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## Wordtrade Reviews: In the Wake of Signatures

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### Editorial Appraisals:

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

## **COVID-19 CONSPIRACY THEORIES: QANON, 5G, THE NEW WORLD ORDER AND OTHER VIRAL IDEAS** by John Bodner, Wendy Welch, Ian Brodie, Anna Muldoon, Donald Leech and Ashley Marshall, foreword by Anna Merlan [McFarland, 9781476684673]

How folkloric knowledge processes become exaggerated and facilitated through relatively new digital social media to exasperate the pandemic. An important foray into confluence folklore and public health.

As the novel coronavirus (Covid-19) spread around the world, so did theories, stories, and conspiracy beliefs about it. These theories infected communities from the halls of Congress to Facebook groups, spreading quickly in newspapers, on various social media and between friends. They spurred debate about the origins, treatment options and responses to the virus, creating distrust towards public health workers and suspicion of vaccines. This book examines the most popular Covid-19 theories, connecting current conspiracy beliefs to long-standing fears and urban legends. By examining the vehicles and mechanisms of Covid-19 conspiracy, readers can better understand how theories spread and how to respond to misinformation.

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The Covid-19 pandemic hovered over New York City for months before descending with a sudden, sickening crash in the second week of March. As the caseload ticked up-42 people, then 95, then a dawning, dizzying realization it wasn't going to slow down any time soon—the mayor declared a state of emergency. The governor placed a ban on gatherings over 500 people. The quiet, edgy sense of rising panic could be felt in the streets, the grocery stores, the suddenly anxiety-provoking subway.

And then the fake text messages started to flood in, forwarded from people supposedly in the know.

A friend just alerted me," one read, "that her friend who works in the emergency management team at the NYPD plans to put containment actions in place this weekend." The text went on to claim that the subways would be partially shut down, all non-emergency vehicles would be banned from the road, and that everyone needed to stock up on cash and food: "Groceries and ATM machines will have limited ability to be refilled? Another widely circulated, entirely fake missive claimed to be from a personal friend of the former mayor's daughter—a wealthy, connected person, the subtext went—who was said to also be preparing for a coming emergency shutdown of the city.

More messages started to circulate nationally: the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) would institute a nationwide lockdown. "Friends of friends" who worked at the CIA and the renowned Cleveland Clinic made similarly dire warnings.

"They will announce this as soon as they have troops in place to help prevent looters and rioters? one message read, supposedly from a friend working at DHS. 'He said he got the call last night and was told to pack and be prepared for the call today with his dispatch orders?

The texts were all fake, of course, and their most dire predictions were untrue, but they worked. They sowed panic, and they were spread by people who knew better. As I sat in New York, anxiously checking my phone, I began to get them too.

I lived in New York City for seven years before moving to Los Angeles, but I was back that horrible week in March for a work trip. It was a fitting, and awful, place to watch as our lives began to change for what would prove to be a very long time. And as I started to get obviously bogus messages about the NYPD's 'emergency management team"—not a real entity—I worried, for the first time, about how intimately misinformation would affect the people I loved during this pandemic. I packed my bags and flew home, several days early, on an entirely full, dead silent plane, full of equally panicked people. I haven't been able to return to New York since.

The text messages were debunked, but the story soon had a new wrinkle: U.S. intelligence agents, speaking anonymously to the New York Times, said in April that they believed some of the messages were amplified by "Chinese operatives" seeking to sow panic and division in the United States. The veracity of that information, too, was hard to pane; citing national security, the intelligence agents didn't provide detailed evidence.

In all, that time was a perfect, and perfectly chilling, premonition and capsule demonstration of how conspiracy theories, misinformation and terrifying rumors would come to embody the coronavirus pandemic era. As I write this six months later, the world is still gripped by the pandemic, and by the various kinds of twisted, misleading and extremely harmful narratives birthed or given new life by this terrible moment. Claims that coronavirus is fake or a bioweapon engineered to kill millions of people

have circulated globally; chapters two and four cover several of these and the context that spawned them. Bogus health products like Miracle Mineral Supplement—a longtime faux miracle "cure" for many ailments that is, in reality, just bleach—have been promoted as a coronavirus cure. (To make matters worse, the president of the United States casually suggested ingesting "disinfectants" as a possible Covid cure.) Doubts about a coronavirus vaccine have been effectively sown before one is even available, as you will see in chapter five. And, like never before, we're having a global discussion about conspiracy theories: where they come from, how they travel, and how they distort the ways we see the world.

Conspiracy theories, in the most fundamental sense, seek to explain upsetting events by identifying a supposed secret group of evildoers who must be opposed in order to bring the world back into a state of calm and order. As the authors of this book note, conspiracy theories can take on a shape similar to myth: a set of outsized but recognizable shapes that help simplify—and, more often than not, dangerously oversimplify—a complicated time.

Six months in, the mythology around Covid-19 isn't quite set. The ground is still shifting and fertile. And so opportunists are busy trying to plant seeds that they hope will grow into something favorable for them.

The fake texts were among the first wave of attempts at conspiracy theory narrative about the virus. They also identified a key theme: the idea that world governments would use the pandemic to impose new and frightening amounts of control on its citizenry. (In fact, in a bitter irony, the National Guard was deployed during the Covid-19 pandemic, but not because of it. Instead, the Federal government used the Guard to try to quell widespread protests that arose after the murder by police officers of George Floyd in Minneapolis.) Read all about the New World Order in chapter six.

In general, as you'll read in chapter eight, "the pandemic has been a boon to fringe political parties and social movements who have used conspiracy theories as a Trojan horse to recruit new members and expand their networks," from 5G conspiracy theorists to far right groups to those seeking to frighten, exploit and misinform Black Americans. The anti-vaccine movement has spread fears about a potential Covid-19 vaccine so effectively that an August poll from PBS NewsHour, Marist and NPR found that 35 percent of Americans said they won't get a vaccine when it becomes available, a number particularly high among Republicans. And as millions of people sat at home, furious, panicked, and scrolling social media, Pizzagate claims have made a worldwide recurrence.

That's not as surprising as it seems: Pizzagate depicts the elites as literally vampiric, feeding on the blood of the young or abusing them sexually. It's a fitting conspiracy theory for a time of economic and social unrest, when anger at how many world leaders have botched the response to this disease is widespread. Signs of social inequality are grimly heightened in the age of Covid-19. While 1.6 billion children around the world are unable to attend school, according to UNICEF, the New York Times' Style section reported in August that in coney places like the Hampton, rapid testing, which can run up to \$500, is the "new velvet rope," allowing the rich to attend dinner parties and concerts again.

Conspiracy theories reflect reality back to us in heightened, twisted forms, and they direct blame, in profitable and often hateful ways. The Covid-19 pandemic has shown that, in spades.

As I write this, life in the United States and many other countries hasn't returned to normal. We're a grieving world: mourning the mass death this virus has caused, the cultural institutions it's destroyed, the places it has touched and warped. Its chilling hand is everywhere. But we desperately hope that chill is not permanent, and are working to illuminate places where others have exploited fear to try and make it so. As we dream

in September 2020 of a coming thaw, my hope is that you read this book in a better and calmer time. Ideally, with the benefit of hindsight, you'll be able to more clearly see the forms that conspiracy theories took in this era, and resolve—as we've resolved so many times before—to greet frightening events with knowledge instead of fear, and with facts instead of conspiracy theories. It's no exaggeration to say that our future depends on it.

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Conspiracy thinking might have always been part of our lives, but in times of great uncertainty, it manifests everywhere. The first pandemic of the social media era meant that theories spread faster than, well, a virus. The Flu Pandemic of 1918 (often referred to as "Spanish Flu") encouraged its own conspiracy thinking, but at that time a rumor's spread relied on word of mouth and sensationalized journalism, bolstered by anti-immigrant sentiment. All these were in abundant supply, but nothing fans these sparks into a fire nowadays like the Internet's swift and far-reaching presence. The disease associated with the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) emerged when, in political and a few other contexts, conspiracy was already almost the default way of understanding the world.

This work draws heavily on social media examples throughout the early months of the pandemic, including but not limited to YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, 4chan, and Facebook. Names were changed or removed from these public posts, and the authors practiced their respective discipline's ethical fieldwork guidelines in collecting. Individual authors also held conversations with colleagues via social media or other communication forms; these are identified separately from public posts as private Zoom meetings, phone calls, etc.

We wrote from March through July of 2020, which means George Floyd's murder by police occurred mid-writing; as we worked, we watched societies change. Subsequent protests transformed aspects of the pandemic and introduced a host of traditional and novel rumors and conspiracy theories. While our analysis is informed by these, we could not cover subsequent events with the scholarly rigor and cultural sensitivity they deserve. Others will write those important books later.

You will see several ways of approaching conspiracy theory in this work, given that the team of writers includes public health policy specialists, folklorists, nonprofit directors working in marginalized communities, a medievalist, a speech and communications instructor, and a journalist; atheists, Christians, and a Jew; people of color and people of European descent; Americans, Canadians, and an ex-pat Brit. We wanted to bring a well-rounded experience to the discussion. We had a grand time introducing one another to our takes on conspiracy theory (and life) while dicing up how we would cover the various topics. You may see occasional differentiation among the voices of those writing

because there were six authors. This divergence of voices is perhaps a meta-narration of one of the major themes running through this book: consider the source. That advice has become one of the foundational rules to assessing news and information from any medium. Who said it, when, and why? Our six authors are all academics, each individual bringing a piece to the whole, each speaking in their own authentic voice with unique lived experiences behind their interpretation of facts. Such is life. Would that such ideas were a little less divisive these days. Perhaps we should teach children to discuss hot topics with cool heads in the same way that we teach how to share scissors rather than run with them.

That brings us to a second recurring theme throughout this book, dealt with specifically in the concluding chapter: how to talk to those who disagree with our stance on a particular conspiracy theory. As in, "that's not a conspiracy theory; it's true!" How do we respectfully defend our position with those we love who may wholeheartedly embrace, for instance, QAnon and the Qult (as they spell it) that it has become?

More than ever these days, we need to understand the ways in which conspiracy theories have entered mainstream politics through astroturfing, amplification, and political weaponization—all terms you will find in the first chapter. This book was written for three types of reader: those interested in the pandemic's societal effects; scholars of conspiracy theory, journalism and public relations, rhetoric, speech communication, storytelling, etc.; and university students required to read in depth about any of those topics. This book is also a record of the crisis for future generations, who we fervently hope will lack firsthand experience of what living through a global pandemic was like.

We spend considerable time in the first chapter outlining the structural composition and popular uses of conspiracy theories, in preparation for explaining where the pandemic's conspiracy theories followed expected patterns, and where they flew far afield or even created new conspiracy theories. (Among other concepts you will discover as you read is that conspiracy theories tend to recycle and update rather than spring newly formed from a novel crisis.) If you want to skip all the backgrounding theory and dive into the more intense elements of Covid-19 conspiracy theories, jump over to Chapter Two, but keep in mind that several concepts referenced later are explained in the first chapter. Also, if you are the student mentioned above and you skip Chapter One, you might not ace your final. Just saying.

In Chapter Two, which is about origins, you will find background information on contamination, dirty others, and the double-edged sword of why people want stories to tell about beginnings—plus why science needs those tales to be accurate. Next, we dive into the long, twisted roots of how nothing new, even a novel coronavirus, ever moves that far from the ancient origins of anti-Semitism and the desire of any given group to dominate another. From there we isolate legends that appeared in communities of color, and also show you how historic trauma and earned mistrust factor into differentiating true conspiracies from conspiracy thinking and theory. A long history of health disparity in communities of color has bloomed into a prickly bush of "here we go again" vigilance regarding medical safety and public health. There is also a section on militias, explaining how they fit into and manipulate conspiracy theories for their gain.

Chapter Five then moves into anti-vaccination thinking—and trust us when we say, Covid-19 proved a boon to the anti-vaxxers. This group is one of the most educated and motivated in conspiracy-land; we have tried to avoid mischaracterizing their positions by differentiating between their stances against

childhood diseases, and a novel global health threat. That chapter paves the way for specific concerns among global End Times adherents, people who believe that a Mark of the Beast (plus all that goes with it) have been accelerated by Covid-19's bursting into the world, which again pulls in militias and the boogaloo movement.

From there we hop into how ostension (the acting out of legend and related narratives like conspiracy theories) factored into QAnon and the Deep State, a prevailing conspiracy theory that has become a lucrative business for some which is approaching near cult status. QAnon hit public awareness during the early months of the pandemic because of Eduardo Moreno, the train engineer charged with one count of train wrecking. No one was injured after Moreno tried to ram the USNS Mercy hospital ship docked in Los Angeles's harbor with his train. He jumped the tracks because he believed the ship was there to transport child slaves (Flynn 2020). As old as Armageddon and child abduction based as like QAnon are, one new kid on the block appeared in the top conspiracy theories related to Covid-19: SG technology and their towers. We take you on a tour through the fears, the science, and the scuttlebutt of this novel conspiracy theory for a novel coronavirus.

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## Affirmative dismissal

...Besides motivational interviewing, you have the option of affirmative dismissal. Both techniques focus on the person who holds the conspiracy theory rather than its content. Affirmative dismissal is a behavior that many women who grew up in church environments will recognize, but the terms describing it differ widely. We chose "affirmative dismissal" because it is so descriptive of the core values behind the technique; it could also be described as assertive sidestepping.

Someone you love says to you, "I totally believe Bill Gates is going to use his vaccine to microchip us all and track our movements. It's gonna be the Mark of the Beast." You could fire back facts, but instead you search for the core fear or belief in that person's kernel narrative. (Remember those, when the conspiracy theory is boiled down to a mere sentence or concept as a shorthand for the whole piece?) If you know this person well, odds are good you already know the core of the fear or need expressed. You hug the person (assuming they are a member of your communal household and therefore following safe quarantine practices) and say, "I totally believe your life is awesome and worth having. I totally believe there will be a Mark of the Beast someday. I don't believe Gates is setting it up. Our lives are exciting enough to track, but other people's aren't so why would he?"

This method sometimes leaves threads a person can pull on, but it also leaves relationships intact. And dialogue open. Your beloved mom, Cousin Tim, Aunt Sue, whomever: they have been affirmed that you heard what they said. You have put down a marker that you do not agree with them. You have offered one piece of information for why, but not in a combative way, or with dismissive humor. As two of the authors can affirm, women have used this for generations to avoid fights at family dinners. An added benefit of this assertive sidestepping is how often a loved one will later reopen the conversation voluntarily. When the conspiracy theory-holder asks for factual information, it is a different dynamic than when you try to offer it unsolicited. This is a positive benefit of affirmative dismissal.

## Starve them out

Not every situation requires affirmative dismissal, but the technique does add to a larger approach we should all keep in mind. We can help to starve out the narratives that depend on repetition and emotional responses for their life. Throughout the pandemic, professional coverage of a conspiracy theory on mainstream platforms accidentally bestowed a level of legitimacy that invited belief. "It must be true if even CNN and FOX are discussing it." Repetition creates casual acceptance without mindful awareness. In interpersonal communication we may sometimes choose to avoid arguments about conspiracy theories because strong negative emotions help to reinforce the notions of persecution and isolation some conspiracy theories rely on. These stories don't just feed on airtime; they feed on human emotions. It requires knowing when to know which technique to use, but sometimes refusing to feed the ego or attention needs of the teller can be the best way to dampen enthusiasm for a conspiracy theory.

"Look how angry she got when I told her she was wrong! She's been brainwashed!" may be the response you want to direct at your Aunt Sue, but it is also what Aunt Sue is thinking about you. Divert. Refine to engage. Starve the stories. Even though one of the tenets of conspiracy thinking is that mainstream refusal to cover it proves its dangerous truth, over the long haul, starving them of attention may kill conspiracy theories, as a fire dies for lack of oxygen. The trick, as we advised early in this chapter, is to stay engaged with an individual without reinforcing their conspiracy theory beliefs.

Similar advice is common on the Internet: don't feed the trolls. While much of our advice will be more difficult in online environments it is still important to recognize where and when shared social bonds allow you to engage with people and when you are just reinforcing and amplifying CONSPIRACY THEORIES by yelling at strangers. Also, social media does not provide private conversation unless you make it one. Where you and your loved one have a few thousand spectators watching your argument develop, people will jump in and divert energy. It is also way too tempting to both the spectators and yourselves to devolve into a "who's winning" space. If you get 37 likes and Cousin Tim gets 12, you have not "won" anything, but you have pushed away Cousin Tim. Motivational interviewing, affirmative dismissal, and starving the emotions out of the moment can all work online, but don't use them with strangers. For posts that have actual factual inaccuracies, report them. For posts that say mean things, remember that disinformation runs on emotion. In fact, how often have you shared a meme because you knew it was false? That's not helping.

To engage on the Internet with a stranger is to fling facts at a person who (1) does not know you; (2) has no reason to trust you (especially if you say, "I'm a doctor/nurse/academic who studies conspiracy theories"); (3) can easily dismiss you as something beyond the bounds of their world (an elite, a Democrat/Republican, a misogynist; it is easy to call names on the Net); and (4) will use you as further proof that they are correct. You will in fact reinforce the thing you wish to counteract, unless you do so in a positive, motivational, non-personal way. And even then, if you don't know the person, you have nothing to trade on. Be cautious where you expend energy online; you don't want to be part of the problem as an inadvertent reinforcer. If you must engage with strangers online, remember the pan-religious Golden Rule: treat others the way you want to be treated. And remember that disinformation feeds on emotion. Don't go there.

