ignored.

Thus, the early biographers of Swedenborg were stymied in their efforts to explain the French tradition that he was an important influence on the development of esoteric or "Illuminist" Freemasonry. In 1867 his British biographer William White noted that "Swedenborg haunts French literature as a founder or associate of secret societies, but when we require the evidence we get nothing but rumour." In 1869 L.P. Regnell, a Swedish Freemason and member of the Swedenborgian New Church, responded with an account of Swedenborg's initiation in a London lodge during his visit there in 1710–13 and his subsequent Masonic career. In 1870 Samuel Beswick, an Anglo-American Swedenborgian, elaborated on Regnell's account in The Swedenborg Rite and the Great Masonic Leaders of the Eighteenth Century.13 In 1873–74 a French journal, Le Monde Maçonnique, published the proceedings of the Philalèthes convention, held in Paris in 1784–87, in which the international participants reported on their researches into Masonic history. Frère Le Normand affirmed that "Schwedenborg en Suède était Me ..."

(using the Masonic identification symbol of three dots forming a triangle). Frère Maubach added that the best way to make progress in "la vraie Science maçonnique" is to study "les oeuvres de Schwedenborg," for they reveal the true cult and divine mysteries of the first order, which present the correspondences that greatly further the occult sciences. Significantly, none of the Philalèthes attendees or correspondents from Sweden, France, or Britain contradicted these claims.

Nevertheless, in 1875 the New Church historian, Rudolph Tafel, reversed his earlier acceptance of Regnells' report and rejected Swedenborg's Masonic affiliation, because he heard from the Grand Lodge of England that "the accounts of the first part of the last century were destroyed." Tafel was further informed that Freemasonry was not introduced into Sweden until 1736. Despite the inaccuracy of these reports, Tafel's rejection was widely accepted, and Swedenborg's Masonic affiliation disappeared from biographical and critical studies of his career. For more than a century, the case did not improve, due to the restrictive secrecy maintained by Swedish and Eastern European Masonic libraries. However, with the recent, gradual opening up of Masonic archives in Sweden, Finland, Russia, and Eastern Europe, new evidence is emerging that forces a revision of the official, Whig version of Masonic history promulgated by the Grand Lodge of England. In the process, a new perspective on Swedenborg's Jacobite-Masonic diplomatic activities is emerging from the historical shadows.

For example, the historical links between Scottish and Swedish Freemasons can be traced back to 1652, when Edouart Tessin was initiated in an Edinburgh lodge, for he can now be identified as a Swedish military architect from Swedish Pomerania. He and his son were subsequently employed by Charles II on the construction of the great stone mole in Tangier. In 1670 his Swedish kinsman Nicodemus Tessin showed his architectural drawings to Sir Christopher Wren and Charles II, who invited him to Stuart service. Though Nicodemus did not accept the invitation, he became a strong supporter of Stuart dynastic claims.18 While in London, he was possibly initiated in a "craft" or "operative" lodge, for his son Carl Gustaf Tessin noted that his father was always proud to call himself a "master mason." Swedenborg was a confidential friend of the Tessin family, and in the early 1700s he closely followed Nicodemus's career as royal

architect to Charles XII. Thus, the reported London initiation of Swedenborg ca. 1710–13, when he was studying the mathematical and technological skills involved in operative and military masonry, is quite plausible.

Following earlier Scottish traditions, when royalist Freemasons supported the restoration of Charles II in 1660, the exiled Jacobites took abroad with them their strategy of organizing military field lodges. In the late eighteenth century, Elis Schröderheim, a Swedish initiate and confidante of the Masonic king Gustav III, recorded his belief that political and military Freemasonry was utilized by the organizers of the Swedish-Jacobite plots of 1715–18. His argument was reinforced by the modern historian Claude Nordmann, who argued that Swedish members of Franco-Scottish regiments were initiated in military field lodges ca. 1715–18. After the death of Charles XII in November 1718 and the victory of the anti-Jacobite Hessian party, there is no surviving evidence of Masonic activity in Sweden during the 1720s. However, in 1729–31 several Swedish noblemen were initiated into Écossais lodges in Paris, and in 1735 Carl Gustaf Tessin (son of Nicodemus) became leader of the French- and Jacobite-affiliated Masons in Sweden. Over the next decades, Swedenborg would be closely associated with the Masons initiated in Paris, and his Swedish political mentors and employers were all high-ranking members of the fraternity. The Swedish Masonic historian Andreas Önnerfors has recently demonstrated that in eighteenth-century Sweden, Freemasonry developed from Jacobite support into an instrument of state.

Swedenborg's association with Scottish-style Freemasonry (which as early as 1638 declared its links with a Stuart king, Rosicrucianism, and second-sight) explains much about his own study and practice of psychic techniques of vision-inducement and intelligence gathering.22 As a mining engineer and student of anatomy, his scientific study of the emanations or waves produced by minerals and metals and the magnetic rays or tremulations produced by the brain and body led him to believe that he could read minds, through mental telepathy, clairvoyance, and physiognomical analysis of facial expressions and body postures. These skills were considered legitimate, even "modern," tools of espionage by his political allies.

From his erudite brother-in-law and intellectual mentor, Eric Benzelius (the Younger), Swedenborg also gained unusual access to heterodox Jewish mystical lore, for Benzelius worked closely with a converted Jew, Rabbi Johann Kemper, a former disciple of the seventeenth-century "false messiah," Sabbatai Zevi, on Christian-Kabbalistic interpretations of the scriptures. From his early readings about Jewish esoteric traditions, Swedenborg became familiar with the Kabbalistic meditation techniques which produce trance states, spirit communication, and clairvoyance—techniques which he later utilized for political analysis and predictions. His further study of Kabbalistic methods of Hebrew letter-number transpositions and allegorical writing proved valuable to the code-making and deciphering of his diplomatic confidantes.

As a post-graduate student in England in 1710–13, Swedenborg was recruited to intelligence work by Count Carl Gyllenborg, the Swedish ambassador in London, who was a close friend of Jonathan Swift, a great admirer of the ambassador and Charles XII. Gyllenborg sent Swedenborg to The Hague, where he assisted the Swedish diplomats during the negotiations leading to the Treaty of Utrecht. They in turn sent him to Paris, Hamburg, Brunswick, Rostock, Griefswalde, and Stralsund, where he gathered intelligence, invented various military devices, and wrote about his developing psychic skills. Swedenborg's father recommended Emanuel to Charles XII's service because of his knowledge of Hebrew, for he knew that a party of Turkish Jews planned to accompany the king when he returned to Sweden. From 1715 to 1718, Swedenborg was employed by Charles XII as a military engineer and examiner of the Swedish artisan guilds, including the operative masonic guilds.

From Eric Benzelius's unpublished papers much new and surprising evidence emerges about the progressive religious initiatives undertaken by Charles XII, who was generally portrayed in English-Hanoverian propaganda as an intolerant tyrant, who tried to reduce his subjects to slavery. Benzelius and Swedenborg were privately informed about the king's intention to declare "liberty of conscience" in all Swedish ter-ritories—a policy which replicated the promise made by the Catholic Pretenders, James II and James III, to their prospective British subjects. However, Charles's death in 1718 not only aborted his plan to restore James III but also Benzelius's effort to open Sweden to

Jewish scholars and traders. The king's declaration of toleration was suppressed and is virtually unknown in Sweden today. Over the next decades, the efforts of Swedish reformers to bring Jewish financial and intellectual expertise to the kingdom would remain "a struggle between God and Mammon," and it was a struggle in which Swedenborg participated.

Drawing on documents in Swedish, British, French, and Dutch diplomatic and Masonic archives, as well as the unpublished Stuart Papers, this study provides the previously unknown diplomatic and Masonic context for Swedenborg's political activities, foreign travels, scientific theories, and theosophical writings. Throughout his long and busy life, Swedenborg maintained a negative attitude towards the Hanoverian regimes in England and believed that he had sympathetic supporters in Scotland. He was closely connected with the Swedish East India Company, which was founded and dominated by Scots and Jacobites. Surprisingly, his many biographers have long maintained that he was an Anglophile and even placed him in the wrong political party (the pro-English, pro-Russian "Caps"). Not until the Swedish diplomat Lars Bergquist published Swedenborgs Hemlighet (Swedenborg's Secret) in 1999 was this fundamental error corrected. In an important chapter, "Money from Paris and 'a good king,' " Bergquist reinforced Lindh's argument that Swedenborg's secret patron was Louis XV, whom Swedenborg revered as "God's instrument."26 To serve Louis, "le Bien Aimé," was to serve God's plan of governance for earthly affairs, which corresponded to heavenly affairs.

Though Bergquist provided some new archival evidence for Swedenborg's French subsidy and diplomatic connections in the 1750s, he was mainly interested in Swedenborg's philosophical and religious beliefs, and he did not provide a detailed, chronological account of his decades-long intelligence activities. Thus, I have used new archival sources to document Swedenborg's personal relations with the diplomatic agents of Louis XV's Secret du Roi, the king's private diplomatic and espionage network that often implemented policies opposite to those of his public ministers. The Secret was especially concerned with Swedish, Polish, and Russian affairs, and Swedenborg provided intelligence, gleaned from the natural and supernatural worlds, on these

troubled kingdoms. Given his claims about the spiritual sources of his political "revelations," I have related his writings on psychic techniques, dream interpretation, methods of dissimulation, Kabbalistic meditation, and Hebrew numerical-linquistic coding to his diplomatic and espionage role. In the process, this study provides a new perspective on the extensive esoteric networks that functioned underneath the exoteric politics of the "enlightened" eighteenth-century. It will become clear that in Sweden, the mystical and royalist beliefs of the Renaissance and early modern Europe were maintained well into the so-called modern era. Moreover, the connections between Scottish and Swedish history, which emerged so strongly in the seventeenth century, are shown to survive, often at great peril to both nations, throughout the next century.

Some examples of the role that Swedenborg played in these international developments will demonstrate this new perspective. In 1715 in Greifswald he published a poem, Camena Borea, which expressed in Rosicrucian allegory his recent work as an intelligence agent at the court of Louis XIV; in 1721 in Holland he collaborated with the financiers of the Jacobite pirates of Madagascar; in 1734 in Eastern Europe he gathered intelligence on Stanislaus Leszczynski's campaign for the Polish throne; in 1736–37 in Paris he collaborated with the Swedish officers and Jacobite Masonic bankers who supported Stanislaus; in 1738– 39 in Italy he participated in a Franco-Jacobite plot to gain Spanish funding for a contingent of Swedish soldiers to invade Scotland, and he made a previously unknown journey to Spain; in 1740 in London, in another previously unknown journey, he contacted J.T. Desaguliers, a prominent but disaffected Whig Mason; in 1744 at The Hague he recorded his initiation into the Jacobite-Masonic high degrees and his mission to bring "a Trojan horse" into England; in 1744 in London he recorded his visions of figures connected to Charles Edward Stuart's planned military campaign; in 1745 in London he wrote a messianic treatise which predicted the Stuart prince's restoration of the Temple in the North; in 1759 in London he helped his confidante A.J. von Höpken, the Swedish prime minister, to evaluate Choiseul's project for a Franco-Jacobite-Swedish invasion of Britain; in 1761 he intimidated Madame de Marteville, a British-subsidized Dutch diplomatic spy, and

Queen Louisa Ulrika, sister of Frederick the Great, with his spirit-derived knowledge of their secret financial intrigues and correspondence with England and Prussia; in 1771 in London he similarly frightened into silence Christopher Springer, a British-employed Swedish spy, to prevent him from interfering with King Gustav III's planned royalist revolution in Sweden.