## Connection over isolation

Isolation results from conspiracy thinking, and those who share specific narratives tend to come together in a defensive community. Sometimes people are less wholehearted believers in the idea, for instance, that the virus began deliberately in a Wuhan laboratory, but their spouse says so, all their friends say so, and they just keep quiet. That could be your loved one, or it could be you. In either case, examining what being a member of a group means to you or your loved one again focuses on the theorist, not the conspiracy theory. What is Cousin Tim getting out of being the one to send out so many conspiracy posts every day: attention, affirmation, feeling like the big guy on campus? Why is Aunt Sue silent when her husband starts talking about the horrors of the Deep State? Likely Aunt Sue isn't in as deep as Cousin Tim, yet both need affirmation that they are not alone.

"You and I don't agree with everyone else in the family about this QAnon stuff, do we?" might be a good starting point for Aunt Sue. You do so much research!" affirms that Cousin Tim is smart. Send him a guide on standards of excellence for lab results, or how to form and test an unbiased hypothesis, and see if he can guide himself into a different kind of approval. Telling him that same information in a "you're doing it wrong" talk will not work; there's no guarantee that handing over a guide will, either, but it plays to his strengths and leads him in a productive direction. It's up to him to walk it.

As it is all of us. We live in strange times. It is natural to seek comforting answers to the hard circumstances engendered by the pandemic. The conspiracy theories we have covered in this book will continue to morph and change and more as will emerge as the consequences of the pandemic with its illness, deaths, economic challenges, social distancing, lockdowns and childcare issues stretch over the following months and years. Diligence is required to accurately assess threats, risk, information, and knowledge production. And these processes will be different depending on individual contexts but what will remain is that conspiracy theories that falsely identify people or groups as dangerous others, whether healthcare workers, members of a racialized community, peaceful protesters or public health officials, must be resisted. They are intellectual and emotional cul-de-sacs.

A world where utopia is just a massacre away is not one we want to live in. If we want to live in a world where people aren't looking for excuses to hate each other, we have to help tell the stories that unite rather than divide us. <>

## **THE MISSION: A TRUE STORY by David W Brown [Custom House, 9780062654427 Hardcover; 9780062655875 E-Book]**

How a Disciple of Carl Sagan, an Ex-Motocross Racer, a Texas Tea Party Congressman, the World's Worst Typewriter Saleswoman, California Mountain People, and an Anonymous NASA Functionary Went to War with Mars, Survived an Insurgency at Saturn, Traded Blows with Washington, and Stole a Ride on an Alabama Moon Rocket to Send a Space Robot to Jupiter in Search of the Second Garden of Eden at the Bottom of an Alien Ocean Inside of an Ice World Called Europa (A True Story)

Most Americans have probably never heard of Europa, one of the small moons circling Jupiter. Thanks to data sent back by the Galileo satellite in the 1990s, we know that it has a large saltwater ocean

bubbling with thermal activity underneath a miles-thick layer of ice. Since these are very much like the conditions that scientists believe led to the appearance of life on Earth, researchers have been yearning to undertake a closer investigation of Europa and Jupiter's three other icy moons.

But as Brown vividly details in his distinctive and engaging voice, ramping up for a major space program is a project of decades, requiring mind-boggling amounts of preparation across many different fields, not to mention many billions of dollars, which Congress, the president, and ultimately the public must be persuaded to spend. "In the end," Brown writes, "it would take seventeen years, six major studies, multiple missions approved, multiple missions abandoned, friendships formed and enmities established, funding raised and budgets lost, congressional hearings, unlikely alliances, technological breakthroughs, terrible losses, and stunning discoveries to get NASA to make it official." (p. 33)

A sweeping saga of a great scientific and human endeavor, **THE MISSION** is the first space science history of its kind: a work of creative nonfiction that not only delves into the science and engineering of the most ambitious science mission ever attempted by NASA, but also reveals the rich interior lives of the scientists and engineers behind it—their doubts, hopes, dreams, rivalries, successes, and failures. It is riveting reading not only for space enthusiasts, but for anyone seeking a dynamic, authoritative, and wide-ranging account of the ways the U.S. space program is probing the deepest mysteries of the solar system and life itself.

### The humans at the heart of space exploration

In his research, Brown conducted over one hundred interviews at every level of the American and European space programs, from graduate student interns to the administrator of NASA himself. He came to know not only the work these space explorers do, but the roads they took to get to the loftiest positions in their fields. Every story, he came to learn, began not with an astronomer fully formed from the womb, but some small moment from childhood that sparked an enduring love of science and engineering. As Brown recounts, NASA administrator Ed Weiler began his journey as a boy from an impoverished family, who attended a free summer camp at a nearby museum, which had a class on how to make your own telescope. That telescope revealed the universe to him, and he would go on to launch the Hubble Space Telescope, revealing the universe to us all. For geomorphologist Louise Prockter, it was a regular childhood visit to a local natural history museum, where suspended from the ceiling was a mesmerizing skeleton of a whale. She watched her father struggle as an adult student at an English university, doing biology homework at the kitchen table. For one class, he hung from his wall a poster of Earth's tectonic plates. She would, decades later, discover the first evidence for the existence of plate tectonics on another world.

Brown describes how these very humble beginnings can lead to human feats beyond the measure of single lifetimes. To the casual observer, missions to the outer solar system may sometimes seem to just happen: one day Pluto is anybody's guess, and the next, it's as real as the Moon, and the physical horizon of humankind is expanded by billions of miles. But those missions take thousands of individuals to achieve, decades to plan and launch, and years—if not decades—longer to reach their destinations.

What kind of person, Brown asks, devotes her life to a project knowing she won't live long enough to see it launch? With technology advancing daily, how does someone design a spacecraft twenty years in advance? How are certain science goals deemed most important when the once-in-a-lifetime mission

finally launches, and what trade-offs must be made along the way? Paradoxically, Brown shows how the struggles, tenacity, compromises, and inflexibility necessary for success make robotic space exploration one of the most deeply human of all forms of scientific investigation—a grand, multigenerational enterprise affecting everyone in the world.

## Europa Clipper

After three proposed Europa spacecraft that never were (Europa Orbiter in 1999, JIMO in 2003, and Europa Explorer in 2007) and one that almost was (Jupiter Europa Orbiter in 2010), Europa Clipper is now set to launch in 2024. It is scheduled to enter Jupiter’s orbit in 2030 and remain there for four years, at an estimated total cost of more than \$4 billion. Its development has proceeded in stages, like all NASA projects, but it was confirmed to move on to the final design and fabrication stage in 2019, just one stage short of assembly, testing, and launch. When finally deployed, it will “sail” past Europa as frequently as every two weeks, attempting to provide more definitive answers to one of humanity’s most tantalizing questions: Is there life beyond Earth?

## News-making revelations and vital context

Brown has previously made news with his journalism, including an op-ed for The New York Times on the effects of budgetary chaos on NASA. In a recent New Yorker feature, he was the first and only journalist to ever report from inside the highly secretive TeamX, where NASA develops its “mission impossible” technologies to cope with almost unimaginably extreme conditions. Now, he offers news-making revelations and vital context for America’s entire space program in **THE MISSION** on topics including:

- What will happen to the space program in the new Biden administration? The end of the Trump administration is good news for Earth science, possibly good news for planetary science, and very good news for a mission to Mars, according to Brown. Existing SLS rockets developed under the George W. Bush and Obama administrations can remain in service for pre-positioning supplies on the Martian surface in anticipation of humans to follow. Furthermore, the commercial space program built under President Obama has finally matured into a robust rival to government-built rockets, spacecraft, and landers. Elon Musk of SpaceX is desperate to put humans on Mars, and with greater government backing, he can see it through. In short,
- NASA’s Mars ambitions—which preceded even the Apollo program and its Moon ambitions in the 1960s— might finally be achieved.
- The Space Force and NASA’s budget. As the sixth branch of the nation’s armed forces, the brand-new U.S. Space Force is responsible for running the launch pads at Cape Canaveral, providing missile launch detection, and developing new defense-related space technologies. This will have positive trickle-down effects on the civilian space sector, and for NASA in particular. Despite wild overestimations by those who do not follow the space program, NASA’s budget is one-half of one percent of the federal budget. The agency is perennially cash-strapped and lacks much-needed funds for technology development. But the Defense Department is like a bottomless pit of money, and because of those tens of billions of dollars spent by Defense on the Space Force, new hardware technologies are available to NASA, free of charge, like the ones that helped inaugurate the Faster-Better-Cheaper era of space exploration.

- How the federal budgetary process harms NASA. Brown reveals just how greatly the government's broken budgetary process punishes NASA, how it has affected the space program since the Apollo program, and how, in the annual effort to save millions of dollars, the government wastes hundreds of millions. This isn't a partisan issue; Republicans and Democrats are equally guilty. Brown spent years interviewing officials at NASA headquarters, in Congress, and across the federal government, to uncover this ugly aspect of a noble endeavor.
- China's lunar ambitions. The Trump administration abandoned Obama-era efforts to put astronauts on Mars, setting NASA's sights instead on returning to the Moon. This is in stark contrast to the Chinese space program. Where the U.S. has been unfocused, China has been methodical in its lunar aspirations. It knows how to land on the lunar surface and is building a program that will soon see Taikonauts plant the Chinese flag where once stood the American one.
- Mars 2020. In 2021, the Mars 2020 mission will land on the Red Planet, in the penultimate mission of a robotic Mars program going back to the early 1960s. Resurrected after being cancelled entirely in 1999, it inaugurated the most successful string of space missions in NASA's history—ten successful Mars missions in a row. The United States is the only nation with the technical expertise to land on Mars, and certainly the only one with a prayer of landing astronauts on Mars. But such institutional knowledge must be preserved, Brown warns. A success cadence cannot stop (as the Trump administration has sought to do by turning attention back to the Moon), or the U.S. will find itself starting all over again.
- SpaceX. Elon Musk's SpaceX company is the most dynamic force in space exploration today. Before SpaceX, when a rocket launched, after its payload was flung into the cosmos, the rocket would splash down into the ocean, startling a lot of very confused fish. Today, those rocket boosters land upright at spaceports and on barges in the ocean. The success of SpaceX is often contrasted with the government-mandated rocket, the SLS/Artemis-I. Ironically, as revealed in **THE MISSION**, neither would exist without the other. Nobody should love SLS more than its arch nemesis, SpaceX.
- Space Launch System (SLS)/Artemis-I rocket. In **THE MISSION**, Obama administration insiders reveal how this program was resurrected from the dead after they killed it, in exchange for congressional support for the Affordable Care Act. In addition, Brown reveals an unexpected benefit for such a powerful rocket: it can fling small robotic spacecraft like the Europa probe to the deep outer solar system with relative ease. In short, the launch of SLS/Artemis-I inaugurates a new era in space exploration. It can get astronauts to the Moon but can also cut years from the travel time of spacecraft to the farthest reaches of the solar system. Without SLS, it would take eight years to reach Jupiter. With SLS, it will take three.
- The International Space Station. As Brown reveals, the International Space Station was not built because NASA wanted to do amazing science in space; just the opposite. In fact, many worthy science programs were canceled entirely to pay for the space station. More than anything else, it was a way to employ the very capable rocket scientists of the former Soviet Union after that nation's collapse and keep them from going to work for hostile nations. Beyond that, it was a way for the CIA to try to uncover the secrets of the Soviet aerospace industry and its capabilities.

- The James Webb Space Telescope. The James Webb Space Telescope, the successor to the wildly successful Hubble Telescope, is one of the great engineering marvels of the modern age, but as Brown describes, it nearly destroyed the American space science program. To pay for it, the White House nearly ended the part of NASA responsible for landing rovers on Mars and exploring Europa. The launch of the telescope frees up billions of dollars that can now go toward exploring the farthest reaches of the solar system, and to funding very real missions of Jules Verne-like wonder, from quadcopter “drones” flying through the skies of other worlds, to submarines in alien oceans.
- The Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) or “Star Wars.” Brown details the story behind this Reagan-era Defense Department program to develop a missile defense shield, popularly known as “Star Wars.” Tens of billions of dollars were spent on the program before it was eventually subsumed by the Missile Defense Agency under the Clinton administration. And while a missile defense shield was never built, the technology development that went into the program would eventually filter down to the civilian sector and revolutionize NASA.
- The importance of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) education. Brown tells the stories of how simple introductions to STEM and STEM-related fields put the men and women at the center of his story on paths to become the world’s foremost experts in their fields, and the leaders of some of the world’s most advanced and consequential scientific investigations.

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## Review

“Brown skillfully braids biography, science, obsession, and accounts of bureaucracy-wrangling into this mesmerizing tale of ‘good, bare-fisted science.’ Salted with pop culture references and humor, Brown’s fascinating outing will entertain anyone curious about space exploration.” — Publishers Weekly, Starred Review

"The inner workings of NASA through an enthusiastic account of an interplanetary probe to a distant moon... A delightful slice of NASA life." — Kirkus Reviews, Starred Review

“Brown leaves no door closed as he covers the science, logistics, personalities, and politics of this extraordinary NASA mission. His extensively researched, humorous, raucous, dramatic, and pop-culture-and science-fiction-laced immersion in planetary science will have readers hanging on every word.” — Booklist

"This is one of the most impressive works of nonfiction I've ever read. It defies genre in many ways. It's science, yes, but it's driven by characters—brilliant, real-life scientists with contagious determination. David W. Brown turns complex planetary science into lyrical, accessible prose. It was compulsively readable and astonishing in scholarship." — Erin Entrada Kelly, Newbery Medal-winning author of Hello, Universe

"With deftness and vigor, David W. Brown brings to life the intricate science, the historical heft and, most exquisitely, the beating hearts at the center of his sprawling, immersive story. With rich

characters, an epic struggle and a Herculean resolve, **THE MISSION** is an extraordinary tale, extraordinarily told." — Megan Abbott, author of Give Me Your Hand

"Europa is the sparkly jewel of the Jupiter system and learning its mysteries is a delight, but it's the people and their dreams and their stories that shine in **THE MISSION**. David W. Brown deftly weaves together the science, the history, and the politics to write the definitive account of one of NASA's most exciting upcoming missions." — Dr. Mike Brown, Caltech astronomer and author of How I Killed Pluto and Why It Had It Coming

"Absolutely riveting from the very first page. David W. Brown is a beautiful writer who brings this incredible story to life in sharp, surprising prose. It is a true pleasure to read." — Aryn Kyle, award-winning author of The God of Animals and Boys and Girls Like You and Me

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## Key Figures in **THE MISSION** by David W. Brown

### THE SCIENTISTS

- Robert Pappalardo, a planetary scientist, one of the first hired to advise NASA on a possible Europa mission, who as a young boy constructed a Styrofoam model solar system containing this tiny moon of Jupiter.
- Louise Prockter, a British-born geomorphologist and former typewriter salesperson, and the first person to detect the movement of tectonic plates on another world.
- Carl Sagan, a world-famous astrophysicist and popularizer of space science, host of the hit PBS television show "Cosmos."
- Edward Weiler, the head of NASA science missions, who previously ran the Hubble Space Telescope team for nineteen years.
- Curt Niebur, a program scientist at NASA headquarters, who kept the outer planets program alive.
- Fran Bagenal, a British-born planetary scientist and one of the longest-serving and most prominent women involved with the mission to Europa.
- Ralph Lorenz, a planetary scientist.
- Susan Niebur, an astrophysicist.
- Werner von Braun, a rocket scientist for Hitler's Germany who was brought to the United States after World War II to become "the father of America's space program."
- Don Blankenship, a geophysicist and Antarctica scholar from the University of Texas at Austin, an expert on ice and how it might behave on Europa.
- Ron Greeley, a geologist, and the "maestro conducting the symphony" of the Europa team for years, almost killed in a car crash as a young man.
- Dave Senske, a planetary scientist.
- Jim Head, one of the earliest planetary scientists, who helped to train the Apollo astronauts in geology, and later helped train Robert Pappalardo and Louise Prockter, who worked under him as graduate students at Brown University.

## THE ENGINEERS

- Karla Clark, an engineer at Jet Propulsion Laboratory, one the longest-serving and most critical members of the Europa team.
- Todd May, a materials engineer and expert in space flight, instrumental in integrating the Russian components of the International Space Station with the U.S. ones.
- Tom Gavin, an engineer.
- Barry Goldstein, an engineer.
- Brian Cooke, an engineer.

## THE ADMINISTRATORS

- Daniel Goldin, the NASA administrator from 1992 to 2001.
- James Green, the head of planetary science at NASA.
- Alan Stern, a planetary scientist and NASA science missions lead.
- Mike Griffin, the NASA administrator from 2005 to 2009.
- Lori Garver, the deputy administrator of NASA from 2009 to 2013.
- Joan Salute, a program executive at NASA headquarters.

## THE CONGRESSMAN

- John Culberson, a U.S. congressman from Texas.

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## A Q&A with David W. Brown, author of **THE MISSION**

**Q:** **THE MISSION** has been described as “*The Right Stuff* with robots,” “genre-defying,” and “Homeric,” “and it’s also been compared to *The Iliad*. What about the book invites such analogies and characterizations?

**DB:** **THE MISSION**, I think, is best read the way you might read poetry: with special attention to its lyricism, sentence construction, and paragraph arrangement, and watching for recurring motifs and unorthodox stylistic choices that, I hope, enhance the storytelling experience rather than call attention to themselves.

The story involves a team of quirky, clever scholars who are practicing a new science and attempting to launch an advanced spaceship to a very complicated place. That could be a lot, so I wanted the reader to remain grounded with playful and expressive storytelling techniques that have been around since the dawn of the Western Canon. It’s squarely a work of creative nonfiction, which lends itself to comparisons with *The Right Stuff*. It is humbling and intimidating to be mentioned in the same breath as Tom Wolfe, let alone be compared to him—but I’ll take it!

**Q:** *Would you call this a science book? Who do you envision its reader to be, and do we have to like science to like your book?*

**DB:** This is not a science book. The main characters happen to study space, but this book was written for people who don’t customarily read books about scientists. A reader interested in space will absolutely love this book, its fidelity to the science, and its look into the opaque, competitive world of

NASA exploration. But that interest is unnecessary; every reader will be drawn into the tall tale of a wildly improbable group who did an amazing, impossible thing.

The ideal reader of the book is someone who loves books but doesn't know the difference between an asteroid and a black hole—and doesn't care to know. The science is precise—and written carefully for both scholars and laypeople to appreciate—but is incidental. The words are the point of this book, and I hope readers come away with a greater appreciation for the malleability of the English language, and the sometimes-unexpected ways it can be employed to tell a sprawling story.

*Q: Your book has a long subtitle: How a Disciple of Carl Sagan, an Ex-Motocross Racer, a Texas Tea Party Congressman, the World's Worst Typewriter Saleswoman, California Mountain People, and an Anonymous NASA Functionary Went to War with Mars, Survived an Insurgency at Saturn, Traded Blows with Washington, and Stole a Ride on an Alabama Moon Rocket to Send a Space Robot to Jupiter in Search of the Second Garden of Eden at the Bottom of an Alien Ocean Inside of an Ice World Called Europa (A True Story). Whose idea was this?*

DB: I am stridently anti-subtitle; the original title of the book did not have one. There was some concern at the publisher that I was limiting the book's audience by foregoing one. I trust the Custom House and William Morrow team, and want people to read this book, so I decided if they wanted a subtitle, I'd give them one. The book endeavors to break form whenever the opportunity presents itself, and I figured the reader ought to know what to expect when he or she picks it up off the shelf.

*Q: How did you learn about the epic story told in **THE MISSION**?*

DB: I stumbled onto this story while working on an unrelated magazine assignment. In passing, someone I interviewed mentioned that we were only a few years away from having no active exploration missions beyond the asteroid belt. For the first time in decades, the outer planets of the solar system would go dark—something I found depressing and wanted to know more about. I was told to reach out to Louise Prockter at the Applied Physics Laboratory, who was busy and important and would certainly say no to an interview. I reached out anyway, and Louise carved 30 minutes from her schedule for me the next day. A testament to her passion, thirty minutes turned to three hours, and I learned about the mission to Europa she and her colleagues hoped to launch. We spoke again the next day for four hours. The more I learned about the mission—but more importantly, the more I learned about how hard she and her colleagues had been working for so long to get a mission approved—the more I realized that there was a book here. I couldn't believe no one had yet written it. And since I know there will be hundreds of books written about the Europa mission sequence, I decided to write the definitive account, and do so in a way that no one else would be able to.

*Q: In what ways might the outcome of the current Mars 2020 Mission change the direction of NASA's focus in the coming years, or impact the fate of the Europa mission?*

DB: Mars 2020 is part one of a mission sequence designed to return a pristine sample of Martian soil to Earth for analysis. The mission—which caused NASA initially to cancel all plans to go to Europa—was sold as a cheap re-flight of old Mars technology. By launch, the Perseverance rover became an almost complete redesign, going over budget by \$500 million—and they added a helicopter. This sort of thing happens because, as described in **THE MISSION**, NASA is culturally wired to prioritize Mars missions

over everything else. (Indeed, long before there was an Apollo program to go to the moon, the agency's progenitors wanted to go to Mars.)

Once Europa Clipper found support in Congress and at NASA, the project would still suffer because of cost overruns by the Perseverance instrument payload. Thankfully, with that spacecraft launched and set for a Mars landing early next year, it can no longer harm Europa Clipper in any meaningful way. The question is what comes next. Both Mars 2020 and Europa Clipper are first steps in sequences of missions. Mars 2020 will cache samples of Mars dirt; those samples must still be launched back to Earth. Meanwhile, Europa Clipper will characterize the icy moon's surface and scout landing sites. A lander mission is necessary to actually scrape into the ice and look for animals that wiggle or swim. And there are other, competing bodies in the solar system in need of exploration. Still, Mars has a big advantage that other worlds do not: astronauts can go there. In a human spaceflight organization, that's all you need.

*Q: Getting a major space project off the ground is a complicated process that involves hundreds of people and countless moving parts. What are some of the recurring themes that emerged when unfolding this complex story?*

DB: The scientists, engineers, and managers whose stories I tell in **THE MISSION** are generally at the tops of their respective fields, but they weren't always. A big part of the story is how they grow, by necessity, into leaders. Bob Pappalardo's narrative arc, for example, is essentially how Mr. Spock becomes Captain Kirk. It's not enough to be a good scientist. You must be a good scientist who can also rally a community of rivals to support your ideas. You must be a good scientist who can also balance billion-dollar-budgets and manage armies of scholars. They don't teach that in university geology programs! And in almost every instance, hours of interviews yielded admissions of imposter syndrome. It is a testament to their perseverance that they could push through that and, in the end, triumph. But it is also a testament to science as a human enterprise, and the Confucian interaction of generations at work. It is a master and apprentice system, with young graduate students mentored by experienced researchers, and often studying very old data and science results, seeking to tease out new insights that will direct the future. There's a joke that it's not a Ph.D. until you cry in someone's office, and I heard a lot of breakdown stories, of simply being overwhelmed with the impossibility of it all. But in every instance, they persisted, and that is the sort of learned tenacity that, over years, yields grand adventures like that to Europa.

*Q: The breadth of your research and sourcing for the book is remarkable – from graduate student interns to the administrator of NASA himself. Can you elaborate on your research tactics and the scope of who you spoke with when writing the book?*

DB: Building the narrative was a painful iterative process. As I described earlier, without a timeline of events it felt like I was assembling a jigsaw puzzle that had another jigsaw puzzle mixed in the box. An analogy I've used before is writing a book about some platoon of soldiers in the American Revolution. Such a book does not require researching the history of the crown in the New World. That heavy lifting is already done, and you can really focus on the story at hand almost immediately. But in the case of **THE MISSION**, no such research was done. No such story was told. Histories have been written about NASA, of course, but the story of planetary exploration and why and how it came to be did not previously exist in the detail I needed. You can't tell the story of why Europa exploration was stymied by

NASA's obsession with Mars without understanding why the agency is obsessed with Mars. Which means before I could write about my little platoon, I had to figure out the history of the crown in the New World!

Moreover, a book like this requires a trust and intimacy with the people you are writing about that can only be built in-person and over a long period of time. As I would see again and again, the heroes of **THE MISSION** had been in the trenches for so long that I don't think it occurred to them that they were part of an epic story. For them, it was always about getting through the next battle. The interviews could be very emotional as they recounted things that felt a lifetime ago. It wasn't just the big things. I remember texting Louise Prockter one night, years into the project, asking if she watched the Flintstones as a child in London. It was for a single clause in a single sentence in a sprawling book, but those sorts of concrete details are everything. (Incidentally, she did watch the Flintstones.)

As for the breadth of people interviewed, it was important to me to get a holistic view of the Europa project. Graduate students have a very different perspective than the head of space science. In addition, everyone has their own motivations, and "villains" in the story, when I sat down with them, had very reasonable and oftentimes admirable rationales. And that was an advantage I have as an author. I can call the administrator of NASA and ask him or her: "Why did you do that?" It has been very satisfying to hear from the protagonists of **THE MISSION** as they finally get to read the book. I have been pleased to hear again and again that they learned new things about a project they've spent decades of their lives working on.

*Q: Tell us about the process of writing **THE MISSION**, which we're told took seven years.*

DB: It took several years just to build a timeline of events for the book. No real history existed, and for the first three years of the project, every time I went into an interview, there was a chance someone would upend my entire understanding of the history I had constructed. And because I did hundreds of interviews, every day felt like I was walking across a minefield.

The challenges of writing the book were manifold, and over the years, I recall each time I completed a chapter thinking, well, at least the hard one is finished. And then starting the next, and realizing that, no, this was the hard chapter. Science is always hard to write well for a lay audience, and planetary science in particular, because planetary is a multidisciplinary science. To tell the story, you can't just give the reader a quick primer on biology and drive on through to the end of the book. Planetary involves geology, geophysics, astrophysics, astronomy, chemistry, biology, and oceanography, among many other subdisciplines, and each of those needs not only to be taught, but to be taught to people with zero interest in the subject.

Moreover, **THE MISSION** should read like an epic poem being spun extemporaneously. It's hard to make a 500-page story read like a bagatelle, especially when it includes jaunty digressions on the complete history of the universe; the complex physics at the center of Jupiter; the byzantine manner in which laws are made in Washington D.C.; and the competitive forces within NASA headquarters to get a mission approved—while also giving twenty characters distinct voices in a sprawling, oftentimes twisting story.

*Q: Where does a work of creative nonfiction fit in the broader context of space and science writing?*

DB: I believe that overall, the science writing genre, and space science in particular, is ossified and generally bereft of the liveliness and inventiveness that you find in other areas of literature; it often feels hackneyed to anyone who's ever actually read a book—any book—from cover-to-cover. **THE MISSION** is my attempt to plant plastic explosives on the pylons holding up space science journalism, obliterate the genre's form, and insist future such books and journalists do better.

Whether I succeeded or not is up to the critics. While writing the book, I thought constantly of Orson Welles, and his famed line in *Citizen Kane* when asked if this was “any way to run a newspaper.” He replied: “I don't know how to run a newspaper. I just try everything I can think of.”

As to the book's tone, when you're walking through a NASA facility, you look over and see wooden crates nailed shut, and you realize that you are looking at boxes of spaceship parts. This, to me, was wondrous, and I wanted the reader to feel what I felt. This work is solidly part of the New Sincerity movement, written with zero irony or cynicism. Few things are more banal than the “jaded NASA book,” the NASA-can't-do-anything-right book. Well nobody has it all figured out. The men and women at NASA and in planetary science are trying everything they can think of, too, and hey, they found a way to explore an ocean on an alien moon. That's amazing, and we should feel amazed.

*Q: You've said that the prose, writing, and words are the “point of the book.” Can you tell us about the writing itself, some of the devices used, and how you used the narrative structure to create this big, rich story around the 20-year odyssey to reach Europa?*

DB: To help the reader get the full sweep of the story, I grounded it in one of the earliest and most familiar works ever composed: *Iliad*. The general idea behind the narration is that this is an old story that happens to be about space, and a thousand years from now, this is how we would tell it. Just as the early centuries of the Homeric epics were memorized in pieces and recited by firelight, the narrator of **THE MISSION** should read like someone who memorized this story in the oral tradition, and is, for the first time, speaking it aloud—uncertainties and all. The physical book held by the reader is a first draft penned by some fast-handed transcriber.

The influence of Tom Wolfe and Herman Melville are expressed throughout. Wolfe wrote in a realist, heightened style, his unorthodox punctuation and mannerisms less like most books of his time were written, and more precisely the way we tend to think—in exclamation marks and italics. Melville, meanwhile, is everything: *Moby-Dick* is the platonic ideal of a postmodern novel, penned years before even modernism appeared on the scene. Among other things, Ishmael's digressive narration, Melville's exuberance in writing entire chapters in new ways, and the super-heightened ending required to justify the many pages leading up to it and satisfy a reader so far invested in the story. There's also a maximalism to **THE MISSION**'s prose, which was inspired by David Foster Wallace's practice of giving the reader an abundance of information in order to facilitate a sort of outside-of-the-story-itself exchange between the author and the reader, specifically excluding the characters and story themselves.

Bringing all of this together—the foundation of the Western Canon; the foundational work of American literature; the realist, energetic, New Journalism work of Wolfe; the reader-writer pact of sincerity exemplified by the work of Wallace—a reader need not bring to the table a background in geophysics to read this book. (Though geophysicists, I know, will enjoy seeing their work so heroically represented.)

Through cultural osmosis, the non-science reader is already armed with everything he or she requires. The reader need only to enjoy a good yarn.

*Q: What do you most hope readers will take away from **THE MISSION**?*

DB: My hope is that readers will finish the book and come away with a new appreciation of what nonfiction is capable of. Creative nonfiction has the vitality to define twenty-first century literature. Many will pick up **THE MISSION** expecting a collection of facts—and there are facts aplenty—and a good story—and they'll get that, too—but I hope what they discover is an entirely new literary aesthetic. I tried to tell a compelling story in an interesting way, and in doing so, push the artform forward. The storytelling, I hope, reflects the grandeur and wondrousness of the story being told. And after a hard year of pandemics and political unrest, I think we could all use a little wonder. The book comes out in January 2021, and I hope it launches readers into the new year with a sense of optimism for what is possible, and for what lies ahead. <>

## **THE OXFORD HANDBOOK OF EGYPTOLOGY** edited by Ian Shaw and Elizabeth Bloxam [Oxford Handbooks, Oxford University Press, 9780199271870]

**THE OXFORD HANDBOOK OF EGYPTOLOGY** presents a series of articles by colleagues working across the many archaeological, philological and cultural subdisciplines within the study of ancient Egypt from prehistory through to the end of the Roman Period. The volume seeks to place Egyptology within its theoretical, methodological, and historical contexts, both indicating how the subject has evolved and discussing its distinctive contemporary problems, issues and potential. Transcending conventional boundaries between archaeological and ancient textual analysis, it stresses the need for Egyptology to seek multidisciplinary methods and broader collaborations if it is to remain contemporary and relevant. It therefore serves as a reference work not only for those working within the discipline, but also as a gateway into Egyptology for archaeologists, anthropologists, sociologists and linguists. The book is organized into ten parts, the first of which examines the many different historical and geographical perspectives that have influenced the development and current characteristics of the discipline. Part II addresses the various environmental aspects of the subject: landscapes, climate, flora, fauna and the mineral world. Part III considers a variety of practical aspects of the ways in which Egyptologists survey, characterize and manage landscapes. Part IV discusses materials and technology, from domestic architecture and artefacts through to religious and funerary items. Part V deals with Egypt's relations with neighbouring regions and peoples, while Part VI explores the sources and interpretive frameworks that characterize different phases of ancient Egyptian history. Part VII is concerned with textual and iconographic approaches to Egyptian culture, and Part VIII comprises discussions of the key aspects of ancient Egyptian scripts and philology. Part IX presents summaries of the current state of the subject in relation to a variety of textual genres, from letters and autobiographies to socio-economic, magical and mathematical texts. The final section covers different aspects of museology and conservation.

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This volume discusses a range of current debates into the ways in which Egyptologists are engaging with the problems and demands of moving towards greater collaborations across the social sciences if it is to remain a relevant discipline in its own right. Viewpoints from contributing authors are synthesized into a discussion of recent developments in the field from fresh research across both the archaeological and textual arms of the discipline. The volume considers the extent to which scholars need to be revising and re-thinking their research questions and moving towards greater collaborations within the discipline, and crucially outside of it. Moving the discipline forward is also about including voices outside of western discourses and into volumes such as this. The contributions from Chinese and Egyptian scholars therefore bring a fresh perspective to some current problems in Egyptological research particularly in cultural heritage management, museum curation, and investigating archaeological landscapes.

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Does Egyptology have an identity crisis? If we look back to the last decade, then the answer would probably be 'yes'. Over the last few years there has been a gathering consensus that the discipline needs to seriously search for its identity and relevance within the social sciences if it is to survive as an academic field in its own right. The main criticism levelled at Egyptology is that it remains stuck within its core narratives focused on religion, art, kingship, temples, and tombs. Recent conferences addressing these and other problems that Egyptology faces often turn to the founding of the subject for answers. I Moreno García<sup>2</sup> for instance suggests that Egyptologists are the problem, not the subject, because they continue to play the role of 'zealous keepers and unique interpreters of pharaoh's achievements', and because of the way in which the myth of "eternal Egypt" and its by-products continue to hamper our comprehension of the pharaonic world'.

We think, however, that survival and relevance of Egyptology lies not so much in navel-gazing about the past, but rather getting to grips with some of the more fundamental aspects of what original research should look like. First, what questions are we asking of material culture? Secondly, what practical and theoretical methods are we going to use to interpret these datasets? Thirdly, what role can multi-disciplinary collaborations play in taking Egyptological study in new research directions? And finally, is the next generation of Egyptologists ready to embrace these changes and challenge the orthodoxy of the subject? To fully engage with all four questions, much more needs to be done. For instance, our attendance at a 'Young Egyptologists' conference in 2015 made for uneasy listening given the general lack of fresh questions and new methods of interpreting material culture outside the rigid boundaries of traditional Egyptological discourse. There were little or no signs of any comparative and multi-disciplinary approaches to developing original research questions and methods, and in some instances, a rather dismissive reaction to taking on agendas that might threaten the orthodoxy. Although similar critiques have already been levelled at the rather dull and repetitive dialogues that remain threaded into the majority of international Egyptological conferences, apart from those looking at largely Predynastic material, it is certainly more alarming to learn that the next generation of Egyptologists is not significantly engaged in revitalizing our understanding of ancient Egyptian civilization.

In our view, this situation lies in a general under-appreciation and misunderstanding about what interdisciplinary research actually means in practice. Collaboration and designing research methods in an interdisciplinary framework is not unidirectional. Expanding our methods of interpretation in which we ask questions of material culture is also about allowing those outside Egyptology to have a voice. There are certainly cases where some scholars, particularly in the textual areas of the discipline, show a reluctance to allow any intrusion into these domains by non-Egyptologists. This volume is therefore an attempt to move the subject into more progressive comparative and multi-disciplinary agendas in terms of research and the questions we are asking. But, before we do that, we need to acknowledge the patience of all the contributors to this Handbook given its long history of gestation, initially commissioned in 2003 (and at first co-edited by Ian Shaw and Jim Allen) and its appearance now in hardcopy (some chapters having already been available online), which required all authors to significantly update their chapters. We therefore extend enormous thanks for these efforts in bringing this volume, at last, to fruition.