While Swedenborg's intelligence activities occurred "under the radar," he also published his theosophical beliefs in eroticized spirituality and visionary meditation, which won him both fame and infamy. In an earlier book, Why Mrs. Blake Cried: William Blake and the Sexual Basis of Spiritual Vision (2006), I have discussed those beliefs and their influence on various artists, philosophers, and occultists. In this new book, I place his esoteric studies and psycho-sexual experiences within the "real world" context of politics and diplomacy. For example, during Swedenborg's last three years, he contributed to the efforts of a radical Rosicrucian in Hamburg and Kabbalistic Jews in Amsterdam and London to develop a new syncretic religion, which would merge Christian, Jewish, and Muslim mystical themes. This rather bizarre and secretive project had significant political ramifications in Sweden, Denmark, and Europe.

In the decade after Swedenborg's death in London in 1772, his Masonic patron Gustav III declared "liberty of conscience" in Sweden, opening the kingdom to Catholics and Jews. Like Charles XII, Gustav believed that he was carrying on a Stuart tradition of religious toleration. Recently published documents reveal that the king and his brothers performed Kabbalistic-Swedenborgian rituals in a secret Masonic "Sanctuary," modelled on the Temple of Jerusalem, in the royal palace. They also introduced the Masonic degree of "Stuart Brother," to be given to their most loyal supporters. In 1783, during a visit to the elderly Charles Edward Stuart in Italy, Gustav was named the Pretender's successor as Grand Master of the Masonic Order of the Temple—an order that Swedenborg had envisioned in London in 1745. When Charles Edward died in 1788, a century after Swedenborg's birth, Gustav assumed the Grand Mastership, and the Temple was indeed restored in the North. Determined to use Freemasonry as an instrument of state, Gustav expanded the mystical Swedish Rite into the enemy territories of Russia and Prussia, forming in effect an esoteric-political "fifth column."

While there is substantial contextual and financial evidence for Swedenborg's secret political role, there is still a problem of missing and destroyed letters and manuscripts. Swedenborg's heirs and executors took it upon themselves to get rid of any material that would hurt his and his family's "respectable" image. Crucial pages were torn out of his journals and manuscripts and were subsequently destroyed. He himself suppressed or left behind in foreign cities various writings and records, while his political mentor Benzelius burned his own "dangerous" political papers just before his death in 1743. These lacunae will be duly noted throughout this study, especially when there is definite evidence that the documents once existed.

To portray Swedenborg as a secret agent on earth and in heaven is not to diminish his stature as a talented scientist, religious reformer, and visionary theosophist. At great risk to himself, he chose to serve his embattled country as a courageous patriot, willing to answer the call of more worldly politicians when Sweden's welfare and very existence were threatened by powerful enemies. His unusually long and active career (his final feat of "spiritual espionage" was performed at age eighty-three) and his many foreign journeys (to England, Holland, Denmark, Germany, Bohemia, France, Italy, and Spain) necessitate a lengthy study. Questions about the reality of his visions and accusations about his political motivations would provoke the curiosity of contemporaries such as Catherine the Great, Immanuel Kant, Johann Caspar Lavater, Friedrich Christoph Oetinger, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, William Law, John Wesley, and William Blake.

By merging for the first time the multiple layers of Swedenborg's multi-faceted career into a detailed, chronological narrative, this biographical-historical study provides new insights into one of the most fascinating and troubling figures of the eighteenth century—and into the complex and troubled history of the Swedish and Scottish "Northern World." <>

Restoring the Temple of Vision: Cabalistic Freemasonry and Stuart Culture by Marsha Keith Schuchard [Series: Brill's Studies in Intellectual History, Brill, ISBN: 9789004124899]

This book uncovers the early Jewish, Scottish, and Stuart sources of "ancient" Cabalistic Freemasonry that flourished in Écossais lodges in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Drawing on architectural, technological, political, and religious documents, it provides real-world, historical grounding for the flights of visionary Temple building described in the rituals and symbolism of "high-degree" Masonry. The roots of mystical male bonding, accomplished through progressive initiation, are found in Stuart notions of intellectual and spiritual amicitia.

Despite the expulsion of the Stuart dynasty in 1688 and the establishment of a rival "modern" system of Hanoverian-Whig Masonry in 1717, the influence of "ancient" Scottish-Stuart Masonry on Solomonic architecture, Hermetic masques, and Rosicrucian science was preserved in lodges maintained by Jacobite partisans and exiles in Britain, Europe, and the New World.

CONTENTS

In a London bookstore in January 1975, I chatted with Dame Frances Yates about the relevance of her pioneering work, The Rosicrucian Enlightenment (1972), to my own research on eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Freemasonry. She was amused by my tale of undertaking a Ph.D. thesis in literary history to investigate two provocative questions: why the Irish poet William Butler Yeats argued that William Blake was a Cabalist, Rosicrucian, and Swedenborgian; why the Irish novelist James Joyce portrayed his Everyman hero, Leopold Bloom, as a Jewish Freemason in Catholic Dublin. With a wry smile, she asked if I was prepared for this quest to take a very long time. From her own experience in entering the quicksand of Rosicrucian research, she knew that even deeper quagmires awaited the explorer of "occultist" Masonic history.

Though I completed my thesis, Freemasonry, Secret Societies, and the Continuity of the Occult Traditions in British Literature (University of Texas at Austin, June 1975), I knew that I had only begun a process of deciphering Masonic codes and unraveling Masonic

politics, which emerged in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries from much older sources. The bizarre figure of MacGregor Mathers, who instructed Yeats in Cabala and Rosicrucianism, epitomized the problem, for he posed as the descendant of aristocratic Jacobite rebels who fled Scotland for France, where they preserved the secret traditions of mystical-military "Celtic" Freemasonry from the eighteenth- into the twentieth-century. In the available books in English on Masonic history, such claims were routinely dismissed as balderdash and rubbish. However, in a steadily increasing number of European publications—from France, Germany, Russia, Sweden, Poland, Italy, and Spain—the "eccentric" version of history espoused by Mathers seemed to gain increasing plausibility.

While concentrating on the infusion of Jewish Cabalism into certain systems of eighteenth-century Freemasonry—especially those that influenced Blake and his Swedenborgian associates—I sought enlightenment from the late Gershom Scholem, who corresponded with me about the possibilities and pitfalls of our mutual interest in the transmission of Jewish visionary traditions into Rosicrucian rites of Masonry. That the transmission operated outside of orthodox Judaism and "regular" Freemasonry meant that we both had to explore the clandestine underground of heterodox Sabbatian Cabalists and "irrregular" occultist Masons and to come up against the stonewall of deliberately suppressed material.

Though the library of the Grand Lodge of London had long been closed to outside scholars, I was fortunate that the late Ellic Howe gained permission for Scholem and myself to use their rich archives. Unfortunately, Scholem became ill and was unable to travel to London, but I have continued to work there, with the encouragement of the librarians John Hamill, John Ashby, and Rebecca Coombes. In the Grand Lodge of Scotland library, Robert Cooper assisted me with the valuable French materials in the Morison collection. In the Grand Lodge of Ireland library, Barry Lyons gave me access to their important holdings. I also worked in the Grand Lodge of Holland library, which possesses rare Sabbatian and Rosicrucian materials retrieved from Nazi confiscations and which welcomes non-Masonic scholars.

Determined to prove or disprove the validity of Yeats's claims about Blake and his alleged theosophical sources the Swedish scientist-mystic Swedenborg and the Jewish Cabalist Dr. Falk—I undertook an unexpectedly difficult but rewarding investigation into Swedish political, scientific, and Masonic history which eventually provided a significant key to the Jacobite-Rosicrucian tradition affirmed by Mathers. As a scholar with Presbyterian roots and Protestant-Whig education, I had been misled by the Anglo-centrism and anti-Stuart biases of that historical perspective to ignore or minimize the Scottish,

Irish, and Catholic traditions of Freemasonry, which according to the conventional academic wisdom of the time was an English institution which originated in 1717 and served Newtonian, Whig causes. However, this "modern" Hanoverian system was not the kind of Freemasonry that fascinated Swedenborg, Blake, Mathers, and Yeats; rather, it was the "ancient" Stuart system that was driven underground in Britain, while it flourished in Europe and the New World.

Guided by the publications of the late Franco-Swedish historian Claude Nordmann, I learned about the decades-long, clandestine support by the "Hat" political party in Sweden (the party of Swedenborg and his family) for Stuart restoration schemes, which were often organized in the Franco-Scottish (Ecossais) lodges established all over Scandinavia and the Continent by Jacobite exiles. Though Swedish Masonic libraries are still closed to outsiders, my examination of the unpublished Stuart Papers at Windsor Castle reinforced Nordmann's thesis about Swedish-Ecossais Masonic involvement in complex, international diplomacy, and espionage throughout the eighteenth century. This multi-national Jacobite perspective forced me to re-examine Frances Yates's Anglo-centric theories on the origins of the seventeenth-century Rosicrucian Enlightenment and to newly examine Scottish, Irish, and Catholic contributions to the Rosicrucian-Masonic movement.

Like myself, who will always be grateful for Yates's fructifying scholarship, David Stevenson used her work as a launching point for his own research into the early Scottish lodges. In The Origins of Freemasonry: Scotland's Century, 1590-1710 (1988), he

utilized Yates's work on the Art of Memory to show how that ancient tradition of architectural visualization became a requirement in the training of Scottish Freemasons. His work enabled me to merge my studies of Cabalistic visualization techniques, which influenced the Art of Memory, into fourteenth- through seventeenth-century "Masonic" history. Moreover, Stevenson's allusion to the 1652 Edinburgh initiation of Hans Ewald Tessin, an architect from Swedish Pomerania, provided important links to the Swedish Tessin family, who transmitted traditions of Stuart and Ecossais Masonry into the milieu of Swedenborg and his disciples in England, who subsequently exercised a powerful influence on Blake.