The long development of this volume however, far from being a negative, has enabled us to significantly broaden the canvas on which we can interrogate the discipline of Egyptology as it currently stands. Egyptology, probably more than any other discipline in the humanities, drowns in 'compendia' of one

sort or another that aim to provide historical overviews of ancient Egyptian civilization through largely western, 'top-down' discourses. Our aim has therefore been to re-model the way in which we present Egyptology as a discipline outside of the orthodoxy, which as David Wengrow remarks, 'evaluates claims of Egypt's uniqueness' (Chapter 2). Rather, we are aiming to address the imperative of re-thinking the ways in which we introduce comparative frameworks into our interpretative models and bring together the often polarizing textual and archaeological arms of the discipline, which, despite fighting talk, remain entrenched in their various camps. Universities, whether intentionally or not, further exacerbate this divide by usually prioritizing the need for 'textual' scholarship over the 'archaeological'. Therefore, our objective has been to integrate approaches to studying ranges of divergent material culture through ten broadly-based themes that aim to stimulate fresh debates, as a necessity, if the discipline is to remain relevant to future generations of students as well as scholars.

Moving the volume forward most significantly into both multi-disciplinary and multi-cultural arenas has been the inclusion of non-western perspectives on some key topics, such as in our opening theme, 'Egyptology: perspectives on a discipline', which examines the subject of Egyptology not only as a curiosity in its own right through its history within western Orientalist discourses, but as a cognate discipline in the social sciences. The story of the 'reception' of ancient Egypt which began in the 1960s, as Florian Ebeling (Chapter 4) remarks 'ends with the beginning of modern Egyptology in the nineteenth century...ancient Egypt was always a second-hand image in western culture handed down by the accounts of the Bible or classical literature'. The emergence of the term 'Egyptomania' in the nineteenth century is further remarked upon as a powerful conceptualization of anything that adopted forms of Egyptian art, yet, as Ebeling notes, this implies a rather 'irrational' interest in ancient Egypt which today is being heavily critiqued. For instance, 'Egyptomania' and ancient 'Egyptianizing' or 'Orientalizing' all need to be scrutinized, as Wengrow (Chapter 2) addresses, given that these views posit 'a timeless cultural dichotomy between East and West'.

Several authors note the impact of the series of books titled *Encounters with Ancient Egypt*, which emerged from a conference held at the Institute of Archaeology (UCL) in 2000. These eight volumes are still considered by many to be the most insightful series of English language works that address the status of Egyptology at the beginning of the twenty-first century. Although new publications addressing the problems that the discipline face have superseded this,<sup>6</sup> Andrew Bednarski (Chapter 1) still stresses the need for us to look back into the foundations of discipline if we are to move it forward. In many ways, it is Wengrow's chapter that sets the agenda for the scope of this volume and our aims in terms of grappling with the problems that the discipline has in remaining relevant. He aptly remarks that the way forward for the discipline is to make greater efforts to find a common language between 'the Arabic-speaking world and the European discourses out of which modern Egyptology arises'. The situating of Egyptology within the social sciences, as he argues, is therefore an important consideration in terms of developing more comparative, multi-disciplinary frameworks, and in particular placing Egypt within the diverse trajectories of social life in other ancient civilizations, such as Mesopotamia, India, China, South America, and Mesoamerica.

## Stretching Egyptology beyond European and American perspectives

Comparative work by Chinese Egyptologists brings into the volume a whole new arena of research that not only touches on the need for voices outside of European discourses, but as the chapter by Li

Xiaodong (Chapter 3) implies, a strand of study in which comparing the evolution of Chinese written characters with Egyptian hieroglyphs can open up significant new ways of pairing nationhood with writing. Yet, Egyptology as a discipline in Chinese universities is still evolving since its true integration into studies of Ancient World History, which only happened in the mid-1980s. There is a breathtaking enthusiasm for Egyptology in China, both in academic scholarship and throughout popular culture, which as Maher Eissa and Ashraf el-Senussi remark in their chapter on Egyptian museums (Chapter 61), has unfolded in Chinese tourism now making up one of the largest groups of visitors coming to Egypt since the 2011 revolution.

The establishment of the Institute for History of Ancient Civilizations (IHAC) at Northeast Normal University in 1985 made it one of the first university departments in China to run undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in Egyptology. This has been a milestone in terms of bringing non-western voices into debates about ancient Egyptian civilization. Yet, Chinese students still have to grapple with western biases not only through the dominance of Eurocentric ideas, but also because of a lack of publications in Mandarin. Currently, universities in China are still reliant on academic exchanges from Europe and the USA to move the study of Egyptology forward. Yet, as the discipline matures with now at least two doctoral students a year graduating and joining archaeological teams in Egypt, the future looks promising for the emergence of new ‘non-western’ approaches to the discipline.

In further developing discourses outside of Eurocentric ideas, several new additions to the volume have been made by Egyptian Egyptologists and archaeologists, who may often be side-lined when it comes to publications of this type. We can find numerous parallels with our Chinese colleagues in terms of the still poor number of Arabic publications in Egyptology, and of course, English remains the discourse of practically all conferences in Egypt. Western approaches to archaeological practice and conservation naturally loom large in post-colonial regions such as Africa, and recent critiques by indigenous archaeologists in Australia have steered attention towards the embeddedness of western ideas, particularly in cultural heritage management. Termed ‘authorized heritage discourse’ (AHD) the suggestion is that the western model is the only effective route to heritage management, yet, as numerous examples in Egypt indicate, the failure rate is high—(see Chapter 11). Never has it been so essential to seek fresh ideas about the ways in which we can finesse working relationships with local communities in managing Egypt’s antique heritage. Campbell Price (Chapter 60), in his fascinating, in-depth analysis of the ways in which ancient Egypt is ‘presented’ in western museums, sheds some valuable insights into the ways in which Orientalist discourses have lain behind attitudes of ‘western’ archaeological missions towards local communities. As Price points out, there has been an ‘assumed moral mandate of westerners to “save” pharaonic antiquities from the modern inhabitants of Egypt’, whereby ‘Concerned (western) experts were contrasted with native Egyptians—depicted as (at best) ignorant bystanders or (at worst) destructive peasants.’

### Issues concerning cultural heritage

The publicity surrounding the 2011 revolution and the subsequent sporadic looting, which in our opinion was vastly overplayed by the media, is a particularly good example of a tendency to perpetuate the myth that Egyptians do not value their own heritage sufficiently. In fact, as Maher and El-Senussi tell us in their chapter on Egyptian museums and storehouses (Chapter 61), there was little reporting of the instances in which some storehouses of artefacts were actually protected by local people, and in others,

considerable amounts of looted items were eventually returned. The illegal antiquities market is of course greatly profiting from the political and social fragility in countries such as Egypt, and its neighbours, and although we would like to have included a chapter on this topic, we were not able to commission it in time for the volume to appear this year. However, as Deborah Schorsch reminds us in her chapter concerning object conservation (Chapter 62) ‘conservators have an obligation to apply their specialized knowledge to recognize newly excavated artefacts and debunk false attributions intended to disguise illegal traffic’.

If we turn our attention to perhaps the biggest threat to Egypt’s cultural heritage, which comes largely from infrastructure development, then we tread a perilous path in terms of deciding who sets the agenda in balancing the social and economic needs of growing populations with those of archaeological conservation. Several archaeologists working in the field in Egypt have highlighted where these dangers lie, such as David Jeffreys (Chapter 9), in regard to the site of Memphis, and Egyptian archaeologist Adel Kelany together with Elizabeth Bloxam (see Chapter 11), in the more forgotten archaeological landscapes in the Eastern Desert and in the region surrounding Aswan (see Chapter 10). Through a series of case studies in the Wadi Hammamat and Aswan, the prevailing consensus lies with finding imaginative ways in which local people can be engaged in setting the agenda. This may sound like nothing particularly new, certainly in relation to the innovative methods of community engagement used to protect Egypt’s Islamic heritage where there are numerous success stories. For instance, in Cairo the ‘Hamam Project’ and Al-Azhar Park have exemplified what can be achieved through steering inclusive ‘bottom-up’ initiatives that work together with local people who live directly among historic buildings, thus giving them a stake in the future of their community. Yet, when it comes to Egypt’s antique heritage we step into a range of competing interests and ideas of managing sites that largely follow the western model (AHD), often supported by international funding agencies and other organizations such as the World Bank, European Union (EU), USAID, and UNESCO. In other words, ‘top-down’ solutions that largely disengage local custodians from decision making, to the extent that the whole machinery of heritage funding and allocation of resources ends up marginalizing those whom it is seeking to empower (see Chapter 11).

The tension that exists between ‘top-down’ bureaucratic, ‘expert-based’ perspectives, and those who actively have knowledge of local people’s viewpoints both of values and of the significance of places near to them is thus the framework surrounding the two case studies in the Wadi Hammamat and Aswan. What both studies incorporate are ideas that do not involve the deploying of large amounts of financial resources, or teams of ‘foreign’ experts, but more simply are finding ways of stewarding local initiatives that are already in existence. Successes are being made with this form of engagement by Egyptians working in the field in Aswan (see Chapters 10 and 11) as members of the Ministry of Antiquities Ancient Quarries and Mines Department (AQMD). What they have managed to do is to protect endangered sites through ‘bottom-up’ engagement with local people and contractors working in the area. Not only have they alerted local people to the significance of archaeological sites, that often contain a wealth of prehistoric rock art, but in return, contractors have provided the team with vehicles to travel to often quite remote sites. Steering contractors away from some of these sites and providing other locations to quarry has been a major success story in Aswan. We often assume that effective cultural heritage management in countries such as Egypt needs western money and experts to make it happen, but what these new approaches are proposing is the need for dialogues outside such alienating

processes. And (p. 6) perhaps most importantly, this kind of dialogue should involve Egyptians who are already successfully integrating sustainable managing of Egypt's Islamic heritage.

Another forgotten strand of debate in terms of museum curation, museums in general, and also the future of the ongoing mega-museum project 'The Grand Egyptian Museum' (GEM) is, who will the visitors be? Efforts to guide the sector into adapting to the significant downturn in tourism from 'western' countries, such as Europe and America, have meant re-thinking and prioritizing relevance first to Egyptian tourists, and also to markets in Asia. As Maher and El-Senussi inform us (Chapter 61), such moves are already underway and local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) now play a significant role in steering young curators towards prioritizing initiatives to attract local people. The Egyptian National Committee of International Council of Museums (ICOM Egypt), established in 2014, has been at the forefront of organizing lectures, workshops, conferences, and museum day events for museum curators, graduate students, researchers, and the public as well. Perhaps most important was the publication in 2016 of a museum booklet in Arabic 'Krasat Muthafia', which aims to 'raise awareness of the importance of museums for the Egyptian, and to spread the knowledge of Egyptian history and civilization'. Success stories in increasing Egyptian visitor numbers are notable at the self-directed 'Bibliotheca Alexandrina Museum' in which over 60 per cent of visitors are from local communities, and also the 'Nubia Museum' in Aswan, given its particular focus on displaying local Nubian traditions through time.

The drop-off in foreign tourists has therefore had some unexpected and positive outcomes in terms of driving cultural heritage initiatives and education more towards Egyptians themselves—the way forward in terms of sustaining Egypt's heritage. So where does this leave the foreign tourist market and museums such as the GEM? With foreign visitors from Asian countries, such as China, India, and Indonesia, as well as Arab tourists from the Gulf, far outnumbering those from other countries, some interesting challenges have been created to the ways in which 'ancient Egypt' is curated and displayed to these increasingly non-western audiences.

### Investigating archaeological landscapes

Other challenges that we face, in terms of recent geo-political events in the Middle East and north Africa, are the problems of advancing archaeological research 'in the field' in Egypt given the many security restrictions in accessing sites. With our own site in the Wadi Hammamat (Eastern Desert), for the last two years state security has not been forthcoming in giving us the permits we need to work there (see Chapter 8), and a case study of work on the settlement site of Gurob (Chapter 14) highlights a variety of practical problems encountered in another research project. Of course we are not alone: like others, we suffer the knock-on consequences of being low on the list in terms of research funding and are therefore unable to confidently set out any long-term field-based research agendas. Consequently, in terms of field methods, we are having to continually adapt and focus more on survey and the use of technologies that can speed up our documenting and mapping of sites. Also, as several authors point out in this volume, much more emphasis is now being placed on the education and training of Egyptian Egyptologists and archaeologists, who will ultimately be the new generation of field directors as foreign missions gradually withdraw. Adel Kelany and his team at the AQMD in Aswan are well aware of these responsibilities and challenges and are already running their own training of local Egyptologists, without the involvement of foreign missions. As he explains in his chapter (Chapter 10),

the ways in which they are adapting techniques in epigraphy to document rock art and inscriptions in the face of increasing destruction of remote sites in the numerous wadis north and south of Aswan, has been an internal development.

In turning our attention to surveying ‘archaeological landscapes’ rather than individual sites, we can therefore significantly enhance our ability to characterize and map large areas that would otherwise either be ignored or considered too time-consuming to document. Remote sensing using satellite imagery and aerial photography (including drone technology) has revolutionized the ways in which we can survey large archaeological landscapes, and importantly, monitor and track threats. Use of these technologies is of course a far cry from the early days of cartography and topographical mapping of Egypt’s archaeology and environment. David Jeffreys (Chapter 9) delves into the history of mapping Egypt’s landscapes and, using Memphis as a case study, discusses the ways in which new technologies such as remote sensing and free access to high resolution satellite images (e.g. Google Earth) provide the local detail of an ever-changing environment. These innovative methods can be used to model such phenomena as the movement of the Nile over millennia. The project at Avaris in the Delta, for instance, combines these new kinds of mapping with sediment coring and resistivity survey, demonstrating a relatively cheap and rapid way of mapping buried deposits without intrusive excavation.

Surveying of extensive procurement landscapes has truly been made possible with remote sensing techniques, using high resolution satellite images as a base map in combination with on-the-ground GPS technology to record features (see Chapter 8). These techniques have been particularly used to document ancient mining and quarrying regions, which are not only some of our most neglected archaeological landscapes in Egypt but also perhaps the most prone to the pitfalls of polarizing research between philology and archaeology—nevertheless, we have been able to make essential holistic studies of diverse ranges of material culture that have changed the ways in which we can map out transformations to these landscapes within broader social and cultural change. As Elizabeth Bloxam explains (Chapter 8), the study of procurement strategies and the social organization of these exploits has been dogged by assumptions drawn largely from textual data that regard these as primarily state-sanctioned activities that are supposedly largely unskilled and hierarchical. Two case studies in the major quarrying regions of Aswan and in the Eastern Desert (Wadi Hammamat), in which epigraphic and archaeological remains have never been contextualized together into the landscape, give us fresh insights into the role of skilled mobile craftspeople operating locally and regionally, creating arenas for technological transmission and knowledge exchange. There needs to be more emphasis on seeing that dynamic interactions can occur in a range of settings. Therefore, instead of sidelining the study of quarries and mines (on the basis that they only provide information about ‘technologies’ and state-run expeditions), we now need to pay much more attention to what (p. 8) these landscapes can reveal about non-elites, social life, and relationships, an area of Egyptology where we have the least amount of data.

Of course, remote sensing has its limitations and cannot be the only method of mapping and characterizing features, or monitoring threats to cultural heritage, without feet on the ground. As Ana Tavares informs us in her discussion of archaeological practice in Egypt (Chapter 12) we need to make sure that micro-level practice in survey and excavation in the field contains all the elements of sound stratigraphic recording. She further reminds us that archaeological field methods are often neglected in Egyptology degree courses and, some would argue, not seen as necessary to scholarship in the discipline. Unless Egyptological study is part of a wider degree course that has options for practical

methods in archaeology, students are missing out on this extremely important part of the discipline, particularly as opportunities for gaining practical skills in the field in Egypt are becoming more difficult. Addressing this situation is key if Egyptologists are to hone their holistic approaches to studies of Egyptian material culture.

## Science in Egyptology

Western archaeologists have remained highly influential players in terms of fieldwork in Egypt even in the twenty-first century, and this is surely primarily because of a combination of financial resources and scientific expertise. However, in the introductory chapter to a recent book dealing with the applications of science in Egyptian archaeology, the authors argue that Egyptology has not engaged sufficiently with the kinds of scientific analysis that have become commonplace in archaeology across the globe. Additionally, Paul Nicholson (Chapter 13) points out that Egyptian archaeology is still lacking in the kind of overarching theoretical frameworks that allow scientific results to be better understood in the context of other areas of material-based research such as ethnoarchaeology and experimental work.

Nevertheless, the use of science in Egyptology, particularly in the field of analytical studies relating to northeast African material culture, has increased enormously in the last few decades, culminating in 2017 with an Egyptian-organized international conference in Cairo dealing with scientific studies of ancient Egyptian materials and technologies. It might be argued that this area of Egyptology is the most multi-disciplinary and outward-looking of all, but, just as technology cannot be properly understood without contextualizing, so scientific analysis is more likely to be productive if it takes place in a context of rigorous problem-oriented enquiry. It is therefore with some justification that Nicholson draws attention to the frequent lack of real direction and purpose in the application of science to Egyptian data. A British Academy analysis of the current state of British archaeology points out that ‘The best projects investigate large questions through a complex integration of techniques, which often involve developing new modes of analysis with applications outside archaeology’.

Specific challenges do of course exist with certain categories of artefact—hence Picton et al (Chapter 16) argue that the earliest proper scientific analyses of Egyptian textiles enabled this area of material culture both to be taken more seriously and to begin to contribute to broader research questions, because the study of clothing was no longer seen as purely ‘women’s work’. Bettina Bader (Chapter 15) stresses that the analysis of pottery, clearly the most ubiquitous form of artefact at any Egyptian archaeological site from the Predynastic onwards, should not take place in isolation, but in relation to other forms of evidence, in order to allow it to shed light on broader issues (beyond pure manufacture or uses of ceramics), such as exchange of commodities, socio-economic systems, and the holistic interpretation of specific features in the archaeological record. Salima Ikram (Chapter 7) notes that the study of animal remains from excavations in Egypt, once conducted primarily in order to determine the nature of the specific remains, is now routinely used to explore diachronic aspects of the climate and environment of the Nile valley and surrounding deserts.

There is a further obstacle to the development of scientific analysis of Egyptian artefacts and materials, and this is the practical difficulty encountered by many archaeologists in gaining permission to take

samples out of Egypt for analysis in laboratories elsewhere in the world, as Ikram (Chapter 19) points out, in relation to access to freshly excavated samples of human and animal tissue from Egyptian sites. Indeed, this general issue of sample accessibility was highlighted in a keynote paper at the 2017 Cairo conference mentioned earlier. Clearly there are many projects that can utilize material in museum collections outside Egypt (such as the chronological projects led by the Oxford University Radiocarbon Accelerator unit), but these artefacts are mostly either unprovenanced or from archaeological contexts that are only vaguely recorded since, by definition, they tend to derive from nineteenth- or early twentieth-century excavations, before the time that official partage (or ‘division’) of finds took place.

### Archaeological practice and multi-disciplinarity

Rounded, multi-disciplinary approaches to field projects are of course where we need to focus our efforts and in Clare Malleson’s comprehensive chapter on Egypt’s flora and the role of archaeobotanists (Chapter 6), she paints a picture of the ways in which we can combine micro-level analysis of botanical remains within larger archaeological contexts. She provides us with case studies from the AERA project directed by Mark Lehner at the Old Kingdom settlement of Heit el-Gurab (pyramid builders’ town) at Giza and from current research led by Johanna Sigl of the German Archaeological Institute on Elephantine island, examining a Middle Kingdom house. In practising holistic techniques that combine ranges of organic and inorganic remains, it has been possible to truly analyse social life and differentiation through diet in relation to settlements. The goal, as Malleson points out, ‘is to reveal the “realities” of living in typical Egyptian village—the sights, sounds, and smells of daily life’.

If we turn to other specialisms in the study of micro-level data, such as the role of archaeozoologists, Ikram (Chapter 7) argues that these experts need to play a much bigger role than they currently do in archaeological investigations. She stresses that the recovery of faunal remains needs more rigorous collection methods and better dialogues between specialists and archaeologists, if they are to provide a more complete view of Egypt’s past. This is particularly because faunal data can answer significant questions about ancient climate, diet, veterinary practices, and cultural beliefs, which, together with the use of DNA analysis, can provide exciting information about the origins of numerous domestic species. Yet, as Ikram tells us, ‘one of the major concerns in archaeozoology in Egypt is the limited number of excavated settlement sites, in part due to the continued use of these sites through the modern era’. Therefore, we are always struggling with these biases in the archaeological record, which can often result in highly flawed interpretations. As Ian Shaw discusses in his assessment of settlement archaeology (Chapter 14), our understanding of social life in ancient Egypt remains woefully inadequate compared with our knowledge of royalty, death, and the afterlife. He points out, for instance, that major developments in settlement studies and social studies within mainstream archaeology across the globe, as documented by Sharon Steadman in 2015,<sup>23</sup> have so far only been partially replicated in Egyptian settlement archaeology. There have been some encouraging developments both in the increasing use of ethnographic data to contextualize ancient Egyptian settlements (e.g. fieldwork comparing modern and ancient mud-brick villages) and in the study of particularly neglected types of settlements, such as the ephemeral encampments of nomadic pastoralists. Overall, however, this feels like an area of Egyptology that is still in its infancy, with many of the most pressing aspects of social archaeology in Egypt (e.g. the roles played by gender, ethnicity, social hierarchy, and religion in the creation and development of urban

neighbourhoods) still requiring not only more relevant data but also more theoretical frameworks that are specific to the northeast African context.

## Debates in ethnicity, human mobility, and cross-cultural contact

In a recent discussion of bioarchaeological perspectives on Egyptian ethnicity, Sonia Zakrzewski<sup>26</sup> draws attention to the fluidity of ancient Egyptian ethnic types, and the sheer complexity of the relationships between social identity and ‘biological affinities’. The importance of establishing clear definitions of ethnicities in order to try to understand the nuances of social and political change in the Nile valley and surrounding regions is repeatedly stressed by a number of different authors. These debates occur not only in the chapters in Part V of this volume that explicitly deal with such issues, but also in many of the chapters dealing with material culture, history, and language. While it is no surprise for Stan Hendrickx (Chapter 27) to note the paucity of contemporary scholars supporting the idea of mass immigrations as sources of cultural change in the Predynastic, it is perhaps more intriguing to see that new debates have emerged concerning contact between sedentary and pastoralist groups in the Nile Valley and the surrounding deserts, which are now much more central to our understanding of many developments from the sixth millennium BC onwards. Thus Linda Hulin’s discussion of Libyan cultural and ethnographic data (Chapter 24) stresses the problems that are encountered in understanding what is meant by nomadism or pastoralism in different geographical and chronological contexts, while Hendrickx argues that attempts by some scholars to suggest that pharaonic culture was directly underpinned and presaged by rock art deriving from semi-nomadic groups are flawed by neglect of archaeozoological data and lack of chronological precision.

Ludwig Morenz (Chapter 28) emphasizes the particular ambiguities that existed in early historical Egypt, in that attributes of ‘otherness’ and foreignness appear to have been assigned to indigenous inhabitants of Egypt who had been conquered and assimilated in the process of cultural and political unification of Egypt. In a much later twist on this paradox, Tony Leahy (Chapter 33) points out the irony of an Egyptian-style statue of Darius I found at Susa, in which Egypt itself features among the ‘foreign’ lands crushed under the ‘pharaoh’ Darius’ feet. Still later on in Egypt’s history as a vassal state, ethnicity remains a ‘difficult’ aspect of cultural studies; thus Khaled Essam Ismail (Chapter 34) notes that many cultural differences between individual Egyptians and communities in the Ptolemaic and Roman periods were not related to ethnic backgrounds, and in many cases were socially constructed, according to scholars such as Koen Goudriaan. Ian Moyer (Chapter 59) also discusses the huge importance of the emergence of greater numbers of ‘bilingual’ researchers, competent in both Greek and demotic, in order to produce more holistic historical accounts by combining numerous Ptolemaic and Roman documents that had previously been erroneously assigned to separate ethnic or cultural spheres.

Scales of human mobility and the transmission of ideas in the emerging states of the Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean, near East and North Africa, have also long been topics of debate in archaeology and anthropology. In terms of discourses about ancient Egypt’s relations with its near neighbours, the movement of people, and the presence of ‘foreigners’ in the Nile valley, there still remains a reluctance to embrace other viewpoints that might critique the dominant cultural-historical paradigms of the last century. In particular there is insufficient discussion of the ways in which migration, invasion, trade (and economics), colonization, or diffusion are deployed to interpret similarities and differences in material culture of sites or regions. Carl Knappett and Evangelia Kiriatzki perhaps best sum this up by asserting

that ‘we can be lulled into thinking that an interconnected world was achieved by mobility solely in the domain of chiefly elites, set against a background of immobility at the household level’. Current debates in post-processual archaeology are therefore asking questions about the ways in which we look at human mobility outside the idea of mass or macro-level migrations, which seem to have been infrequent in most places and cultures, and more towards ideas that stress the movement of people as continual flows at a range of scales and for a variety of reasons. For instance, quarrying and mining are activities that are often framed in terms of the mass movement of labour orchestrated by elites, but this is not actually reflected in the archaeological record. Strong arguments are currently emerging that centre around small-scale mobility of skilled craftspeople and stonemasons, perhaps as kin-groups, operating locally and regionally. Contact between people in this more nuanced way creates contexts where technological know-how and other cultural characteristics could be transmitted (Chapter 8).

If we look at the excavations in Aswan (Elephantine) in the south of Egypt and sites in the Delta (i.e. the north), research into these permanent settlements reveals that populations were much more heterogenous than previously thought. These debates are obviously permeating our ideas about the ways in which we view ‘foreigners’ such as ‘Libyans’, ‘Asiatics’, and ‘Nubians’ in Egypt, and indeed influencing our views concerning cross-border relationships outside ideas of dominance and empire-building. Carolyn Routledge (Chapter 25) particularly challenges orthodox perspectives such as diffusion, empire, trade, and core-periphery studies, in shaping our ideas about the relationship between Egypt and its neighbours in western Asia. As she aptly remarks ‘Current models have a tendency to privilege economic explanation and elite society above many other forms of interpretation’. She demonstrates the problems of these past viewpoints by re-visiting two important questions in Egyptology relating to Egypt’s relations with western Asia: first, the nature of the impact of western Asian culture on the development of the state in ancient Egypt, and secondly, the distinctive features of Egypt’s impact on Late Bronze Age Canaan. This latter point treads into the thorny question of ‘empire’ and the degree to which it may or may not be visible in the archaeological record. Although no consensus has yet been reached, Routledge tells us that multi-disciplinary symposia and cross-disciplinary co-authorships are beginning to shift ideas away from ‘top-down’ inferences and towards ideas that forefront, as mentioned earlier, the nuances and complexities of interactions across regions through which social and cultural transformations occur.

Questions of identity and ethnicity also generate other contentious areas of discussion in Egyptology, particularly since so many assumptions about ‘foreigners’ such as ‘Asiatics’, ‘Libyans’, and ‘Nubians’ have been characterized largely from the textual and iconographic sources. Theorizing notions of ethnicity and identity through paradigms such as agency theory, social archaeology, and anthropology have not been truly adopted as frameworks to get at the nuances of cross-cultural relationships in ancient Egypt. Linda Hulin (Chapter 24) tackles this issue in the light of our perceptions about ‘Libyans’ and the Libyan dynasties in New Kingdom and Third Intermediate Period Egypt. In particular, she focuses on the ways in which new archaeological evidence from north Africa, west of the Nile valley, is re-shaping some previously entrenched viewpoints which assume that Libyan culture was ‘persistently nomadic...but also rather simple’. As Hulin points out, we are constantly having to review the sense of Egyptian identity as ‘monolithic’ and therefore, given the paucity of archaeological data in Libyan contexts, scholars are having to produce arguments to identify ‘un-Egyptian traits’ to characterize ‘Libyan’ identities. On a more positive note, Hulin suggests that the current trend towards refining studies of the archaeology of

nomads suggests that these models are allowing us to realize the degrees of 'social complexity and adaptability across the nomadic-settled continuum' that need to be more utilized in our research agendas. This is particularly important to our understanding of the extent to which the Libyan peoples were assimilated into Egyptian society.

Even more contentious than perceptions of Libyans in Egypt are those of Nubians, and questions about the nature of relationships between Egyptians and their southern neighbours. Our understanding of Nubian/Egyptian relations has of course significantly improved with the expansion of multi-disciplinary excavations in north Sudan, as Egyptian archaeologists move their research interests away from the challenges, as mentioned earlier, of working in Egypt, given the unpredictable security situation. Sites between the Second and Third Cataract regions, such as the New Kingdom 'temple-towns' at Sai Island, Amara West, Sesebi, and Tombos, have had a particular focus in recent years, the findings from which are challenging the numerous assumptions that have been made about Egyptian/Nubian relations in the Bronze Age. Even the notion of the 'temple-town' may need to be revised in light of such work, given that this characterization conquers up imperialist and colonialist definitions of a dominant, highly bureaucratized Egyptian presence based largely on economic motives. Rather, we need to look at these sites in their larger landscape settings, and to think more about these centres as the loci of various cultural entanglements that have an essentially Nubian character.

With these projects focusing more on settlements than ever before, we now have significant new perspectives in terms of the ways in which we understand the more nuanced interplay between local populations and Egyptians during the New Kingdom. We also see that procurement and working of materials, such as gold, were major influences on the character of these places, and we can observe the extent to which craft-working activities seem to have been controlled by local elites. Julia Budka and Florence Doyen's excavations of the settlement and burials on Sai Island suggest that there was a much greater social complexity within local populations than previously thought, with local elites forming the major group of officials in the town, as well as others who were certainly involved with gold working. As with other excavations of 'temple-towns' in the region, these projects show numerous parallels suggestive of microcosms of Egyptian town planning but with multiple building phases, thus underlying the changing dynamics of these settlements from the early New Kingdom phases of occupation. At Amara West, Neal Spencer's excavations reveal an even greater sense of comparatively unplanned settlement, and copious evidence of production places (workshops) and Nubian pottery.

(The ongoing work of the Sudan Archaeological Research Society has also been pivotal in providing, through its annual bulletin, the latest findings from these and other excavations, in particular the long-standing work of Derek Welsby at Kawa and the Dongola Reach. As Robert Morkot explains (Chapter 23) in his historical overview of Egyptian/Nubian relationships, older interpretations of the political geography even further south in Upper Nubia need to be revised. He suggests that evidence from more recent excavations in the region between the Third and Fourth Cataracts, such as Stuart Tyson Smith's excavations at Tombos, show that New Kingdom material is limited in quantity and specific in type. Morkot also points out that few artefacts of Egyptian origin have been found south or east of the limits of Kerma, Egyptian New Kingdom, or Meroitic control. He goes on to suggest that 'whether archaeological material will ever be found to indicate ancient Egyptian contacts (direct or indirect) with sub-Saharan Africa matters little, as Egypt was, and will always be, a significant African culture'.

If we turn our attention to the question of contact and interplay between Egypt and its northern neighbours in the Aegean, studies of maritime trade and the movement of materials have of course played a major part in determining the scope of these interactions. Luxury items such as stone and pottery vessels, gemstones, gold, and other exotic materials, particularly those found in the Uluburun shipwreck, have provided us with a sense of the numerous opportunities for contact that existed through the movement of materials both as ‘exotic’ gift-giving at the elite end of the spectrum, and in the form of the more utilitarian logistics of raw material transportation to places of production. Pottery, probably more than any other class of object (in particular ‘Mycenaean’ vessels found in settlement sites in Egypt at Kahun, Gurob, and Amarna) has been studied as a means of synchronizing Egyptian and Aegean chronologies. Yet, as Jacke Phillips (Chapter 26) points out, it has been Aegeanists rather than Egyptologists who have led the way in furthering our knowledge of broader questions surrounding interactions across the Aegean. Andrew Bevan’s study of the movement of a single class of material culture such as stone vessels, not only as finished products but down to the origins of their material source and manufacture, can give the real detail about regimes of value and contact across the Aegean; Bevan’s work has been a key advance in the way in which we use such studies to formulate comparative ideas about social life and the variability of relationships, as well as the movement of people in the region. But as Phillips discusses in her in-depth look at the range of other datasets that have been the focus of investigating Egypto-Aegean relations in the Bronze Age, there is a pressing need for much greater collaboration between the two disciplines if we are to address important current research debates concerning cross-cultural chronology and dating, as well as considerations about imported goods and the tangible/intangible influence of one civilization upon the other.

The general current absence of cultural interdisciplinarity, if we look back at the development of Egyptology as a discipline, is actually much more of a post-war phenomenon when we consider that archaeologists such as Arthur Evans, John Pendlebury, and Henri Frankfort regularly worked across the region of the eastern Mediterranean and near East in the 1930s. The sense of isolation that came from ideas about the ‘uniqueness’ of Egypt as a civilization apart from its neighbours can arguably be linked to the greater focus being placed on studies of texts, rather than archaeology—a situation that is even more apparent today. As mentioned in the opening pages of this chapter, the divide between the two arms of Egyptology is ever broadening and littered with wasted opportunities because we are not formulating analytical frameworks through which we study all classes of material culture equally. Attempts to address this have come from some multi-disciplinary quarters, working with Egyptologists (from both the philological and archaeological arms of discipline) who have been contextualizing epigraphic data within broader landscape contexts. However, when we delve into the holy grails of temple and tomb inscriptions and papyrus documents, there is an undeniable breach between the textual and archaeological sectors of the discipline.

### Society and culture: viewpoints from texts and iconography

Issues that can raise significant barriers between the textual and archaeological spheres respectively are stressed in the chapters in Part VII Society and culture: textual and iconographic approaches, which consider the more orthodox analytical approaches to text and iconography that have dominated our understanding of social and cultural life in ancient Egypt for several decades. Administration, genealogies, religion, gods, theology, and symbolism are all topics that have mostly lain in the domain of philological

study. But as these chapters address, it is the depth of the research questions we are asking that we need to work on, and then also the extent to which we challenge the problem of data bias, which, as Christopher Eyre (Chapter 36) tells us, 'is often contradictory, not simply as a consequence of incomplete evidence but reflecting structural factors in the ecology and political order of a state that was never as monolithic as ancient ideology or modern historiography presents it'. Wolfram Grajetzki (Chapter 35), for instance, takes us through a range of archaeological contexts in which we can encounter epigraphic evidence relating to the emergence of titles and social hierarchies from the Early Dynastic through to the Late Period. In grappling with the notion of a 'national administration' he presents us with a detailed account of the research problems that we encounter in approaching such ideas from a single data source and context, such as elite burials, and reminds us that we need to be careful in avoiding the assumption that a title reflects an actual role in practice: 'A high percentage of ancient Egyptians identify themselves on objects and documents with administrative titles. However, even if the translation of a title is possible, the function of it remains most often obscure.'