Encouraged by the indefatigably unconventional historian of philosophy Richard Popkin, I made contact with Susanna Akerman in Stockholm, who was pursuing similarly "heterodox" research into Queen Christina and the Rosicrucian societies on the Baltic. She and I both profited from the archival research of Adam McLean (Glasgow) and Ron Heisler (London), whose independent scholarship is based on a genuinely disinterested curiosity about esoteric history. At last, it seemed that an internationalized version of Rosicrucian-Masonic history in eighteenth-century Britain might be possible—one that would approach the impressive work in French by Auguste Viatte, Rene Le Forestier, Antoine Faivre, Pierre Chevallier, Charles Porset, Pierre-Yves Beaurepaire, and Andre Kervella; in German by Karl Frick, Rolf Zimmerman, and Helmut Reinalter; in Italian by Carlo Francovich; in Spanish by Ferrer Benimeli; in Hebrew by Gershom Scholem and Jacob Katz.

In 1994, when various readers of my dissertation—which achieved a wide international circulation urged me to publish an up-dated version, I warned them that I would have to make major revisions of the early chapters, which were too dependent on Yates's work and which would require a new Scottish-Stuart perspective. Over the next years, as unexpectedly fruitful materials emerged on Cabalistic, Hermetic, Masonic, and Jacobite networks in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, I realized that a major scholarly disideratum was still the Scottish-Stuart origins of Freemasonry. Thus, this book which covers the period from Solomon's Temple through the Stuart diaspora in 1695 functions as a prolegomena to future works on eighteenth- and nineteenth-

century occultist Freemasonry in Britain, Scandinavia, and Europe. My aim is to reveal the architectural, technological, religious, and political roots of those rites of Cabalistic, Rosicrucian, Templar, and Swedenborgian Masonry that emerged so mysteriously and operated so powerfully in the international culture of the "Enlightened" eighteenth and "Progressive" nineteenth centuries.

I am grateful to Lord Crawford for permission to use the Balcarres Papers in the National Library of Scotland. At Marsh's Library in Dublin, I was ably assisted by Dr. Muriel McCarthy; at Sheffield University by Dr. Andrew Prescott; at Emory University by Marie Hansen of the Interlibrary Loan Office. Further acknowledgement must go to the librarians at University College and Trinity College, Dublin; Queen's University, Belfast; University of Edinburgh; University of Glasgow; Royal Society, London; British Library; Bodleian Library; and Royal Library, Stockholm. I am indebted to early readers of the manuscript—Susanna Akerman, Allison Coudert, John Patrick Deveney, Antoine Faivre, Deborah Forman, Joscelyn Godwin, Matt Goldish, David Katz, and Gregory Johnson who encouraged me to continue exploring this difficult terrain. My husband Ronald Schuchard has been an amiable companion in the exploration, for he enjoys hearing about the early sources of Cabalistic, Rosicrucian, and Jacobite notions of W.B. Yeats, MacGregor Mathers, and their fellow initiates.

***

When trying to decipher the often bizarre symbols and codes in the writings of Swedenborg and Blake, I often found keys in the myths, images, and language of "irregular," Franco-Scottish Freemasonry. The important work carried out by French scholars of eighteenth-century Écossais rites—scholarship which drew on the great Masonic collections in the Bibliotheque Nationale revealed an imaginative world of Cabalistic, Hermetic, Rosicrucian, Sabbatian, and Swedenborgian symbolism that was transmitted to the artistic circle of Blake in London.' The standard histories of "regular" Freemasonry in English provided few credible clues to the origins, provenance, and modes of transmission of this complex "occultist" tradition.' Moreover, the French

historians were hampered in their investigations of seventeenth-century Freemasonry by the misleading histories published by Anglo-centric scholars.

The great stumbling block to research on pre-1717 British Freemasonry was James Anderson's Constitutions of the Free-Masons (London, 1723; rev. ed. 1738), the first "official" history of the fraternity, which is a hodgepodge of credulous legends and verifiable facts. A native of Aberdeen, Anderson was a Presbyterian propagandist for the Anglo-Scottish union and the Hanoverian succession. Though he had access to Scottish and English Masonic documents and oral traditions, he shaped and distorted them to suit his anti-Jacobite political purposes. Despite the difficulty of ascertaining the accuracy of many of his assertions, his statements cannot be ingored by the historian, for many early readers knew the historical figures (or their descendants) whom Anderson claimed were Masons. While he minimized Scottish (Jacobite) Masonic history in order to exaggerate English (Hanoverian) contributions, his claims should be mentioned and evaluated within their historical context. It is still unclear whether his use of terms such as "Grand Master" for early Masons was retrospective anachronism or a derivation from oral traditions.

Though Anderson repeated uncritically the medieval and Renaissance traditions of Scottish and English Masons, his version of more recent (1685-1722) Masonic developments was skewed by his anti Jacobite political agenda. Thus, the formation of the "modern" Grand Lodge of London in 1717 was portrayed as the beginning of real Freemasonry, with the surviving evidence of earlier Scottish and Stuart developments given such short shrift that it virtually disappeared from the emerging "conventional wisdom" of Masonic history. Thus, in 1972 the English historian J.M. Roberts could confidently assert that "the only definite thing which can be said about Scottish masonry is that it did not come from Scotland."' Rejecting the Ecossais traditions preserved by Jacobite exiles in Europe, he argued that "the idea of masons who strove sword in hand to rebuild the Temple was the taproot of the tradition to become known as 'Scottish' masonry, a name which owes much to another of [Chevalier] Ramsay's flights of fancy," for Freemasonry was "peculiarly English."

Despite Professor Roberts's commendable effort to place English Masonry in a wider European context, his dismissal of Scottish history led to his frequent rejections of Cabalistic and Hermetic themes as rubbish and nonsense. Thus, he remained puzzled by the persistent Jewish elements within the higher degrees developed in European lodges and by the political charges made against the Ecossais lodges. For the next sixteen years, the prevailing academic assumption that the Scottish and Stuart claims (made by European Masons through out the eighteenth century) were without historic foundation continued to stymie enquiries into the pre-1717 history of the fraternity.

In 1988 the Scottish historian David Stevenson published his breakthrough research on the late sixteenth-century Scottish origins and subsequent Scottish development of "modern" Freemasonry, which he placed within a European intellectual context of serious interest in the occult sciences.' Working from the surviving Scottish documents of operative and speculative lodges, Stevenson filled the frustrating gaps between early Stuart culture, its links with Scottish Masonry, and its preservation within the Jacobite diaspora after the expulsion of the last Stuart king, James VII and II. Stevenson's doctoral student Lisa Kahler carried this research further into the early eighteenth century and documented the inaccuracies and distortions of the "orthodox" English version of Masonic history, which served Hanoverian-Whig political purposes.' More importantly for my own research, this revisionist history enabled me to trace the eighteenth-century ramifications of Écossais Masonry back to their early roots in Jewish and Scottish architectural history.

Stevenson's illuminating discussions of the role of the Art of Memory a mnemonic technique of architectural visualization in the training of operative masons in Scotland provided a missing link to the similar art of visualization practiced by heterdox Hebraic mystics in the Jewish diaspora. It thus became possible to utilize objective scholarly accounts of ancient and medieval Jewish building practices, guild organization, and stone-technology to build a real world base for the imaginative flights of visionary Temple-building which appear in Jewish mystical literature.' Reinforced by Elliot Wolfson's studies of the persistence of "iconic representation and visualization" in officially anti-iconic Judaism, I was able to connect the previously perplexing role of

Cabalism in Freemasonry to the survival of architectural visualization and Temple mysticism in European Judaism.

Perhaps the most surprising thesis of this book is that pre-modem Scotland provided a uniquely "Judaized" culture for the preservation of architectural and Solomonic traditions that were largely suppressed or ignored in other Western countries—especially in Scotland's southern neighbor and traditional enemy, England. The work of Arthur Williamson on the strange history of the "Judeo-Scots" sheds light on this peculiarly Hebraic national self-image that made Scotland—a land with no public Jewish community a major repository of rare Jewish traditions. Moreover, an accident of geological history the ready availability of "hewable" stone for monumental architecture in ancient Israel and medieval Scotland—provided an unusually technological base for similarities of development in Jewish and Scottish national myths.

According to Stevenson, Masonic history has been generally led astray by the prevailing misconception that the emergence of Freemasonry took place in England "a belief maintained in the face of the overwhelming preponderance of Scottish documentary evidence relating to the process, evidence which is often simultaneously explained away ... and then used in an English context to make up for the lack of English evidence!" Because the occultist systems of Masonry that survived underground in post-Stuart Britain and that flourished in eighteenth-century Europe developed out of the architectural, scientific, religious, and political policies of the Scottish-descended Stuart kings of Britain, it is necessary to examine those elements of early Stuart culture which were preserved within the secret enclaves of Écossais lodges. The vigorous revisionism currently undertaken by historians of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Scotland and England makes possible a new factual context, which sheds light on the deliberately secret history of Stuart Freemasonry."

With the expulsion of James VII and II from the British throne in 1688, political exiles carried Masonic traditions throughout the "Jacobite" diaspora, where they attracted a startling variety of monarchs, philosophers, scientists, and artists to their supposedly

defeated creed and culture. The Hermetic-Cabalistic masques of the Stuart court, which were often designed and constructed by Masons, disappeared from Britain after the "Glorious Revolution," but they eventually reappeared in the elaborately theatrical ceremonies developed by Jacobite exiles and their local supporters in Écossais lodges. The revival of the Masonic "masque" in late nineteenth-century Scottish Rite lodges in the United States is revealed in the recently published paintings and photographs of the scenic designs, theatrical techniques, and illusionistic effects which recreated the Solomonic magnificence and mystical radiance of the early Stuart performances. The surprising continuity of this Scottish Masonic tradition from royal celebrations in Scotland in the 1590's to democratic initiations in America in the 1920's testifies to the enduring fascination of Stuart-Masonic culture.

With the accession of the Elector of Hanover as King George I of England in 1714, Masonic supporters of the Stuarts mounted a decades long, clandestine campaign to regain the British throne. In 1717 a rival Hanoverian system of Masonry was established, which aimed to suppress and defeat that campaign. When the Hanoverian victors in England—and their descendants among Whig historians wrote the histories of this great cultural and political rivalry, they created their own myth of Protestant progress and toleration, which almost obliterated the Celtic-Catholic-Jewish elements in the opposition's struggle and which ignored the survival of those elements in an international Jacobite culture. However, the current invigoration of academic Jacobite studies—led by Eveline Cruickshanks, Paul Monod, Frank McLynn, Edward Corp, Bruce Lenman, and Murray Pittock—overturns much of the conventional wisdom about the Whig-Newtonian-Hanoverian culture that allegedly created "modern" Freemasonry.

One of the more controversial arguments of this book is that the Stuart monarchs were not the monsters of religious intolerance so often painted in academic and popular writing in English. Only if Catholics are considered as so marginalized and sub-human as not to count in estimations of tolerance can Stuart efforts at peaceful accomodation with Catholics be dismissed as "Papist" plotting or cynical autocratism. As J.C. Riley observes, "Seventeenth-century Englishmen regarded Papists with much the same

suspicion and hatred that Americans held for Communists in the late 1950's," though Romanists composed less than 2% of the English population. Maurice Lee stresses that the Stuart kings "never understood the visceral nature of the ordinary Englishman's feelings about Popery," which meant that their repeated efforts to establish liberty of conscience were distrusted and mocked.

The further misconception that radical Protestants and Parliament were more tolerant than the Stuarts is belied by revisionist research on the status of Jews in Britain!' As Jews resident in seventeenth-century Britain recognized, their freedom to remain Jewish—to not acquiesce to Protestant conversionist pressures—was linked to issues of toleration for Catholics. Through examination of connections between "Judeo-Scots" and Stuart Freemasonry, we can uncover the origins of the strange phenomenon of the "Jacobite Jews" and their Cabalistic-Stuart lodge rituals. Moreover, the emergence of religious toleration as the central creed of Freemasonry was rooted in developments among the Stuart exiles and their Jewish supporters in Holland in the 1650's.

Though the continued strength and great attraction of Scots-Irish-Stuart Masonic culture in the eighteenth century will be the subject of extended discussion in my next books, the creators of that culture in fourteenth- through sixteenth-century Stewart Scotland and seventeenth-century Stuart Britain is the subject of this preliminary work. Because so much of this history has been insubstantially documented and relegated to the realm of oral tradition and anachronistic legend, I have tried to present as much concrete detail and chronological narrative as possible to create a credible, objective, real-world context for the developing "myths" of Freemasonry. Thus, I concentrate on certain themes that define the Stuart Masonic mentality [i.e., Jewish and Scottish architectural mysticism; Jewish and Lullist mnemonic-visualization techniques; Cabalistic and Hermetic sexual theosophy; Rosicrucian and Masonic scientific schemes; crusader chivalry and illuminated knighthood; liberty of conscience and universal brotherhood.

By the end of this long survey, I hope readers will come to feel more culturally at home in James Joyce's "Nighttown," as his Jewish Everyman, Leopold Bloom, protects the free-

thinking Irish Catholic, Stephen Daedulus, by repeating his Masonic oaths and making the signs of a Master Mason.' In the process, Bloom evokes a vision of his dead son Rudy who silently reads a Hebrew text. Readers may even welcome MacGregor Mathers to their real world, for he did not merely invent his fantastic persona who wears Highland dress, meditates on the Cabala, designs Rosicrucian rituals, and recruits Ecossais Masons to fight for Scottish independence in the 1890's. As we shall see, these colorful "Cabalistic-Celtic" characters were acting in a long-running drama that began in ancient Israel and achieved its richest flowering in seventeenth-century Stuart Britain. <>

The Cross in Context: Reconsidering Biblical Metaphors for Atonement by Brad Vaughn, Foreword by Joshua M. McNall [IVP Academic, 9781514000281]

How can a doctrine about reconciliation with God create so much controversy among God's people? Theologian Brad Vaughn believes Christians can gain clarity and unity on the doctrine of the atonement through a renewed attention to the biblical evidence. While theological theories are necessary and useful, they can obscure reality as much as clarify it. And we're often ignorant of the role that cultural and historical context plays in shaping these views. Instead of beginning by comparing atonement theories, he argues, we need to delve deep into the Bible, where we find a handful of motifs that combine to form a richer, more robust theology of atonement. The Cross in Context presents a perspective on the atonement that seeks to reconcile theological camps and enable Christians to interpret the Bible more faithfully. It draws from the entire biblical canon and considers the New Testament in light of its Old Testament background, focusing on the internal logic of Israel's sacrificial system. Applying his intercultural ministry experience and expertise on honor and shame, Vaughn also considers how to effectively contextualize the multifaceted message of salvation in diverse cultural contexts. Combining missiology, theology, and biblical studies, The Cross in Context

provides a refreshing and nuanced look at the atonement and what it means for the life and witness of the church.

Review

"Brad Vaughn explores the interplay of metaphor and atonement—thus this book is about the core of salvation in the New Testament. Atonement is complex, but this is a reliable and well-written guide through the variety of biblical images. Its contextualization offers the key to understand the core of the mission of Jesus Christ. A must-read for all who want to know what the Christian gospel means in diverse cultures!" -- Christian A. Eberhart, professor of religious studies at the University of Houston and author of The Sacrifice of Jesus: Understanding Atonement Biblically

"What would it look like if we allowed the apostle Paul's statement that 'Christ died for our sins' to be truly explained 'according to the Scriptures' (1 Cor 15:3)? In this provocative book, Brad Vaughn carefully peels back layers of church tradition, systematic theology, and folk Christianity to reexamine what Scripture actually says about the death of Christ. The result is a whole-Bible approach to sin and atonement that mounts a stimulating challenge to scholars and laypeople alike. Whether or not you agree with his conclusions, you will undoubtedly come away with a deeper appreciation for the richness of what Christ's death accomplished!" -- Jerry Hwang, academic dean and associate professor of Old Testament at Singapore Bible College

"Given the importance of atonement and the breadth of imagery used in Scripture to describe it, any work on atonement is sure to invite criticism. As Brad Vaughn himself notes, this book will not avoid that fate. Still, it remains a rewarding read because of the light it sheds on some of the often underappreciated biblical imagery used to describe what Christ accomplished for sin-stained image bearers. Read, wrestle, discern, critique, and worship your way through this book. Even the critic will be grateful for the reminder of the gospel's multifaceted salvation presented in The Cross in Context." -- Matthew Bennett, assistant professor of missions and theology at Cedarville University

"Brad Vaughn offers a book that needed to be written. It is challenging, insightful, intriguing, and stretching. Not all will agree with this book (W. tells us as much!), but no one should ignore it. Here we discover the multifaceted diamond that is Christ's atonement." -- Heath A. Thomas, president of Oklahoma Baptist University

CONTENTS

Scripture Index

I have grieved throughout the writing of this book. I will lose friends. This book will make some people wary of me. Ironically, this is what the doctrine of atonement has done to people. The very thing that should bring church unity instead undermines it.

Jesus' death is central to Christianity. You'd think we could agree about why he died. In fact, few things divide the church as does the atonement of Christ, whose death brings about the reconciliation of all creation. While his sacrifice reconciles us to God, it seems to split the church into factions. This observation is as ironic as it is tragic.

I have found that many people, including Christian scholars, harbor doubts about this or that point of doctrine, but they know speaking up will cause a kerfuffle. The risk to their reputations or careers is too much. So, they choose to "stay in their lane" and away from controversy. Within some Christian subcultures, one can hardly challenge popular authors and conventional thinking. To do so means you will be branded a "liberal" or even "heretic" If you listen to some talk about people with opposing viewpoints, the problem you'll see is not mere division but disgust.

Without question, every reader will find something to disagree with in this book. By the time it's published, even I might disagree with something it says. No writer or book is entirely right or wrong. This work is no exception.

Knowing that you'll never get everything correct is paralyzing for some people; instead, it should be freedom giving. We can accept ambiguity, embrace nuance, and learn from others. As teachers, we must guard against heresy. But we should equally fear a lack of genuine humility.

Three Goals of this Book

This book has three interconnected purposes. First, it attempts to guard church unity. It is commonplace to compare the doctrine of atonement to a multifaceted diamond. Christ's atoning work abounds in significance. Its richness is incalculable. Nevertheless, Christians all too often feel compelled to emphasize one aspect of the atonement over

another. In doing so, one picks a “theological team.” Debates about the "most central" or "most fundamental" theory of atonement have long divided Christians.

While some authors attempt to mediate such debates, their explanations might perpetuate the problem. Theologians assume the validity of conventional, systematic theories of atonement. They do not always interact sufficiently with or incorporate the wealth of insight provided by biblical scholars. Such systematic treatises focus more on philosophical assumptions than on the inherent logic of the biblical narrative and its metaphors. Although many authors acknowledge the partial truth of various historical theories, their treatments still lead readers to prioritize one theory over another. Some debates refuse to die. Pilate killed Jesus, but we theologians sacrifice the atonement.

A second purpose is theological. In light of these disputes, this book seeks to add clarity and cohesion amid the clutter of theories. It shows how biblical writers harmonize the various atonement metaphors that span the canon. As a result, readers will not pit one set of biblical texts against another. This broader perspective of Christ's atonement is both humbling and hope giving. It can calm the cackle and clatter that stifles genuine dialogue among Christians. It helps to reconcile theological camps and enables us to interpret the Bible more faithfully.

Third, this book assists readers in contextualizing the Bible's teaching concerning the atonement. It equips the church to explain the gospel of salvation in ways that are meaningful in diverse cultural contexts. Furthermore, this volume lays the groundwork for practitioners to better comprehend how the atonement affects various aspects of life.

An important result follows from this study. It highlights several ways in which honor and shame shape biblical passages that speak of atonement. These observations provide a more robust view of Christ's work through the cross and opens fresh applications for the church.

Do We Reject or Reconcile Theories?

The atonement is the crux of Christianity. Despite this fact, or perhaps even because of it, the atonement remains an enduring source of contention among theologians. For centuries, writers have offered theories to explain the significance of Christ's death. Scholars take sides in the debate whenever they defend their preferred view of Christ's atonement. Systematic theologians catalog an array of biblical texts to highlight the superior logic of their theological perspective.

Several recent books take a more accommodating approach.' They take pains to demonstrate how competing theories can coexist. Accordingly, authors insist that popular theories, like penal substitution and Christus Victor, are complementary, not mutually exclusive. Yet even in such cases, readers may invariably conclude that one theory is more "fundamental" or "central" to the doctrine. As a result, theologians create a hierarchy of atonement theories founded on the logic of countless hidden assumptions.

Much of the literature that exists concerning the atonement is inaccessible to nonspecialists. Most readers do not have sufficient time or background to grasp the nuanced arguments found in the journals of biblical studies. What's more, one finds discontinuity between the way many Old Testament scholars describe atonement in the Pentateuch, for example, and the treatments provided by systematic theologians, who synthesize texts from disparate contexts to construct an atonement theology.

Many welcome the movement away from either-or debates about the atonement; however, both-and solutions are inadequate unless we can explain how the Bible integrates the various aspects of Christ's atonement. A fresh approach is needed.

In this book, I propose a way to reconcile popular theories of atonement that sometimes seem to conflict or at least have tension. To do so, we'll consider the influence of context on our understanding of the atonement. The biblical narrative uses several metaphors that help us find the intersection of the biblical text with contemporary contexts. The biblical narrative has an inherent logic that gets lost amid endless theory-laden debates.