Eyre (Chapter 36) takes this idea even further, and argues, through the formulation of seven important research questions, that the idea of 'administration' as a fixed and structured mode of state control has been vastly overplayed by Egyptologists. By examining the environment and settlement patterns in Egypt, as well as giving us an in-depth look at the range of contexts in which we find documents and inscriptions relating to social hierarchies, he suggests that we need to think again about the ways in which we assume the existence of a 'bureaucratic regime'. Rather, we need to re-think roles at local levels, such as 'headmen' who mediated and represented their communities, proposing therefore that we should define local government 'according to degrees of alienation between peasant communities and state government, and the enforcement of revenue demands through local intermediaries'. As in Egypt today, it seems that settling of local disputes and other matters tended to fall on community 'leaders', and allegiances were much more based on identity and kinship ties to specific village locales.

Yet, when we try to turn our gaze onto ideas of social life, kinship, and relationships at lower social levels through the textual record, of course we come up against the still-powerful doctrines of 'kingship' as an ideology that masks the role of individuals under its orthodoxy. Egyptology still struggles to move very far from these constraints, particularly when it comes to understanding private, more secular rituals and religious practices outside of this sense of state religion. There is however a growing consensus amongst Egyptologists who work with the textual record that our approaches to these themes do need revitalizing if we are to move away from repeating the same ideas. Morris Bierbrier (Chapter 38), Susanne Bickel (Chapter 39), Richard Wilkinson (Chapter 40), and Alexandra von Lieven (Chapter 41) take us on insightful journeys into some of these better-studied arenas of textual and iconographic aspects of core Egyptological research such as genealogies, gods, myths, religion, theology, and symbolism. They discuss the extent to which we need to revise our research questions and to concentrate much more on the context of the textual and iconographic record or, in other words, to take more holistic approaches. Wilkinson (Chapter 40), for instance, points out that future research into symbolism needs to pay much more attention to the origins of symbolism, as well as connections between the visual and verbal use of symbols. He urges us to move away from single object studies to broader contexts of landscape. Bickel (Chapter 39) similarly argues for more holistic approaches to our research questions if we are to get at the nuances of the ways in which people interacted with theological ideas about the divine in religious practice. As she succinctly states: 'The extremely codified

and conventionalized forms with which religious matters were treated in writing and iconography are a major barrier to our knowledge of individual and community belief and practice.’ As Abbas (Chapter 42) stresses in his discussion of funerary beliefs, even the fundamental corpora of myths relating to death and the afterlife in the pharaonic period only became codified into coherent continuous narratives at a much later date, in the work of Classical authors. For much of the pharaonic period, our sense of the crucial narratives that underpinned funerary beliefs and practices is highly fragmentary and elusive, comprising hints and sometimes obscure symbolism, rather than the straightforward full-scale ‘stories of the gods’ that provide the framework of Greek and Roman religion.

Theological speculation is another fundamental component of text-based research, which, as Alexandra von Lieven (Chapter 41) points out, needs to be properly defined away from our modern Christian notion of theology, and towards ideas that people had across the social spectrum, with regard to gods, myths, and the cosmos. The paucity of data is of course a problem in getting at the nature of these concepts through time, given that cultural contexts of the evidence are mostly funerary and temple domains. Problems of context and quality of evidence have clearly hampered efforts to extrapolate ideas about religious practices, particularly at individual household levels. We are still reliant, perhaps overly so, on sites such as Deir el-Medina for our insights into practices such as ancestor worship, given that this settlement presents us with both archaeological and textual evidence for family cult practices in the New Kingdom.

It is the sense that texts are themselves very much artefacts, embedded within material culture as a whole, that has been stressed by many of those dealing with the philology of ancient Egypt. In Jim Allen’s text book on the Middle Egyptian language, he points out that he is providing an introduction to the language and crucially also the culture of hieroglyphs. He therefore includes numerous essays on aspects of Egyptian society and thought, with the explicit intention of enabling students not only to translate Middle Egyptian texts but also to ‘understand what they have to say’. This distinction between literal translation and real cultural understanding has probably been one of the most distinctive characteristics of the study of ancient Egyptian texts in the twenty-first century. Andréas Stauder (Chapter 43) sees this cultural dimension operating even at the level of scripts when he discusses the ‘complex, historically shifting, cultural code’ comprising values attached to the various different script types. Jacqueline Jay (Chapter 47), on the other hand, emphasizes the almost stratigraphic process by which the textual output of ancient Egypt can be forensically examined to determine surviving traces of the oral or non-literate culture that both preceded and then also co-existed with the elite text-based ‘high’ culture. She argues that the change from orality to literacy is a gradual one, with no dramatic specific turning point yet discerned, and indeed the wealth of recent work on non-textual marking systems (noted by Stauder at the beginning of Chapter 43) indicates that diverse forms of communication existed within the conventionally defined illiterate non-elite throughout the pharaonic, Ptolemaic, and Roman periods, thus suggesting that orality only recedes into the background in historical times, rather than being superseded or suppressed.

The widespread appearance of such things as pot marks, quarrying/stone marks, and soldiers’ identity marks in ancient Egypt shows that non-textual systems effectively created a kind of ‘grey area’ of graphic communication that was neither oral nor fully literate but spanned the activities of a wide range of artisans and professionals. This undoubtedly complicates the picture presented by anthropologists such as Jack Goody,<sup>58</sup> who appear to have generally worked on the assumption that there are only two

modes of communication: oral and literate, whereas it is clear that there are a plethora of scenarios in which ostensibly illiterate ancient Egyptians could choose to communicate through non-textual signing. This is not merely a case of marks on pottery vessels, textiles, masonry, and ostraca as part of complex relationships that have usually been placed solely in the domain of Bronze Age ‘economics’—what we also need to include are marking systems documented on rock-faces in or near mines and quarries (see Bloxam, Chapter 8), and on the living rock at hilltop sites in the desert.<sup>59</sup> In other words, these phenomena are widespread throughout Egyptian culture, regardless of geographical place or social stratum. There are of course many other (p. 18) neglected categories even among the conventional writing scripts, such as the many demotic inscriptions on small artefacts, which are discussed by Richard Jasnow (Chapter 55). A few years ago graffiti of all kinds, whether on monumental architecture or on natural desert surfaces, might have also been regarded as neglected and under-appreciated as a resource, but, as various chapters, particularly that of John Darnell (Chapter 57), demonstrate, there has been a real growth of work in this area in the last decade or so, fuelled perhaps partly by growing interest in different forms of self-representation in the visual and textual records. Darnell also points out that the emergence of the ‘lapidary’ form of hieratic, from the Old Kingdom onwards, is an indication of a hybrid form of script that seems to have specifically evolved in order to facilitate the production of rock inscriptions and graffiti on an unprecedented scale in the Middle Kingdom.

Allen’s ‘historical study’ of the diachronic nature of ancient Egyptian language takes a general, all-encompassing view of the sequence of linguistic changes and innovations. Yet, as Sami Uljas (Chapter 45) correctly stresses, there has been a tendency in recent years towards a wider diversity of individual views and approaches to all phases of the language. This change may, as much as anything, represent a reaction against the long-term rigid conformity to the so-called Standard Theory that was introduced by Jakob Polotsky in the 1940s, and gained general acceptance in the 1970s and 1980s. The question therefore of whether to seek a wide, global solution, as opposed to specialized ‘local’ endeavours has also characterized the history of ancient Egyptian lexicography, according to Julie Stauder-Porchet (Chapter 44). Thus, a subject undoubtedly dominated for much of its development by the attempt to create an overarching solution in the form of the *Wörterbuch* project (initiated in Berlin in 1897 by Adolf Erman and Hermann Grapow) and its modern digital equivalents (the *Digitaler Zettelarchiv*, which is accessible through the *Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae* database), has become increasingly characterized by smaller projects, often geared towards phases of the language (such as Leonard and Barbara Lesko’s *Late Egyptian dictionary*) or specific corpora of texts (such as van der Molen’s *dictionary of the Coffin Texts*).

### Problems in the construction of historical narratives

As Stauder points out in his discussion of the history of the ancient Egyptian language (Chapter 46), the traditional subdivision of the language into different diachronic phases ‘is inherently problematic as it projects historical periodization onto linguistic history’, so that ‘the boundaries between discrete stages as traditionally defined are also getting blurred’. In a more general cultural sense, the construction of chronologies and the writing of narrative history have both been integral elements of Egyptology since the nineteenth century, when Sir John Gardner Wilkinson, for instance, began his *Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians* with ‘a brief account of the general history and early advancement of that ancient state’. It is characteristic of the historical branch of the subject, however, that Wilkinson was

already drawing attention to the ‘many doubts and discrepancies’ that divided researchers, even at this early date. Not surprisingly, the chapters dealing with Egyptian history in this Handbook confirm that, for some periods, there are still major lacunae and points of controversy.

For many periods of ancient Egyptian history, there is a clear consensus on most of the basic chronological aspects, such as sequences and lengths of reigns, although huge numbers of specific names and dates are still contested, as a recent co-authored history clearly indicates. There is still significant debate, for instance, around the existence and nature of ‘coregencies’ (periods of deliberate overlap between reigns, usually assumed to be designed to ensure smooth succession), which Wolfram Grajetzki (Chapter 30) discusses in the context of the Middle Kingdom. Most labyrinthine of all, most would argue, is the Third Intermediate Period, and David Aston (Chapter 32) makes the point that, frustratingly, the apparent chronological resolution for this period provided by Ken Kitchen in the late 1990s, has been slowly but surely unpicked and stirred around by the work of the last two decades. On the positive side, our understanding of the material culture of the Third Intermediate Period has greatly benefitted from a real plethora of studies undertaken and published in recent years. In the case of some other historical periods, there are specific problems in relation to material culture studies: thus Nigel Strudwick (Chapter 29), for instance, stresses that Old Kingdom material is very much dominated by artefacts from tombs and temples, as opposed to domestic data from settlements of this date, which are still not being excavated and/or adequately published in sufficient numbers or diversity. Grajetzki (Chapter 30), on the other hand, emphasizes the lack of precision in dating of some aspects of late Middle Kingdom typologies of artefacts, such that difficulties are sometimes encountered in distinguishing between Twelfth-Dynasty, Thirteenth-Dynasty, and Second Intermediate Period material. Not only do we need to understand the interplay between processes of change in material culture and the traditional framework of ‘dynasties’ and ‘kingdoms’, but we also need to be able to locate intricate local genealogical studies within the broader picture of national political and social change. As Bierbrier (Chapter 38) tells us, studies of genealogies can bring fresh insights into the depth of family linkages with chronology, which has remained a rather shadowy area of research. He stresses the need to look back at our already accumulated archive of documentation from the last two centuries and to draw these together with new archaeological material to refine our knowledge, yet he cautions that ‘genealogy in ancient Egypt often can be considered more of an art than a science’.

Advances in scientific dating, particularly radiocarbon dating, have affected all periods, but inevitably prehistory in particular, as Stan Hendrickx (Chapter 27) stresses. He notes, for instance, that radiocarbon dates have revealed a chronological overlap between the Badarian and Naqada I cultures, but of course opinions differ as to whether this simply implies a slower transition in the Badarian heartland, or, more radically, a need to regard Badarian culture as a geographical rather than chronological phenomenon. It is also as a result of radiocarbon dating that it is now suggested that cereal farming appeared first in Egypt at Neolithic sites such as Kom W in the northern Faiyum region, by the mid-fifth millennium BC. One of the most recent radiocarbon dating projects that specifically targeted the Predynastic and Early Dynastic periods reached the conclusion that the Predynastic as a whole was actually shorter by six or seven centuries, compared with previous estimates of length. On a more theoretical level, Hendrickx throws out, once and for all, Jean Capart’s attempt to consign Predynastic iconography to the realm of the ‘primitive’ through ethnographic parallels.

The question of how we define what constitutes an actual historical record, in the modern evidential sense (as opposed to a piece of ritual, myth, or ideology) is discussed by several authors in this Handbook. Morenz (Chapter 28) uses the phrase ‘iconems of power’ to refer to the fascinating iconographic system that was developing in Egypt in the late Predynastic and Early Dynastic periods, as the country moved towards a unified state that seems to have required (and brought into existence) a repertoire of so-called semiophors to justify and culturally embed the emerging political system. From an aesthetic point of view, Brett McClain (Chapter 22) points to the way in which the transition from relief-carved mobiliary art, such as the Protodynastic Narmer Palette, to architecturally embedded stelae took place at the same time as the rapid development of a set of new canonical principles and iconography. The latter coincided with the process of cultural and political unification, and McClain therefore uses the term ‘state-sponsored’ to refer to these early royal reliefs. This is a reminder that the many genres of texts that provide the backbone of our accepted political and social historical narratives for Egypt derive from texts that, according to Ronald Leprohon (Chapter 48), were often written primarily in order to define the state’s role as conscious and explicit controller of the people. Grajetzki (Chapter 35), Chris Eyre (Chapter 36) and John Gee (Chapter 51), on the other hand, stress the danger of simply assuming the centrality of the state, in their analyses of the administrative and socio-economic data, when in fact there are indications that a confused plethora of local concerns often lie beneath the thin shell of national governmental control.

The recurrent question of the extent to which most Egyptian elite texts and images might be regarded as pure expressions of state control is also taken up by John Darnell in his discussion of rock art and graffiti (Chapter 57). Darnell addresses the issue of early combinations of art and proto-writing, and the extent to which any of these ‘early tableaux’ (such as the ‘Scorpion tableau’ at Gebel Tjauti and the Gebel Sheikh Suleiman inscription) can be regarded as records of actual historical events—he stresses the extent to which these Dynasty 0 rock inscriptions appear to ritualize events, transforming and celebrating the cosmic significance of happenings by incorporating them into timeless royal imagery. Both Regine Schulz (Chapter 18) and Colleen Manassa Darnell (Chapter 31) stress the importance of much later unconventional historical sources (from a western viewpoint), in the form of the so-called ‘commemorative scarabs’, which provide glimpses of events and individuals from the reign of Amenhotep III, but in the context of what might be described as ‘verbal tableaux’. Like the Dynasty 0 tableaux, these scarabs intertwine the static celebration of royal ritual and ceremony with some sense of dynamic historical narrative.

Both Denise Doxey and Bill Manley (Chapters 49 and 50 respectively) discuss the extent to which the historical or factual information that we seek to glean from texts may be restricted by the mixing and overlapping of genres. Doxey points out that elite individuals’ ‘autobiographies’, primarily inscribed in tombs from the Old Kingdom onwards, overlap in aims and content not only with royal texts of various types but also with literary texts. The suggestion is that borrowing from the latter genre (particularly the so-called ‘lamentations’) adds pessimism to these supposedly historical accounts of individuals’ careers, thus producing modern historical views, particularly of the First Intermediate Period, that have sometimes been unduly negative in terms of the view presented of social and economic conditions. Strudwick’s overview of the sources for this period (Chapter 29), including the plethora of theories concerning the decline of the Old Kingdom, argues against the automatic assumption of ‘historicity’ of data deriving from funerary biographies, and cautions particularly against monocausal explanations.

What we demonstrably lack, however, are historical narratives that primarily draw on the surviving vestiges of material culture rather than textual data. In relation to the administrative and socio-economic aspects of historical change in Egypt there have been few real attempts to use archaeological data to approach these kinds of issues. From the 1970s onwards, there have been some instances in which the mud-brick buildings associated with administrative control and storage have been studied, but it is still rare to see diachronic studies of the impacts on materials and artefacts within the archaeological record, as indicators of changing patterns of production, consumption, and control. Yet, these are all well-worn paradigms in which we tend to automatically search for answers and insights into social and cultural change. If we are to move Egyptology into fresh debates we must re-think our research questions away from monolithic concepts such as administration, economy, and state control, and seek to generate enquiries into the complex nature social interactions across a range of situations through which cultural and social change occurs.

## Contexts and problem-oriented approaches

In recent years, ideas derived from the Social Construction of Technology (SCOT) movement, which originally developed among sociologists in the 1980s, have been increasingly applied to the study of archaeological material across the globe. However, this view of ancient technologies as embedded and reactive components of complex social systems, exemplified by such studies as Andrew Welton's metallurgical analysis of Anglo-Saxon weaponry and Elizabeth Murphy and Jeroen Poblome's work on pottery production at Sagalassos, has still not been particularly widely applied in Egyptian archaeology. As Nicholson (Chapter 13) underlines in Part IV: Material culture, the study of ancient Egyptian materials and technology will always tend to be hugely flawed and restricted if the all-important cultural and archaeological contexts are neglected or ignored.

The importance of context is a recurrent theme, not only in the Handbook (see, for instance, Chapters 14, 15, 21, and 22) but in many other Egyptological publications from the last decade or so. Aidan Dodson (Chapter 17) stresses the enormous importance of such contextualization with regard to the chronology and typologies of funerary material, particularly coffins and sarcophagi. Thus, it was the actual excavation of the coffin of Sethnakhte (c.1186–1184 BC) in tomb KV35 and the coffin of Psusennes II Pasebakhaenniut I (c.959–945 BC) at Tanis, among others, that demonstrated that the so-called 'rishi' coffin continued to be used for royal burials into the Third Intermediate Period, despite the fact that it had fallen out of use for non-royal individuals by the mid-Eighteenth Dynasty. Cultural context can also be crucial to the process of extracting maximum meaning from texts, therefore Terry Wilfong (Chapter 56) notes the importance of the survival of large numbers of Manichaean Coptic texts at the well-preserved settlement site of Kellis in Dakhla Oasis, where their value is enhanced by the fact that they have been found in secure archaeological contexts, embedded among the artefacts and urban landscape that can give them crucial added meaning.