An Overview

The following chapters fall into three major parts. Section one consists of five chapters. The first chapter explains why all atonement theories are contextualized. We are often ignorant of the role that context plays in shaping our theories of atonement. Our cultural context narrows the focus and scope of our theological questions. Because of our historical situation, we might ask too much of our theories. These observations create the need and opportunity for writing this book.

Chapter two provides critical background needed to make sense of Israel's rituals. Ancient Israelites viewed the world quite differently than we do. They even categorized space, time, people, and objects around them in ways we would think peculiar. Lacking this framework, our theology of atonement collapses under the stress of oversimplification. It becomes reductionistic. We sacrifice a biblical understanding of atonement when we substitute our assumptions in place of those held by ancient Israel.

Chapter three opens with an overview of the major types of offerings and their significance. It highlights important aspects associated with sacrifice that are underappreciated in discussions concerning atonement. Chapter four asks several fundamental questions: What does "atonement" mean in the Bible? At a basic level, what does atonement accomplish? Chapter five first explores how the biblical writers use honor-shame language to discuss various related concepts such as holiness, sacrifice, and sanctification. Specific attention is given to Old Testament passages. Second, we'll consider how these observations inform a biblical understanding of the sacrificial system.

Section two demonstrates how biblical writers consistently use several key metaphors when speaking of atonement. Accordingly, chapter six explains why purification is a primary metaphor that describes atonement. Atoning sacrifices cleanse impurity. We will give attention to passages such as Leviticus 17 and Hebrews 8-10. In chapter seven, readers examine the metaphor of "bearing sin:' Intriguingly, this imagery routinely conveys opposite theological ideas. We will especially focus on the Day of Atonement

(Leviticus 16). Chapter eight considers the Bible's use of economic language to explain atonement. Atonement is often depicted as payment or compensation for debt. Offering sacrifices or gifts to God is one way that worshipers provide recompense. What are the implications for a biblical doctrine of atonement? We will study the Passover, a fundamental paradigm used by New Testament writers to explain Christ's death on the cross. Next, chapter nine raises objections and questions concerning several weighty passages, such as Psalm 22, Isaiah 53, Romans 8, 2 Corinthians 5, and Galatians 3. Some readers will be tempted to skip immediately to this chapter. I recommend against that plan for the simple reason that my comments there will make little sense apart from the preceding chapters.

Finally, section three highlights various implications and applications. Chapter ten ties together the insights from this study. It shows the relationship between the interpretation in this book and popular theories of atonement. In the process, I respond to common questions that arise from the view of atonement proposed in this book. Chapter eleven offers a meaty conclusion. It surveys various applications that stem from the previous chapters. It raises theological and practical questions that deserve further discussion. For example, how does Christ bear our shame? How might the ideas in this book affect contextualization in crosscultural missions? Also, how does a biblical view of atonement expand our understanding concerning the need for reconciliation between people?

My Fear of Tree Roots

When I was around seven years old, my uncle and I took a walk through the forest. We came across a large fallen tree. A huge crater remained where the roots had formerly been. A puddle of rain filled the hole. I had no idea how deep the cavity sunk into the ground. So, I asked my uncle, "What's down there?" His reply was straight-faced and simple, “Hell.” I was petrified. For many years later, I veered from such holes, just in case he was right. I hate being suckered.

As humans, we are desperate for certainty and clarity. It provides a sense of security. Sadly, this natural desire can lead us to forfeit other values, like humility and richness.

What do I mean? In seeking certainty, we hedge our bets against humility, even though we all know that everyone is fallible with limited perspectives. Wanting clarity, we sometimes demur at the Bible's richness with the label "complex." Scripture is deemed complicated. Our brains' longing for certainty and clarity sets us up to be duped.

We even become blind to reality. Consider this: at one level, the picture I paint in this book is a simple one. The Bible uses a few common metaphors. Ironically, various atonement theories actually complicate our view of atonement. Verses and images are taken from context and reordered according to our limited wisdom. In trying to make the doctrine simpler than it is, we end up twisting the Bible to fit our desires and assumptions. This is a type of theological syncretism whereby one compromises the gospel by settling for ideas that are merely true.

Contextualization and the Cross

Why is this book called The Cross in Context? Words and ideas have meaning based on their context. This is why contextualization is so important. I define contextualization as "the process wherein people interpret, communicate, and apply the Bible within a particular cultural context." Contextualization begins with interpretation. It cannot be otherwise. Most chapters consider how the biblical authors contextualize the concept of atonement. However, I don't want us to stop there.

Sprinkled throughout the book are ideas and suggestions to help readers communicate and apply their insights about the atonement. Healthy contextualization should be both biblically faithful and culturally meaningful. Contextualization cannot be done well in the abstract. It requires a concrete, historical context. Accordingly, no book can hope to tell every reader how to contextualize the atonement for their specific setting.

How then might I offer real-world suggestions given the limited size of this work? I'll demonstrate the practical significance of contextualization in at least three ways: First, we will use the observations made in this book to evaluate certain attempts to contextualize the cross of Christ. Second, I'll propose constructive ideas for communicating the atonement in contextually meaningful ways. Third, readers will see

a few implications for applying the atonement within our daily lives. Such application is found most clearly in the book's last chapter.

Finally, I offer a brief word to scholars. This book does not intend to give a history of how interpreters explain the atonement and related concepts. Therefore, some specialists will be disappointed that I do not explicitly interact with certain renowned authors. To allay such concerns, I can only state that I've engaged such scholars in my research but, due to the larger goals of this book, I'm forced to limit my interaction with them here. In some cases, other writers seem to participate in a quite different conversation than the one I put forth in this book. Consequently, some specialists might be less than satisfied with certain parts of my arguments; however, I trust readers will assess my proposals with generosity.

A Constellation of Theories

Humans are pattern-making machines. This is why we see a "man in the moon:' Our brains construct the image of a face from a cluster of lunar craters. When reading the Bible and doing theology, this instinctive skill set goes into high gear. Our many theories of atonement are comparable to various constellations. The Big Dipper belongs to the constellation Ursa Major (the "Great Bear"). Others, like Perseus, Hercules, and Aries, fueled the minds of ancient peoples, who envisioned cosmic powers in conflict in the sky.

Stars and planets are real. Patterns help us organize those astronomical bodies within our minds. The more we humans contemplate those interstellar patterns, the more we open our imaginations to a thousand other speculations and stories. Our theories can become larger than life. Meanwhile, we forget the stars and planets.

This book brings our attention back to basics. My objective is not to present a definitive or final interpretation, which is not possible in such a limited space. I suggest reasons why certain evangelical views should not be assumed as obvious nor taken as default positions. But ultimately, my goal is constructive. This work is an attempt to reconcile those who love Jesus, "the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star" (Revelation 22:16). <>

Anselm's Argument: Divine Necessity by Brian Leftow [Oxford University Press, ISBN 9780192896926]

Anselm of Canterbury gave the first modal "ontological" argument for God's existence. Yet, despite its distinct originality, philosophers have mostly avoided the question of what modal concepts the argument uses, and whether Anselm's metaphysics entitles him to use them.

Here, Brian Leftow sets out Anselm's modal metaphysics. He argues that Anselm has an "absolute", "broadly logical", or "metaphysical" modal concept, and that his metaphysics provides acceptable truth makers for claims in this modality. He shows that his modal argument is committed (in effect) to the Brouwer system of modal logic, and defends the claim that Brouwer is part of the logic of "absolute" or "metaphysical" modality. He also defends Anselm's premise that God would exist with absolute necessity against all extant objections, providing new arguments in support of it and ultimately defending all but one premise of Anselm's best argument for God's existence.

Review

"a detailed and robustly defended Anselmian account of perfect being necessity against challenges that have emerged in the history of philosophy after St Anselm" -- Gaven Kerr, *Notre Dame Philosophical Reviews*

- Provides the most accurate analysis of Anselm's modal argument for God's existence
- Argues that Anselm had an "absolute", "broadly logical", or "metaphysical" modal concept, and thought of God as existing with this sort of necessity
- Provides new positive arguments that God would exist with this sort of necessity, and defends the modal logic to which Anselm's argument is committed

BRIEF CONTENTS

This book has three audiences. I aim it primarily at analytic philosophers of religion and scholars of medieval philosophy. But Anselm's style of argument for God's existence remained a subject of contention in the early moderns, and so I think students of early modern philosophy will also find much here to interest them. The book is in two ways a sequel to my God and Necessity. Some of what I do in explicating Anselm counts as further development of the power-based modal metaphysics I give there, since Anselm (as I read him) bases modality on facts about powers too. More importantly, I use theses from God and Necessity to defend Anselm's argument. Thus God and Necessity and this book are part of a case that God exists. To complete that case, one must argue that possibly God exists. I hope to do this in another book.

***

Between the rubble of Rome and the spires of scholasticism, it is mostly a dark bare plain, broken by only one true tower: Anselm. For most of his career, he had no-one of any stature to talk to. He had pitifully few books to read, few of them philosophical. Yet 900 years after his death, one cannot discuss arguments for God's existence, the nature of God, or the Christian doctrine of the atonement without feeling his presence.

His arguments for God's existence certainly take the prize for originality. Anselm was not the first to state their key thesis, that God is that than which no greater can be thought. He could have found it in Seneca, Augustine, or Boethius. But he was the first to use it to argue God's existence, and the way he used it had no precedent. Kant's label for Anselm's new kind of argument, "ontological," is a prime example of bad terminology sticking merely because it becomes familiar. Rather than curse the darkness, I light a candle. A thing than which no greater can be thought is a greatest thinkable being. But many gloss Anselm's phrase as "thing than which no greater is possible," i.e. greatest possible being. Differences between the two will not matter for present purposes. "Perfect being" can be glossed either way, and is short. Thus I often substitute "perfect being" for Anselm's phrase, and I call Anselm's arguments "arguments from perfection."

Anselm offered the first modal argument from perfection—that is, the first trading on the claim that Perfect Being Necessity. If any perfect being existed, its existence would be absolutely necessary.

Charles Hartshorne and Norman Malcolm claimed that he did it in Proslogion 3. Most now disagree. But there is such an argument in Anselm's Reply to Gaunilo. It concludes that a perfect being exists. This conclusion interests Anselm only because he believes that any perfect being would be God. So while Anselm premises only Perfect Being Necessity, he also holds that Divine Necessity. God's existence would be absolutely necessary.

A little history

Doctrines of divine or perfect being necessity have had a checkered career. Until Hume, it is hard to find a philosopher who considered the matter and denied God or a perfect being the strongest sort of necessity he or she recognized. I will argue that Anselm's strongest was the kind I call absolute, and others call metaphysical or broadly logical. If I am right, he was the first in Christendom to assert this. He may have been the first, period. At least four strands of thought contributed to the long popularity of divine and perfect being necessity.

The scriptures of the Abrahamic religions teach that God is eternal. Aristotle argued that whatever is eternal exists necessarily. The thinking behind his argument was influential until well into the modern period. Orthodox Christians, Jews, or Muslims who accepted Aristotle's reasoning, or something like it, found themselves committed to God's having whatever sort of necessity they used to interpret Aristotle's reasoning. If they thought of God as a perfect being, they also found themselves committed to the claim that a perfect being existed with that sort of necessity.

Again, God's eternality includes at least that He never will cease to exist. Reflective theists usually add that He is imperishable, i.e. absolutely could not cease to exist. Medieval Aristotelians tended to think that the past, once past, is absolutely necessary. Before Socrates drank the hemlock, he was able not to. All the same, they argued, once he had drunk it, it was no longer possible in any sense that he did not.8 On this account, though things now past could have failed ever to happen, there is now just one absolutely possible past. Suppose that this is so, and that in that past, God always existed and absolutely could not cease to exist. On the medieval Aristotelian assumption, that He always existed makes it now absolutely necessary that He did. If He absolutely could not cease to exist, then in no absolutely possible continuation of actual history does He do so. If there is just one absolutely possible past, every absolutely possible history consists of the actual past plus some absolutely possible continuation of actual history. So on these assumptions, in no absolutely possible history does God ever not exist. Thus God exists with absolute necessity. Belief in one

absolutely possible past came under pressure as the Middle Ages progressed. But for as long as it lingered, it plus divine imperishability mandated divine necessity.

The first two reasons for doctrines of divine or perfect being necessity depend on claims few if any current philosophers accept. But two others still have "pull" for many. Beginning with al-Farabi, Muslim philosophers developed cosmological arguments from contingency, which contend that something exists which caused the existence of all contingent beings. If something causes the existence of every contingent thing, then if God is contingent, something causes His existence. The Abrahamic religions reject this. They all say that nothing made God. For Abrahamic theists who accept contingency arguments, the only out is to hold that God's existence is not contingent. If it is not, He exists with the necessity that pairs with the sort of contingency in the argument. Thus any Abrahamic philosopher who accepts a contingency argument must accept the correlated sort of divine necessity.

Finally, as we see shortly, Anselm's Reply to Gaunilo asserted that a perfect being would exist with absolute necessity just because it is perfect. It asserts, in other words, that perfection entails necessity. Anselm said no more. Apparently it seemed to him just obvious, as it has to many since. In what follows, I try to put some argument behind it. Again, that Anselm deals in absolute necessity is something I argue later.

This was the state of play until Hume. Hume and Kant presented highly influential arguments against Divine Necessity and Perfect Being Necessity. Thereafter, the two claims dropped from view. In the dark night of post-Kantian Europe, it is hard to find a philosopher who considered the matter. Among twentieth-century analytic philosophers, Divine Necessity was once in such disrepute that J. N. Findlay could base on it a purported disproof of God's existence. But things have changed again. Divine Necessity and Perfect Being Necessity are now consensus views among "analytic" theist philosophers. It is not as if a pitched battle arose and the Knights of Necessity slew their opponents. Rather, not long after the advent of possible worlds semantics (of which more anon), most theist philosophers seemed spontaneously to acquire Anselm's intuition that absolute necessity goes with perfection. Opinion "flipped" without much

argument at all. I share this intuition. But sometimes intuitions do not pan out, and sometimes one can dig into them and excavate arguments. I hope to do that, and so put Divine Necessity and Perfect Being Necessity on a firmer footing.

What I am up to

The present book has historical and philosophical goals. One historical goal is to make sense of Anselm's modal metaphysics (that is, his metaphysics of possibility and necessity). Another is to show that the necessity in Anselm's Perfect Being Necessity is indeed absolute. Many people have believed this, but almost none on the basis of a close look at Anselm's modal metaphysics. Instead, they took it for granted, or based it on misreadings. They were right, but for no reason or wrong ones. I provide (I hope) the right ones. I add that if I have Anselm right, his metaphysics represents a neglected alternative we might do well to consider. I argue that alternative's virtues elsewhere.9 Here I only display what he thinks, in order to get one argument straight.

The philosophical goal is to defend all but one premise of an argument for God's existence close to Anselm's. Most of my effort goes to Perfect Being Necessity and Divine Necessity. I sometimes call on points I argued in God and Necessity. So as the argument veers from history into philosophy of religion, this book becomes a sequel to God and Necessity, in which I begin to argue the existence of the God I describe there.

Why they matter

Perfect Being Necessity anchors Anselm's modal argument from perfection. That is enough to commend it to our attention. Divine Necessity could take Perfect Being Necessity's place in that argument. That is enough to make it worth our attention. But we have still more reason to give it a look. For starters, it has a role to play in a large swath of natural theology. Three other sorts of theistic argument require it, and it improves still more.

I first note the arguments requiring it. Only Divine Necessity can turn "contingency" cosmological arguments into arguments for God's existence. For these arguments conclude to a necessary being. So God must exist necessarily if we are to identify Him with it. Actually, we can take this a step further. The necessary being to which these

arguments conclude causes either the existence of all contingent things or the existence of the first ones, depending on how the argument goes. God is supposed to play these roles. If something else does, God does not exist, or is not as He is said to be. So theists who accept contingency arguments pressure themselves to accept Divine Necessity.

Divine Necessity is also required for a further sort of theistic argument I present elsewhere, from modal metaphysics.11 Finally, Divine Necessity lets one answer the question "Why is there anything, rather than nothing?" The answer is that there could not have been nothing, because God would have existed, no matter what. Divine Necessity enables the same answer to "Why is there anything concrete rather than nothing concrete?" God of course answers "Why is there anything physical?" This triple role is a legitimate source of religious awe. It also provides a further argument for God's existence, though I cannot develop this here.

I now take up places where Divine Necessity helps. To begin, it makes God a more satisfying terminus of explanation for causal cosmological arguments. In these, causal explanation comes to a halt in a first cause, which the arguer hopes to identify with God. Now the more brute a fact, the less intellectually satisfying an explanation that terminates in it, ceteris paribus. Facts are brute if unexplained, and if there is no explanation that they rather than some other possible fact obtain. A fact is more brute if both are true than if just one is true. For contingent brute facts, both are true. For absolutely necessary brute facts, just one is true. For any absolutely necessary fact obtains rather than some other possible fact because there is no such possible fact. There is no other way things could be. Thus if the cosmological arguer identifies the first cause with God, Divine Necessity makes its existence a more satisfying explanatory posit. Some think that necessary facts obtain because there is no other way things could be. If this is so—I have argued against it—absolutely necessary facts are not brute at all. If they are not, an absolutely necessary being is an even better terminus of explanation.

Again, a family of theistic arguments contends that abstract entities are best construed in God-involving ways: attributes as His concepts' contents, propositions as existing in His thoughts, etc. A variant argues that God provides the best way to eliminate abstracta—His concepts or His mental events replacing attributes, His thoughts doing duty for propositions, etc. Now suppose that the abstracta in question would exist necessarily. Any reason actually to place them in a host or eliminate them would be equally good in any possible situation. So if the abstracta would be necessary, and the argument is sound, they necessarily have a host or eliminator. If God can fail to exist to host or eliminate them, questions arise about why we are guaranteed a substitute when God is absent, what provides it, and whether it plays or shares the role if God does exist. These are hard to answer. It is better not to raise them. Divine Necessity lets one avoid them. It also simplifies one's metaphysics to have just one possible host/eliminator. Such simplicity makes a theory more plausible. Thus Divine Necessity strengthens the case for God as host or eliminator.

Divine Necessity can also improve moral arguments for God's existence. Such arguments infer a divine source or ground of all moral truth. Some of that truth is necessary. So if it is of a sort to have a source or ground, it necessarily has one. Again, the simplest theist theory here would have God necessarily be that, and so necessarily exist.

I submit, then, that a good case for Divine Necessity would strengthen the case for God's existence. It would enable arguments which could not otherwise be had, and improve others. Beyond all this, Divine Necessity can do work in theology. Even theologians with no tolerance for natural theology sometimes see this. Thus Karl Barth writes:

> The first primary meaning of God's ... aseity ... (is that) He Himself, in being, is His own basis, and ... differentiates ... His existence ... even from the very thought of His non-existence. (And so) the mode of existence is proper to Him which is exempt from any limitation by the possibility of its non-existence...

Suppose that God exists necessarily and no other concrete thing does. Then His necessity can help explicate the way He transcends His creatures. It helps fill out the idea that He is of a fundamentally different kind. Further, it explains His eternality. I have argued that it makes Him atemporal. If I am wrong about that, then still, if He must exist, He always has existed and always will exist. Divine Necessity thus tells us why God is the Rock of Ages: it is all just swirling tide, save for God, who must abide. Further, as Barth sees, God's necessity can help explicate His aseity. Part of existing "from Himself" is that it is from Himself that there is no alternative to His existence. One way to explicate that leads one to a theistic modal metaphysics. Again, as noted above, Divine Necessity lets God play the lead role in the metaphysics of the possible, the necessary, and the abstract. That He play these roles is theologically important and fruitful—and even satisfying matter for religious contemplation.

The bulk of this book concerns Perfect Being Necessity and Divine Necessity. These claims, I have suggested, are well worth our time. I now use the rest of this introduction to lay groundwork. I explain the concept of absolute necessity that (so I argue) we find in Anselm and that powers the argument from perfection whose defense I begin here. To do so, I explain the concept of a possible world. I then indicate some things I will not discuss. Finally, I provide a road-map for the book.

Absolute necessity

To discuss claims that something's existence would be absolutely necessary, I must explain what absolute necessity is. I give a fuller account of it else-where.16 I now introduce it. To do so, I use a bit of machinery. I first wheel it in, then apply it. Then I show how to do without it.

Possibilities come in many sizes. It is possible that I be elected Pope. It is also possible that I be elected Pope and my wife be surprised. It is also possible that I be elected Pope, my wife be surprised, and the College of Cardinals have been roaring drunk that day. These possibilities are little bits of possible histories. Some possibilities are possible complete histories for all of reality. Were they actualized, for any proposition P, it would be true that P or else that not-P. These are the largest possibilities. A

"possibility" would be larger than these only if, were it actualized, for some P, both that P and that not-P would be true. A "possibility" like this would not be a possibility at all. It would not be something that could occur. Philosophers call largest possibilities possible worlds. Every smaller possibility is part of some possible worlds, and is their intersection. The possibility that I be made Pope, for instance, is part of many. There are many ways history could go once I become Pope Brian I.