The network of links between Greek and Roman temple texts and their surrounding architecture and reliefs are discussed by Olaf Kaper (Chapter 58), particularly in relation to the 'library' of hieroglyphic, hieratic, and demotic papyri (dating mostly to the second century AD) discovered in a cellar below the temple at Tebtunis in 1931. He points out that these can be seen to have clear and intriguing links with the texts and images carved on the walls of the temple itself, including two papyri specifically relating to

the processes and nature of temple decoration.<sup>88</sup> In her chapter on architecture, Corinna Rossi (Chapter 20) emphasizes the importance of the location and orientation of religious and funerary architecture within the landscape as highly influential contextual features, especially in the case of the Old and Middle Kingdom pyramid complexes and New Kingdom temples such as those at Abu Simbel and Deir el-Bahri. In discussing the wide diversity of attempts by scholars over the last three centuries to understand the underlying principles of ancient Egyptian architecture, she also stresses the importance of properly recognizing cognitive contexts. First, she points out that it is generally incorrect to base modern architectural theories primarily on ground-plans, when all the evidence suggests that Egyptians designed their buildings three-dimensionally. Secondly, she notes that many hypotheses rely on mathematical concepts or language that had not yet been formulated in the third and second millennia BC. A similar point is made by Rune Nyord (Chapter 53) in relation to texts relating to healing and protection—he underlines the need for ‘adequate conceptual frameworks’ to replace the dangerous, but very widespread, tendency to look at such texts explicitly within the parameters of modern medicine. As he further notes, there are distinct parallels with challenges in medical anthropology, where standard modern western concepts such as mind, medicine, and magic are clearly recognized as inappropriate to non-western contexts. The cognitive context is also crucial for study of ancient Egyptian mathematical texts, as Annette Imhausen (Chapter 52) indicates in her discussion of the social and cultural settings of such texts. She underlines the point that, even before the Middle Kingdom, when the first specifically mathematical manuscripts started to appear, the funerary ‘biographies’ of individuals (e.g. that of Weni in the Sixth Dynasty) already began to hint at the need for access to some kind of mathematical ability in order to be successful as an administrator or builder.

Egyptology’s anthropological and sociological contexts are frequently neglected, despite a sprinkling of ground-breaking attempts to establish a role for the discipline as a genuine social science. Egyptologists have often struggled to come to grips with the full complexity of issues relating to social identities, and in particular the key area of gender studies, whether in textual or archaeological terms. There are some small indications of advances in this area in the Handbook. Thus Deborah Sweeney’s discussion of letter writing (Chapter 54) not only deals with the evidence for female literacy but also addresses the issue of female letter contents as indications of aspects of social behaviour and communication that were regarded as appropriate to women. Although women’s social roles and rights are particularly thinly attested in the Old and Middle Kingdoms, there are increasing amounts of archaeological and textual evidence from the New Kingdom. Picton et al (Chapter 16) discuss the centrality of gender in the analysis and interpretation of textiles, and note the important role played by women in the New Kingdom community at Deir el-Medina as producers and traders of cloth. Shaw’s brief examination of the syntax of domestic architecture in Egypt (Chapter 14) highlights the contributions of Barry Kemp and Lynn Meskell to gender-oriented study of New Kingdom houses and use of domestic space. At a more abstract level, Sandra Lippert’s presentation of textual evidence for the legal position of women in the New Kingdom and Third Intermediate Period (Chapter 37) indicates that a greater diversity of documentary sources now exist, many indicating the rights of women and children in relation to property.

We can finally return to our opening question: does Egyptology have an identity crisis? It is probably now up to the readers of this volume to make their own minds up about this. Although we have argued that a lot more needs to be done to forge new paths into multi-disciplinary collaborations, and also

methods, it is clear from some of these chapters that a number of fresh approaches have already begun to appear and thus there is reason for optimism. This is particularly the case when we consider the greater number of voices coming into debates outside of traditional western discourses. So, what we need to think about now are the ways in which we collectively shake off the stale image and perception of Egyptology and shout more about the interesting changes of direction that are happening, particularly in the archaeological side of the discipline. To do this we need to publish more widely across the spectrum of archaeological and anthropological journals, participate more actively in forums across disciplines, and work more rigorously towards finding common research agendas that generate opportunities for cross-disciplinary collaboration, both within and outside Egyptology.

There is no perfect way to compile a multi-authored volume that covers all topic areas of a discipline and therefore we are aware of omissions such as more comment from prehistorians, from those working in interesting cross-border regions in Sudan, and of course, from anthropology. But perhaps the next volume of articles should not be another batch framed within Egyptology, but one that is much more inclusive of cross-cultural debates across the archaeological and historical spectrum. In other words, a 'world' perspective in which we seek new ways of working together to find that common ground that unites us, rather than those things that potentially isolate us from our fellow researchers in the other humanities and social sciences. —Elizabeth Bloxam is Visiting Professor in Egyptology at the Northeast Normal University in Changchun, China and an Honorary Research Associate at University College London.

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## **AZTEC RELIGION AND ART OF WRITING: INVESTIGATING EMBODIED MEANING, INDIGENOUS SEMIOTICS, AND THE NAHUA SENSE OF REALITY by Isabel Laack [Numen Book, Brill, 9789004391451]**

In her groundbreaking investigation from the perspective of the aesthetics of religion, Isabel Laack explores the religion and art of writing of the pre-Hispanic Aztecs of Mexico. Inspired by postcolonial approaches, she reveals Eurocentric biases in academic representations of Aztec cosmovision, ontology, epistemology, ritual, aesthetics, and the writing system to provide a powerful interpretation of the Nahuatl sense of reality.

Laack transcends the concept of "sacred scripture" traditionally employed in religions studies in order to reconstruct the Indigenous semiotic theory and to reveal how Aztec pictography can express complex aspects of embodied meaning. Her study offers an innovative approach to nonphonographic semiotic systems, as created in many world cultures, and expands our understanding of human recorded visual communication.

This book will be essential reading for scholars and readers interested in the history of religions, Mesoamerican studies, and the ancient civilizations of the Americas.

"This excellent book, written with intellectual courage and critical self-awareness, is a brilliant,

multilayered thought experiment into the images and stories that made up the Nahua sense of reality as woven into their sensational ritual performances and colorful symbolic writing system." - David Carrasco, *Harvard University*

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The people currently known as the "Aztecs" lived in the Central Mexican Highlands roughly five hundred years ago. As immigrants from the north, they arrived in the Valley of Mexico at the beginning of the fourteenth century CE and intermingled with the local people. They rose to political and cultural heights in the fifteenth century, only to be brutally conquered by Spanish invaders in the third decade of the sixteenth century. The so-called Aztec Empire was a political alliance between three major groups in the Valley of Mexico: the Acolhua living in the town of Texcoco, the Tepanec of Tlacopan, and the Mexica living in the twin cities Tlatelolco and Tenochtitlan. Tlatelolco and the now-legendary Tenochtitlan formed the heart of the "Aztec Empire." These cities were picturesquely located on two islands within Lake Texcoco, which covered a large part of the bottom of the Valley of Mexico during that time. The valley, a high plateau 2,200 meters above sea level, was surrounded by skyscraping mountain peaks, among them the famous volcanoes Popocatepetl (5,624 m) and Iztaccihuatl (5,230 m). When the Spanish conquistadores first saw the city, an estimated 200,000 to 250,000 people lived there (Matos 2001: 198), making Tenochtitlan-Tlatelolco one of the largest cities in the world at that time. With the twin pyramids, the ceremonial center, and the marketplace at its heart, the city spread out into the lake with people's living quarters and fertile chinampas (raised fields). A large aqueduct from Chapultepec on the close western shore of Lake Texcoco supplied fresh water. In addition to items made by local farmers, craftspeople, and artisans, traders from afar and tribute collectors brought exotic food into the city,

along with fine clothing, highly crafted tools, laborsaving devices, beautiful jewelry, and every other imaginable type of article.

The Triple Alliance controlled large parts of Mexico, conquering cities and villages through military campaigns. Politically, it was not so much an *empire* as we think of it—subjected local rulers were typically left in power and local language and culture were largely left unchanged. The local rulers only had to ensure a constant flow of tribute payments to the capital. In this way, the influence of Tenochtitlan reached from the Pacific shores on the west to the Caribbean on the east. Cultural exchange and trading between the different ethnic groups was encouraged; the political fundament, however, was relatively unstable. Many people in the conquered towns harbored negative sentiments toward the Mexica because of the high taxes and tributes. Thus, when the Spaniards arrived, many local armies joined the few Spanish soldiers in their

fight against Tenochtitlan, hoping to free themselves from Tenochtitlan's tight grip without realizing the far greater anguish that the Spaniards would bring. Despite the awe that Europeans feel to this day for Tenochtitlan's magnificence—the dreamlike manifestation of the legendary, glorious island city—images of Aztec culture are typically painted in rather dark colors. We imagine the Aztecs as deeply imbued with superstition, carrying out questionable military campaigns such as the "flower wars," waged mainly to obtain fresh supplies for cruel and bloody heart sacrifices at Tenochtitlan's main temples. These sacrifices were extensive and shocking rituals on which the Aztecs spent an excessive amount of time, energy, and money. Historians imagined life in Tenochtitlan as harsh and joyless, ruled by the pessimism that only a cyclical concept of time could generate as well as by a deeply felt fatalism dominated by the belief in a near end of the world if the gods were not nourished with an endless supply of sacrifices. Terrified by predictions of doom, Tenochtitlan's last ruler, Motecuhzoma II, easily gave in to the Spanish soldiers commanded by Hernan Cortes, whom Motecuhzoma believed was the god *Quetzalcoatl* returning to reclaim rulership of the Mexica. Thus, when the Spaniards came upon the Aztecs, it was a clash of semiotics, as scholar Tzvetan Todorov (1984) concluded. This clash ultimately led to the Spanish victory because their superior sign system enabled Cortes to think politically, improvise, and act strategically. Motecuhzoma II, on the other hand, was too preoccupied with reading the omens, understanding the will of the gods, and acting according to a tradition that offered no strategy for dealing with the Spaniards. This all-encompassing image of Aztec culture, including the interpretation of their defeat, is strongly shaped by European projections of the Other and by intellectual imperialism rooted in the will to conquer, dominate, and exploit. One of the major objectives of this study is to challenge these images and to attempt to understand—inspired by a postcolonial perspective—how the Aztecs perceived reality. One of the most important steps on this road is to look closely at the sources with a raised level of reflexivity.

Let us begin this endeavor by discussing the use of the term *Aztec*. This name was apparently introduced by Alexander von Humboldt (1810, 1997) and made popular by us historian William H. Prescott in his *History of the Conquest of Mexico* (Prescott 1843). Since then, it has generally referred to the mainly Nahuatl-speaking ethnic groups that formed the Aztec Empire in the century before the Spanish conquest. It particularly refers to the Nahuas who lived in Tenochtitlan-Tlatelolco and controlled the Aztec Empire politically and militarily. Humboldt chose this name because it relates to the migration myth of this Nahua group, which recounts how their ancestors had come from a place called *Aztlan* before they settled on an island in Lake Texcoco at the beginning of the fourteenth century CE.

However, people living in pre-Hispanic Mexico never used this name themselves. Postclassic Mexico was ethnically diverse, and identity was bound mainly to the locality where one lived. For example, the inhabitants of Tenochtitlan were the *Tenochca*, the people living in Tlatelolco the *Tlateloka*. Since settling jointly within Lake Texcoco, these two groups collectively identified as the *Mexica*. This denomination was later chosen for the postconquest capital Mexico City and finally for the independent state Mexico itself. When we speak of the Aztecs, it is typically the Mexica as the dominant ethnic group in the Triple Alliance we refer to, and it is the Mexica we have the most knowledge about.

This book, however, will use the name (*ancient*) *Nahuas* instead because it includes the larger ethnic group that settled in several towns in the Central Mexican Highlands and which shared the *Nahuatl* language and important cultural and religious traits.<sup>2</sup> Today, more than 1.5 million people speak a variant of Nahuatl, most of them living in Central Mexico, with some major expatriate groups in the United States. Although Nahuatl has changed in the last five hundred years due to internal development and contact with Spanish, contemporary Nahuatl is nevertheless relatively similar to Colonial and Classical Nahuatl. Political officials and notaries used Colonial Nahuatl in early colonial times, whereas Classical Nahuatl is known to us through the writings of the early missionaries and mission-trained Indigenous authors. With the colonial transcription of Classical Nahuatl into the Latin alphabet, regional differences became standardized and a form of orthography established (R. Cortes 2008: go). Most of the sources relevant for this study are written in Classical Nahuatl. With regard to transcription and spelling, throughout this study I use the simplified, modernized Franciscan system for Nahuatl terms to ease the reading for nonlinguist readers (see Bierhorst). The modernized Jesuit system, in comparison, based on the grammar by Jesuit priest Horacio Carochi (Carochi and Lockhart), includes diacritics (especially the marking of long vowels and glottal stops) and thus better serves linguistic needs.

In contrast to the Classic Period Maya, the preconquest Nahuas and their close cultural neighbors, the Mixtecs, used a pictorial writing system instead of a phonographic writing system that notated the sounds of their respective languages. This pictorial writing system uses pictograms that show stylized objects (such as houses) and ideograms that visualize abstract thoughts through combinations of pictograms (such as a temple pierced by an arrow for *conquest*) or conventionalized abstract signs. All signs were arranged on pages in an intricate way, displaying a narrative syntax and complex concepts of time and history (see Leibsohn 1994, Boone 2000). Writing in traditional style on Indigenous paper and linen appears to have prevailed until the seventeenth century, progressively adapted to the changing cultural environment and the changing needs of the Indigenous population in their interaction with the Spanish (Arnold 2002: 227). Mastery of this writing system, however, was gradually lost during colonial times and only a few primary sources from pre-Hispanic Central Mexico written in Indigenous pictorial style have survived the conquest wars, the burning of Indigenous books by frenetic missionaries, and, finally, the corruption of time. What remains is a handful of precolonial manuscripts and several hundred (early) colonial documents (see Cline 1972, 1973, 1975a, 1975b), among them tribute records and property plans, histories of ethnic groups and genealogies, calendars and astronomical measurements, and cosmologies and songbooks, along with handbooks for rituals and divination.

Many of the early conquistadores and missionaries acknowledged the Indigenous writing as a proper writing system. Based on its widespread use and its efficiency in communication, they apparently accepted it as equal to their own alphabetical writing. However, some of them classified pictography as a preliminary, evolutionarily primitive stage of writing, thus legitimizing the conquest and subsequent

exploitation of the Indigenous people. This opinion came to dominate later European and American views of the Aztecs. It went hand in hand with European philosophies of language that are rooted in the discourse of the ancient Greeks, link rational discourse with phonographic script, and advocate the intellectual supremacy of (modern) Europe. This ideology has even influenced modern theories of literacy that assert that only phonographic writing is capable of intellectual precision and rationality (e.g., Havelock 1986). As a consequence, pictorial writing systems have remained largely neglected by most European literacy theories, which rely on the (exclusive) definition of *writing* as the visualization of language (see Coulmas 2011). In the last two decades, however, some scholars, based on their analyses of Nahua and Mixtec pictorial writing systems (starting with Boone and Mignolo 1994), have questioned this devaluation. It became obvious that these are highly efficient systems of visual communication comparable to musical or mathematical notation or to geouaphical cartography and are no less capable than phonographic writing systems of transporting complex models of the world and people's place in it.

Although we are still far from comprehensively understanding the surviving pictorial manuscripts, the recent analyses have produced major breakthroughs in reading them. In this study, rather than analyzing the contents and visual structure of single sources, I raise far more basic questions: How does this particular form of visual communication work and what type of knowledge does it express? What does it tell us about the Nahua sense of reality? What semiotic theory informs their writing system? How did the Nahuas relate their writing system to other forms of expression and communication and to (their concepts of) truth and reality (as they perceived it)?

Thus, the study combines two perspectives on Nahua culture: one on their writing system and the other on their religion. In the last few decades, not only Central Mexican writing systems but also Mexican religions have been understudied. Religious aspects of Mesoamerican cultures have not been the prime focus of research among Mesoamericanists for several reasons within the disciplinary history of Mesoamerican studies (see Monaghan 2000). Similarly, few scholars of religion—among them David Carrasco and Philip P. Arnold—have specialized in ancient, that is, pre-Hispanic Mesoamerica. In this study, I wish to open a new dialogue between Mesoamerican studies and the study of religion by applying recent theoretical, methodological, and epistemological debates within the academic study of religion to the study of Aztec culture. In doing so, I intend to present a fresh view on the relation between pictography and the Nahua sense of reality.

## Outlining the Chapters

This book aims at taking its readers on a journey in search of the ancient Nahua sense of reality, with particular regard to their writing system. For this purpose, we move from general aspects of their cosmivision to the specifics of their semiotics while critically reflecting common representations of Nahua culture and uncovering Eurocentric biases in previous academic interpretations.