The reigning semantics for modal talk speaks of possible worlds.19 It treats the words "necessarily" and "possibly" as quantifiers over these. It is true that (^x)(Fx) if and only if at least one object in the domain "^x" quantifies over is F. The reigning semantics treats "possibly" as an existential quantifier over a domain of possible worlds. That is, it takes it that possibly P if and only if in at least one possible world in the domain, P. It treats "necessarily" as a universal quantifier over a domain of possible worlds. That is, it takes it that necessarily P if and only if in all possible worlds in the domain, P.

This provides a way to explicate absolute necessity, given one further idea. Sometimes, when we assert that possibly P, we mean that for all we know, P, or that our beliefs do not rule it out that P, or the like. Such possibility is a relation between the claim that P and a body of belief, knowledge, etc. It thus relates claims to minds. Other sorts of possibility, and their correlated sorts of necessity, do not relate claims to minds. They concern how things might or must be, independent of any finite mind. So I call such sorts of possibility and necessity objective. I now put that term to work. If modal terms quantify over worlds, absolute-modal terms quantify over objectively possible worlds:

> Absolute-necessarily P = df. in all objectively possible worlds, P. Absolute-possibly P = df. in at least one objectively possible world, P.

That P is absolutely impossible just if in no objectively possible world, P. It is absolutely contingent just if it is neither absolutely necessary nor absolutely impossible. Three other locutions will be useful. It is true that P in a possible world W just in case absolute-necessarily, if W is actual, then P. An item I exists in a possible world W just in case absolute-necessarily, if W is actual, I exists. A state of affairs S obtains in a possible world W just in case absolute-necessarily, if W is actual, S obtains.

As the absolute “possibly” quantifies over all objectively possible worlds, absolute possibility is the widest objective possibility. Everything in any way objectively possible is absolutely possible. Thus every other sort of objective possibility is truth or obtaining in some sub-class of the absolutely possible worlds. If so, every other sort of objective possibility is in effect a restriction on it. For every other sort of objective possibility S, there is some condition C that just the worlds in S’s sub-class meet. For instance, a world is nomically possible if and only if it is absolutely possible and has just the actual natural laws. Being an S-possible world requires being absolutely possible and meeting C. Being absolutely possible does not require meeting any such C. So absolute possibility is the weakest, least demanding sort of objective possibility.

For absolute necessity, again, the domain of worlds is all objectively possible worlds. That makes it the strongest sort of objective necessity. Necessarily P if and only if in every world in the relevant domain, P. So absolute-necessarily P if and only if in all objectively possible worlds, P. So absolute-necessarily P if and only if in no objectively possible world, -,P. Absolute necessity is strongest because that absolute-necessarily P excludes all objective possibility that -,P whatsoever. Other objective necessities do not do that. It is nomically necessary that $E = mc^2$, but absolutely possible that $E = mc^3$. There are objectively possible worlds without our nomic necessities. Thus nomic necessity is weaker than absolute. The weaker the necessity, the larger the proportion of possible worlds without it. As every other sort of objective possibility is absolute possibility given some condition, so too every other sort of objective necessity is absolute necessity given some condition. It is nomically necessary that P, for instance, just in case it is absolutely necessary given the actual natural laws that P—that is, just in case the actual natural laws entail that P.

If there are any objectively possible worlds, there are absolute necessities. For if there are such worlds, some truths will obtain in all of them. Suppose, for simplicity, that there are just two such worlds and just two atomic propositions, that P and that Q. To try to deny that anything is true in all possible worlds, let us say that in one world, P but not Q, and the other, Q but not P. This does not avoid truth in all worlds. In both, it is true that P or Q, and that something is true. Something true in all objectively possible

worlds is absolutely necessary. So there are no absolute necessities only if there are no objectively possible worlds.

We can also define absolute necessity without world-talk. We can say:

Absolute-necessarily P = df. No matter what, it would be true that P.

Consider the claims that 2 + 2 = 4 or that ((P ^ (P ! Q)) ! Q). Could these have been false? No! The mind rebels at the thought. They are true no matter what. "No matter what" means just that. They would hold in every objectively possible situation, however outré. They absolutely could not fail to be true, period. These truths are prime examples of absolute necessity. Let us now make this definition a little more formal. An absolute necessity is one which would hold, no matter what. So one can define this in terms of the subjunctive or would conditional, >:

Absolute-necessarily P = df. For any objectively possible Q, Q > P.

So per earlier argument, there are no absolute necessities only if there are no objective possibilities. The claim that there are no objective possibilities deserves discussion, but I do not discuss it here. One has to start somewhere. I start with there being real and irreducible objective modality.

What I will not discuss

I now note some things I do not discuss here.

One is talk about beings as great and greater. Anselm thinks this makes sense. Elsewhere I argue that it does indeed.24 Anselm's "greater," I suggest, is just the notion operative in such ordinary truths as that Beethoven's 7th symphony is a greater work than "Pennies from Heaven," or that Lincoln was a greater man than I am. If that is all there is to it, the metaphysics behind it can be fairly innocuous. As I defend his ideas elsewhere, I speak as Anselm does. My case for Perfect Being Necessity below includes perfect-being arguments—arguments that reason about what a perfect being would be like. Some reject such arguments. I hope to address this elsewhere. Readers skeptical of them should ask whether the particular features that worry them really are in play in

mine. If they think they are, I hope they will at least play along until my defense appears.

I defend an argument for a perfect being. It premises that possibly a perfect being exists. Here I defend only the argument's other premises. I hope to discuss the possibility premise in another volume. Because it is not my subject here, I do not discuss it, or objections to it, or to things it implies.

Anselm argues that his perfect being has the traditional divine attributes.25 But he simply takes for granted that they can be had. This is a large assumption. But to discuss it would discuss Anselm's possibility premise. It would discuss his idea of what that premise entails, and so of what its content really is. If one being has all traditional divine attributes, they not only can be had, but are all compatible. But to discuss compatibility issues would discuss Anselm's possibility premise. So for now, I do not discuss these things. I just go along with Anselm. I use "Anselmian being" to abbreviate "a perfect being broadly as Anselm conceives of one." I sometimes remind the reader of what I am granting arguendo by speaking not of a perfect being, but of an Anselmian being.

Some reply to Anselm's modal argument by parody. We have (the parodist claims) as much reason to grant that possibly there is a necessarily existent Quetzalcoatl as to grant that possibly an Anselmian being exists. If we accept this and parallels to the rest of Anselm's premises, Quetzalcoatl exists. We do not think he does. So we should not accept both. But (says the parodist) we have no more reason to accept Anselm's premises than to accept their Quetzalcoatl parallels. So if we do not accept these things in Quetzalcoatl's case, we should not accept them in Anselm's case. I discuss parody at length in another book.26 While that discussion is keyed to a different argument in Anselm, most of it applies here too.

Health warning

Note what Perfect Being Necessity does not say. It does not say (or imply) that necessity makes a perfect being great. It could be true if necessity conferred no greatness itself,

but were a necessary condition of some increment of greatness. Again, it does not say (or imply) that it is better to exist necessarily than to exist contingently. For a perfect being has the an overall best set of compos-sible essential attributes. So in principle, a perfect being could be necessary even if taken in isolation, it were better to be contingent. Necessity could make it into the winners' circle because something else implies it, and this thing's value outweighs the value contingency would bring.

The road ahead

Here is the plan. To grasp what Anselm means by Perfect Being Necessity, we need to know what he means by "necessarily" and how he understands the metaphysics of necessity. Chapter 1 lays out the metaphysics. Anselm's ideas overlap quite a bit with those I developed in God and Necessity. Thus Chapter 1 also shows how a theory of my sort can undergird basic truths of modal logic. Chapter 2 discusses modal claims which Anselm uses his metaphysics to explicate. Anselm's account of why the past is "fixed" and unchangeable becomes relevant, and I try to make sense of it. Chapter 3 discusses objections to my claim that Anselm deals in absolute modality, and to aspects of Anselm's account. Oddly enough, this leads me into his doctrine of predestination. It turns out to differ a lot from what one finds in Augustine or Calvin. Chapter 4 lays out Anselm's modal argument and the not-quite-identical argument I defend. Chapter 5 shows that one of the argu-ment's premises is true if and only if the modal logic for absolute modality includes what is known as the Brouwer system (hereafter just "Brouwer"). It also argues that that logic does in fact include Brouwer, and so the premise is in fact true. The rest of the book considers Perfect Being Necessity. Chapters 6–12 defend it from all extant objections. For those who find it intuitive, that should be enough. An intuition which faces no defeaters carries the day. For those who are unsure about Perfect Being Necessity, or would like to see whether an argument can articulate or bolster their intuitions, Chapters 13-17 argue Perfect Being Necessity. <>

The Wood Between the Worlds: A Poetic Theology of the Cross by Brian Zahnd [IVP, 9781514005620]

The cross is the heart of Scripture Everything about the gospel message leads to the cross, and proceeds from the cross. In fact, within the narrative of Scripture, the crucifixion of Jesus is literally the crux of the story—the axis upon which the biblical story turns. But it would be a mistake to think we could sum up the significance of the crucifixion in a tidy sentence or two. That kind of thinking only insulates us from the magnificence of what God has done. In our ongoing quest to make meaning of the cross, we need to recognize that this conversation will never conclude—that there is always something more to be said. Brian Zahnd reminds us that the meaning of the cross is multifaceted and should touch every aspect of our lives. Just as gazing through the eyepiece of a kaleidoscope reveals a new geometric image with every turn, Zahnd helps us see that there are infinite ways to behold the cross of Christ as the beautiful form that saves the world. The Wood Between the Worlds is an invitation to encounter the cross of Christ anew.

Review

"Most books on the cross of Christ are regurgitations of outmoded atonement theories that say almost nothing memorable. But Brian Zahnd has once again broken the mold with his revolutionary book The Wood Between the Worlds. Herein we have a capacious portrait of Jesus' sacrifice that is so stunningly beautiful and uniquely framed that the reader cannot look away. An enrapturing volume to reignite the church's curiosity around the crucifixion penned by one of today's most provocative pastors." -- Jonathan Merritt, author and contributing writer for The Atlantic

"To the apostolic witnesses, the cross of Christ was never a theory to be solved by theologizing, as if the calculative mind could solve its mysteries through abstraction. The cross can only be narrated, beheld, and shared as a transforming testimony—proclaimed in sermons, symbols, and parables, in the poetry and hymns of lives it has rebirthed. For over four decades, Brian Zahnd has been a poet-preacher-

prophet of the cross. I daresay he's an eyewitness theologian who kneels at its foot. This book is his revelation of who he has seen there." -- Bradley Jersak, principal of St. Stephen's University, New Brunswick, and author of A More Christlike Word

"With the heart of a pastor, the mind of a scholar, and the soul of a Jesus follower, Brian Zahnd here shares the fruit of his long, unhurried contemplation of the cross of Christ. His keen insights liberate us from flawed atonement theories based in retributive justice that have persisted for far too long, and he breathes new life into the mystery of the cross: the supreme centerpiece of God's love that radiates redemption and ushers us into the peaceable kingdom." -- Eric E. Peterson, pastor of Colbert Presbyterian Church

"The American church has inherited a desiccated theology of the cross, one that bypasses the rich and diverse images of salvation presented in Scripture and articulates atonement in terms of deity appeasement and individualistic salvation. In The Wood Between the Worlds, Brian Zahnd puts flesh back on the dry bones of our atonement theology. His holistic reading of the biblical texts recounts the salvation story with an eye toward what the cross meant and continues to mean for the world. Using literary allusions, Girard's scapegoat theory, and reflections on our current social and political reality, Zahnd refocuses us on the truth of the gospel message—that Jesus' death saves humanity not from hands of an angry God but from the violent powers that have corrupted us and held us in their sway. The efficacy of the cross, then, is not that it divides the damned from the saved but that it unites all humanity, reconciling us to one another in hope as we hunger for the final restoration of creation." -- Jennifer Garcia Bashaw, associate professor of New Testament and Christian ministry at Campbell University

CONTENTS

I dare to write about God, which is, admittedly, an audacious undertaking. That a hit of sentient soil would venture to say something about the nature of the ineffable eternal must seem like the most absurd of fool's errands. And yet I venture. I cannot help myself. The depth of my fascination with the One who is the answer to the question of why there is something instead of nothing makes it impossible for me to remain silent on the subject. I sympathize with King David when he said, "While I mused, the fire burned; then I spoke with my tongue" (Ps 39:3). And when I dare to speak about God, I do so not as the idly curious but as a reverent worshiper. I seek to understand God not as a cold and dispassionate scientist—a God-ologist, if you will—but as one who prays, worships, and kneels before his maker.

In seeking to understand God, lam not starring from square one—far from it. Theologically, I am not tasked with harnessing fire or inventing the wheel. I am the heir of a venerable theological tradition, among the grateful recipients of received revelation that has been passed down for millennia. I am working from the sacred text that is the Jewish and Christian Scriptures. In daring to write about God I do so with the language given to us in the Bible. I can truthfully say that my thinking is saturated in Scripture—the Bible is my primary vocabulary. Yet as essential as Scripture is, to say that the Bible clearly reveals the nature of God is to oversimplify the matter.

The Bible is a sprawling collection of texts often unwieldy and difficult to interpret. While some may speak glibly of the alleged perspicuity of Scripture, we nevertheless must acknowledge the uncomfortable reality of what Christian Smith has called "pervasive interpretive pluralism."' In other words, no matter how ardently we hold to the inspiration of Scripture and insist on its clarity, the text must be interpreted, and there is no denying we are far from universal agreement on biblical interpretation. Thus it behooves us to approach the task of theological interpretation with a good deal of humility.

In seeking to interpret the biblical text with a goal of gaining insight into the nature of God, we need a way of positioning ourselves within Scripture. We need to locate an interpretive center—a focal point from which we can interpret the rest of the Bible. We need to locate the heart of the Bible. As a Christian, I have a ready and, what seems to me, obvious location for the heart of the Bible: the cross. In the Christian gospel, everything leads to the cross and proceeds from it.

If the Bible is ultimately the grand saga of human redemption through divine intervention, the crucifixion of Jesus Christ is literally the crux of the story. The cross is the axis upon which the biblical story turns. Who is God? God is the one who was crucified between two criminals on Good Friday. Hints at the nature of God are subsumed into a full unveiling of the divine nature at Golgotha. On Good Friday the true nature of God is on full display in Jesus of Nazareth crucified. God is the crucified one. And yet, nothing is more central to the theological vocation than interpreting the

meaning of God as revealed in the crucified Christ. Theologians must gather worshipfully around the cross of Christ and speak from there. All that can truthfully be said about God is somehow present at the cross.

Yet I suspect that what can be said about God revealed in the crucified Christ is as infinite as God's own being. Though we can begin talking about the meaning of the cross, we can never conclude the conversation. The four living creatures around the throne of God who day and night sing, "Holy, holy, holy, / the Lord God the Almighty, / who was and is and is to come" (Rev 4:8), are not automatons on infinite repeat, but angels granted an infinite series of glimpses into the ever-unfolding glory of God. Every eruption of their thrice-holy adoration is a reflexive response to a new glimpse of God's glory. How the seraphim gather around the throne of God is how theologians should gather around the cross ofChrist.

The meaning of the cross is not singular, but kaleidoscopic. Each turn of a kaleidoscope reveals a new geometric image. This is how we must approach our interpretation of the cross—through the eyepiece of a theological kaleidoscope. That the word kaleidoscope is a Greek word meaning "beautiful form" makes this all the more apropos. I believe it is safe to assume there are an infinite number of ways of viewing the cross of Christ as the beautiful form that saves the world. In this book I seek to share some of the beautiful forms I see as I gaze upon the cross through my theological kaleidoscope.

Then there is the matter of how to speak of what is seen through the theological kaleidoscope. Not all theological language is the same. Though in modernity we have a penchant for technical prose when engaging in theological conversation, earlier ages—and the Bible itself—have a fondness for the less precise but also less limiting language of poetry. Theopoetics is, in part, an attempt to speak of the divine in more poetic language. It is an attempt to rise above the dull and prosaic world of matter-of-fact dogma that tends to shut down further conversation. If in this book I occasionally veer away from prose to employ slightly more poetic language in how I see the cross, this should not be regarded as fanciful, but as the best recourse I could find to describe the truth I believe the Spirit is helping me to see. It's an invitation to consider something

new. With that, let us begin what I hope will be a kaleidoscopic and theopoetic conversation about the wood between the worlds.

A Theopoetics of the Cross

The World on the Far Side of the Wood

And God said,
Let the dry land appear.
And it was so.
And God saw that it was good
Then God said,
Let the earth bring forth
Trees of every kind.
And it was so.
And God saw that it was good.
And there was evening,
And there was morning,
The third day.

Three trillion trees.
They tell me that's how many trees there arc these days,
though I imagine there was a time
when there were many more,
before the "cortege rhythm of falling timber."
God made trees on the third day.
On the third day—our ears perk up.
It's a green day—a day of loam soil and growing things.
A day so good that God saw it so, not once but twice.
An auspicious day—a good day to get married,
a wedding day—a day to turn water to wine.
On the third day God made trees of every kind.

Silver Birch and Blue Spruce,
Weeping Willow and Giant Sequoia,
Oak and Pine,
Apple and Orange,
Buckeye trees and Cypress trees,
the Banyan tree for Buddha to sit under,
a deciduous tree called Chinese Wonder,
the Sycamore who is a friend of mine,
the Thorny Locust who is not so kind,
and in the middle of the Garden was one of a kind,
the tree of life with the fruit of immortality.
When Adam and Eve were banished from Eden
for eating the forbidden fruit,
the tree was guarded by a fearsome angel
with a flaming sword turning every way.
But why?
I think it had to do with not getting stuck in the wrong kind
of immortality.

I had a dream once. I dreamed I was giving a lecture at a college, and in the lecture hall there were four entities I was pointing w and talking about a rock, a plant, a car, a person. I said, "These four have four kinds of being. The rock has being bur nothing more. The plant has king and life. The car has being, life, and awareness. The person has being, life, awareness, and the self-awareness we call consciousness. The capacity for self-awareness is also the capacity for God-awareness, but it comes at the price of death-awareness. For on the day that you hear of it you shall surely die." The dream was true, but I think I woke up too soon.

To be a God-aware person is not the final development. We are called not only to know God, but also to become like God. "Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness," said Elohim. "You are gods," wrote the psalmist. "You are gods," affirmed Jesus. "God became man that man might become god," insured Arhanasius. Theosis is our telos—the participation in the divine nature. But we only get there through death. As yet

we're but a seed, a caterpillar, a babe in the womb waiting to be born. Beloved, now we are the offspring of God, but it has not yet appeared what we shall be. This world is but a womb. More on that anon.

Three trillion trees.
Trees for firewood and lumber,
for warmth and shelter.
Fruit trees and olive trees,
for delectable food and luxurious oil.
Hardwood oak, walnut, and mahogany,
for crafting the necessary items of living...
And killing.
A club, a gallows, a cross. Ofcourse
A CROSS.
Plato said that at the center of the soul of the cosmos there is
a cross.
Plato would say something like that, prow-Christian that
he was.
David foresaw much,
when he spoke of a forsaken one with pierced hands,
as they gambled for his clothes.
But Plato may have foreseen even more,
when he spoke of a just one tortured and spat upon,
and last of all crucified. Crucified by being
nailed to a tree—a tree of death chat became the tree of life.
The tree that appears at the beginning of the Bible in the
middle of the garden,
And then reappears at the end of the Bible in the middle of
the garden city.
The Revelator called it the tree of life.
A clever scribe called it the tree of the Lamb.
And you know what? They're both right.
Three trillion trees and one became the wood between

the worlds.
God died upon a tree
that by God's own death
a door might be opened to the world on the far side of
the wood.
This world is a womb—a womb for the world to come.
This is a chrysalis cosmos still cocooned
awaiting metamorphosis.
I once caught a glimpse of the "new world unfurled."

I had another dream. dreamed was in a big and beautiful city—I think it may have been Barcelona. The cityscape spread before my eyes. I saw call buildings and wide boulevards. saw shops and restaurants. I saw people sitting in parks and strolling along sidewalks. It was good and it all seemed very real. Then there were sirens. (*In the Bible it's trumpets, but in my dream it was sirens.*) *Loud sirens! Everyone knew what the sirens meant. It was kingdom come! Some were exultant, some were afraid—but whether happy or frightened it was kingdom come for each and everyone.*

And as I looked, the cityscape before my eyes—which had seemed so real, so substantial—began to flutter, and then it began to war, as if it were made of mere fabric And as the fabric of the cityscape began to tear away, there appeared a new city, a new Barcelona, if you will. The new city was not entirely different, for there was a continuity with the old city, but the new city was far more glorious, far more dazzling, far more beautiful, and far more substantial. For here we have no enduring city, but there is an eternal city to come. I saw the holy city coming down from heaven adorned as a bride for her husband That heavenly city which is to come is the world on the far side of the wood.

Three trillion trees.
They came to be on the third day of Creation.
That double-blessed day of verdant goodness.
Three trillion trees.
One became the wood upon which the Son of God was hung.

A tree created on the third day.
The third day—the day of three trillion trees.
And on the third day of new creation
the stone was rolled away.
On the third day the gardener walked again in the garden.
On the third day the firstborn emerged from a cocoon
called death.
On the third day a new world was born.
There is the world that was and the world to come,
and between those two worlds
is the wood upon which the Son of God was hung.
Three trillion trees.
One became the wood between the worlds. <>

<>