Before the actual journey begins, I need to address questions of methodology covering postcolonial approaches to historiography, the challenges of studying the aesthetics of religion, and the journey's objectives. This reflection will prepare us to enter the world of the ancient Nahuas. First, we will examine their general ways of living in cultural diversity and central aspects of their cosmivision, which imagines the human being as embedded in a dense net of cosmic relations. Based on this, we will attain a higher level of abstraction by exploring Nahua ontology, including notions of divinity and concepts of reality in a world they perceived as constantly in motion. After discussing Indigenous epistemology, we

will move on to how the Nahuas interacted with this world in motion through a code of conduct, rituals, and aesthetic media, including the pendulum of the *teixiptla*, a material or human representative of the deities. The insights gained in these chapters will help us to analyze Nahua semiotics in First, we will interpret Nahua language theory regarding the relationship between the linguistic sign and nonlinguistic reality. After closely inspect the foundations of the Nahua pictorial writing system, we can (re)constructing Indigenous semiotic theory regarding the writing system. Furthermore, we develop an interpretation of Nahua pictography as an efficient system for unicating complex, nonlinguistic kinds of meaning and knowledge t reality, including embodied metaphors and body knowledge. The final chapters summarize the results of the study, draw methodological and theomencal conclusions, and present an outlook for future studies in this field.

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After reaching a momentary end to our journey, I wish to present a short conclusion regarding the subject of *scripture* as well as a summation of my initial objectives and an outlook for potential future research.

One of the most important arguments of this study was to include non-propositional kinds of knowledge and ways of being and acting in the world in our understanding of *religion*. The human being is not a disembodied mind but a sensory being with a body and multiple kinds of experiential sensations. emotions, and feelings acting in the world in many forms of practices. Above this, we use various types of media and material objects in a wide range of ways, challenging the idea that these serve only as a "medium" for mediating and communicating (propositional) meaning. I started this study with an interest in *scripture*, which is traditionally defined as a particular type of "sacred" text. In popular discourse, *scriptures* identified with "sacred texts" are predominantly regarded as the central medium for learning about other religions, and even within the academic study of religion, the concept has only recently been criticized.

Analyses of Nahua culture challenge the traditional concept of *scripture* in several ways. First, Nahua written texts were so deeply embedded in oral performances that common distinctions between oral and literate societies do not match. These performative contexts draw our attention to the bodily and material aspects of semantic expressions. Confronted with Nahua ways of reading, we become aware that our contemporary practice of silent reading is by no means the only form for engaging with "texts" (and images). Consequently, engagement with the Nahuas motivates us to reflect and study the history of media usage in Europe more extensively. Second, Nahua texts challenge the idea that thoughts are best expressed linguistically, an idea related to the ideology of alphabetical writing. They do so because Nahua pictography also visually employs other forms of thinking, such as embodied conceptual metaphors. As a consequence, Nahua pictography also challenges ideas of knowledge that exclusively focus on the linguistic expression of propositions. Finally, the generally high significance of practice and aesthetics in Nahua religion draws our attention to the many ways of being religious beyond creedal beliefs and intellectual engagement.

Contemporary academic semiotic theories are deeply rooted in the European history of ideas and in many cases are strongly influenced by the debates within European religions about the proper use of different media. Within Christianity, extensive disputes about the ontological nature and representational function of images led to several schisms. In Plate's judgment, no other religion has

spent so much time on these questions and established such a "vast theological corpus of doctrines on images" (2002b: 55). Although the European arts were increasingly secularized after the Renaissance, the evolving new theories of representation were still deeply rooted within this discursive tradition. Similarly, many contemporary academic theories about the relationships between signs or images and reality are firmly located within European ontological and epistemological frameworks. Drawing on the Western tradition of suspecting the image, many scholars within the field of Visual Culture caution against the manipulative power of images. With a background in critical theory, some of these scholars are openly critical of the increasing oculo-centrism within contemporary mass media and fear the related loss of alphabetical literacy among the populace, which is equated with the loss of the intellectual achievements of the Western-European civilization. Analyzing and reflecting the discursive roots of European theories about images and writing systems should be the first task of any academic research in this field.

Correspondingly, we need more awareness of the fact that people in non-European cultures often developed different semiotic theories embedded within specific cultural aesthetics and complex epistemologies and ontologies. Annette Hornbacher (2014) convincingly demonstrated this using the example of esoteric script mysticism in Bali. Interestingly, many religious image practices do not consider the image as a passive object made (merely) by human hands but attribute agency to it. For example, in Catholicism, statues of the Virgin Mary weeping tears or blood are popular. In India, deity statues have the capacity for *dargan*, that is, the power of the auspicious sight. In general, religious images are attributed with many different forms of agency; the most prevalent appears to be the power of healing. Furthermore, there are diverse, sometimes elaborate explanations about how images or statues enter into a state of agency.

In colonial Mexico, the Franciscan image doctrine declined in the second half of the sixteenth century while the belief in the agency of images grew. The worship of the "miraculous image" reached its climax in the seventeenth century, when images were "endowed with their own life, capable of regulation and autoregulation" (Gruzinski 2001: 129). This image concept incorporated many aspects of the pre-Hispanic idea of the *teixiptla*, which attributed agentive power to images and statues. We do not know whether the pre-Hispanic Nahuas also assigned agency to written texts in their materiality, while they did so to paper in its unwritten form. This is different from many material text practices in other traditions, in which efficacy is endowed to paper only through the signs written on it. There are, for example, contemporary practices of ingesting paper inscribed with text from the Qur'an for healing purposes or the practice of wearing amulets enclosing written texts for protective purposes in the Roman Empire.

The belief in the agency of images and the efficacy of texts in their materiality is one important aspect of Indigenous semiotic theories awaiting cross-cultural comparison. Another aspect concerns the assumed relationship between the sign and reality and the question of which part of reality the sign might represent. According to my interpretative theory, Nahuatl semiotics was based on the idea that the sign presented the underlying structures of the cosmos. This idea resembles a specific interpretation of Chinese calligraphy as a visual medium for expressing the organizing structures of the universe. While the mandalas of Tibetan Buddhism are generally believed to represent intrapsychic sceneries and the cycle of reincarnation, Islamic calligraphy, according to the semiotic theory by Lois Ibsen Al-Faruqi, seeks to "express the non-representableness, the inexpressibility, of the divine" and to "suggest infinity". Thus,

Islamic calligraphy is the visual embodiment of the crystallization of the spiritual realities (*al-haqa lq*) contained in the Islamic revelation. This calligraphy provides the external dress for the Word of God in the visible world but this art remains wedded to the world of the spirit, for according to the traditional Islamic saying, "Calligraphy is the geometry of the Spirit."

These examples only superficially sketch emic semiotic theories; what is needed is a thorough comparison of differences and similarities.

Taking the complexity of emic semiotic theories and the fundamental differences in their related epistemologies and ontologies into account, any academic theory with cross-cultural aspirations may easily fall short. It may turn out that the academic theory is simply one more semiotic theory embedded within its respective culture, in this case within the secular ontology and epistemology of the modern Western sciences. Along these lines, I see some shortcomings in the theory proposed by Meyer. She understands media and materiality in the context of religion as mediations "between the levels of humans and some spiritual, divine, or transcendental force". Correspondingly, she defined *religions* as "the ways in which people link up with; or even feel touched by, a meta-empirical sphere that may be glossed as supernatural, sacred, divine, or transcendental". Taking "the material and sensory dimension" as an intrinsic feature of *religion*, she understands *religion* "as a practice of mediation that organizes the relationship between experiencing subjects and the transcendental via particular sensational forms". Specifically regarding images, Meyer proposed that these make the invisible visible, represent "an absent signified," and "operate as symbolic forms that mediate that signified and in so doing constitute reality". Although Meyer aimed at disengaging the antisomatist and antimaterialist tendencies in the study of religion, this semiotic theory nevertheless maintains a European ontological dualism that is not necessarily cross-culturally applicable. As I have argued in several places, it does not apply to Nahua monist ontology.

The theory *could* apply to Nahua ontology, however, if we exclude its ontological statement about matter mediating the transcendent and reduce it to state merely that the image or sign presents the "invisible." After doing so, the theory could be related to a more secular academic semiotic theory arguing that signs might be able to represent the ineffable, in the sense of a "quality or state that applies to things that are incapable of being expressed in words". The ineffable, understood in this way, could include mystic experiences of "the sacred," as Rudolf phrased it, or visions gained in altered states of consciousness but also philosophical ideas of "contradiction, paradox, and impossibility". Finally, it could also refer to kinds of nonpropositional knowledge that are difficult to express linguistically. In this way, my interpretative theory of Nahua pictography could be regarded as a more secular variant of a contemporary academic semiotic theory, because it argues that Nahua pictography offers a means to express embodied conceptual metaphors and other kinds of body knowledge.

The theoretical approach discussed in the last paragraph focuses on one aspect of human media usage, the semiotic aspect theorizing the relationship between the sign and reality and defining which aspect of reality the sign is believed to mediate. This idea of semiotics appears to be closely derived from the traditional understanding of material objects as symbols mediating a non-material meaning and also from the traditional understanding of media as a means of communication that transports a message like a parcel from the sender to the recipient. Searching for a more radical shift in perspective, we might turn to approaches theorizing the many other ways in which human beings use, relate to, interpret, and make

sense with media and material objects, approaches that understand meaningmaking as an integrated bodily process. One approach along these lines is Schilbrack's recent introduction of the theory of material culture as cognitive prosthetics into the study of religion. After these concluding remarks about the study of semiotics in the context of the aesthetics of religion, it is time to summarize the work done in this study. One of its central academic objectives was to start an interdisciplinary dialogue between Mesoamerican studies and the study of religion. On one hand, I intended to change the perspective on Mesoamerican cultures by seeing it from viewpoints recently developed within the study of religion. On the other hand, I intended to test whether theories from the study of religion hold ground when applied to Mesoamerican cultures. In sum, I followed Mignolo's intention: "In writing this book I was more interested in exploring new ways of thinking about what we know than to accumulate new knowledge under old ways of thinking".

The temporary endpoint of my journey into the world of the pre-Hispanic Nahuas was to propose two interpretations: first, an interpretative (re)construction of Nahua semiotic theory based on their sense of reality and, second, a theory about the *modus operandi* of Nahua pictography seen from the perspective of contemporary academic theories. In this, I opted for an interdisciplinary approach and, consequently, faced the impossibility of doing justice to the sophistication that some theoretical debates have reached within their home disciplines. I am aware that in many cases I only scratched the surface of these debates and surely missed many ideas that have already been thought. Furthermore, I surely missed complete discussions that would have matched my objectives, regarding both my interpretation of Nahua culture and the theoretical scenery I painted in the last chapter. Finally, I more or less deliberately excluded fields of research simply because I needed to establish an end to an already long journey. One of these fields, for example, is formed by German-speaking image theories, another by recent German research projects on the materiality of writing (see, e.g., Strafing 2006). Unfortunately, I was unable to include results of the Research Training Group "*Notational Iconicity: On the Materiality, Perceptibility and Operativity of Writing*" (German Research Foundation) located at the Freie Universität Berlin,<sup>1</sup> although it followed a theoretical agenda similar to my own. Similarly, the results of the running collaborate research project on material text cultures at Heidelberg University await further discussion.

Other fields include research on epigrams and seals in ancient history or analyses of the many different writing systems of the world done in several area studies. I have sketched in broad strokes only the European history of philosophies of language, writing, and the arts, and largely excluded extensive details of the philosophical debates based on Kant, Wittgenstein, or Derrida. Furthermore, I touched only briefly on the field of (comparative) semiotics, which might have provided interesting perspectives on my research material, at least in those cases in which it is cross-culturally applicable and translatable for interdisciplinary dialogue. Furthermore, I only quickly mentioned the promising research field of the psychology of art and aesthetics (see, e.g. Tinio and Smith 2014). The main intention of the study was not to cover all those fields comprehensively but to open up interdisciplinary dialogue and to provide a springboard for further discussions.

As a consequence, there is much work left to do in future studies following the theoretical perspective of this study. Specifically, I see a large potential in the transdisciplinary dialogue between the studies of religion, art history, aesthetics, visual studies, perceptual psychology, cognitive science, and many area studies that discuss the ways in which human beings make meaning from and with visual systems of communication and the ways in which they position themselves within the world through the visual

sense. More generally, I dream of expanding our academic and scientific knowledge about the sensorial, bodily, emotional, medial, and material ways of being and acting in the world in the context of religious and cultural traditions and their interrelationships with cognitive processes and among one another. This also includes comparative studies between different religious and cultural aesthetics, semiotic theories, and epistemologies.

There is also much work left to do in future studies on the culture and religion of the pre-Hispanic Nahuas as well as on contemporary Nahuas and their colonial and postcolonial history and, more broadly, on Mesoamerican cultures and their histories in general. Specifically with respect to the pre-Hispanic Nahuas, one central objective of this study was to reassess previous academic representations of Nahua religion and semiotic concepts. In this, I put great emphasis on the analysis and reflection of secondary literature on the Nahuas. Future studies are needed to test my interpretations and theories on more and specific primary source material.

All in all, my prime motivation was to understand a little better the pre-Hispanic Nahua sense of reality. Much has already been written about the question whether historical and cross-cultural understanding is possible at all.

Being aware of the limitations of this understanding, I am still interested in listening to the Nahuas rather than giving up on the matter by thinking that I could, in the end, only understand myself. Most certainly, there are aspects of unconscious Othering in my work and failed attempts to transcend my own concepts and thinking patterns. I hope that my colleagues, contemporary and future, Nahua and non-Nahua, will have a clearer vision to finding these projections and misunderstandings. Furthermore, I reached my interpretative theories through high levels of abstraction from the data given in individual sources. Consequently, my theory homogenizes individual, social, regional, ethnic, and historical variations in a complex culture that was rapidly expanding, diversifying, and transforming. Generalizing these differences to construct underlying characteristics of a shared culture involves high degrees of interpretation and most probably also of projection. Hence, the resulting interpretation that I offered is not only abstract but also probably different from what any individual pre-Hispanic Nahua would have thought. While my intention was to stay close and truthful to the primary sources and not to work *against* their evidence, I also used the interpretations of my scholarly predecessors and sometimes reached highly speculative ground. My intention was to make better sense of Nahua culture based on the available sources than earlier interpretations could. Notwithstanding this, I do not claim to have any better access to Aztec affect, sense, and thought than those earlier interpretations. I simply offered a new attempt to search for cross-cultural historical semiotic understanding.

In all this, I am aware of the intrinsic paradox of my understanding of academic knowledge. While the basic drive of my academic research echoes positivist and teleological interests because it searches for approaches and theories fitting and explaining reality better than earlier ones, at the same time it is deeply postcolonial and postmodern because I am quite aware of the limits of human understanding. The only solution to this dilemma appears to be to adopt a ludic attitude, as Sam Gill proposed in his discussion of Jonathan Z. Smith's methods of comparison:

Play, as demonstrated to us by Smith as a double-face, is holding at once comic and tragic perspectives, the oscillatory and iterative negotiation of fit, the acknowledgment that we must stand somewhere despite knowing that there is ultimately no justifiable place on which to stand

to comprehend the world. To embrace this absurdity is particularly suited, one might even say singularly so, as the attitude for the modern academic study of religion. It is the perspective from which we can simultaneously embrace two or more opposing positions without declaring ourselves mad. <>

## **APPERCEPTION AND SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS IN KANT AND GERMAN IDEALISM** by Dennis Schulting [Bloomsbury Academic, 9781350151390]

In **APPERCEPTION AND SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS IN KANT AND GERMAN IDEALISM**, Dennis Schulting examines the themes of reflexivity, self-consciousness, representation and apperception in the philosophy of Immanuel Kant and German Idealism more widely. Central to Schulting's argument is the claim that all of human experience is irreversibly self-referential and that this is part of a self-reflexivity, or what philosophers call transcendental apperception, a Kantian insight that was first apparent in the work of Christian Wolff and came to inform all of German Idealism.

In a rigorous text suitable for students of German philosophy and upper-level students on metaphysics, epistemology, moral and political philosophy, and aesthetics courses, the author establishes the historical roots of Kant's thought and traces it through to his immediate successors Karl Leonhard Reinhold, Johann Gottlieb Fichte and Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel. He specifically examines the cognitive role of self-consciousness and its relation to idealism and places it in a clear and coherent history of rationalist philosophy.

### **Review**

"In this volume Dennis Schulting goes beyond his earlier close studies of Kant's Transcendental Deduction by explaining in detail how Kant's critical conception of self-consciousness plays a central and positive role in the philosophies of Reinhold, Fichte, and Hegel. A distinctive feature of the work is its extensive attention to recent secondary literature on this topic, as well as its nuanced articulation and defense of a systematic position on German Idealism that develops many related themes emphasized by scholars such as Robert Pippin." —*Karl Ameriks, McMahan-Hank Professor of Philosophy Emeritus, University of Notre Dame, USA*

"This highly engaging study provides a subtle and intelligent interpretation of Kant's concept of transcendental apperception. It sheds welcome light on Kant's significant debt to Leibniz and Wolff and highlights Kant's profound influence on his successors, Reinhold, Fichte and Hegel. This is an eminently readable and thought-provoking study." —*Stephen Houlgate, Professor of Philosophy, University of Warwick, UK*

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### Ineliminable Reflexive Human Experience

When I experience a particular object that is in front of me, the screen of the laptop on which I am currently typing these words, say, I can justifiably assert that *I* am the one experiencing the screen, or more precisely, the window in which I type those words. I need not be explicitly aware of my typing words on the keyboard and seeing them appear on the screen—it would be impractical if I were constantly aware of my typing and the letters appearing in the window as I type. But I must at least be able to be explicitly aware of my so typing and seeing the words appear on the screen. That is, I must be able to think of myself as being engaged in the activity of typing and reading. This reminds us of the well-known and oft-cited phrase at the start of the actual argument for the deduction of the categories of experience in the B-Deduction of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, namely that 'the *I think* must be able to accompany all my representations'. This phrase has often been misinterpreted as to its scope' but what is at any rate clear is that it expresses Kant's principle of transcendental apperception, which basically says that all my representations ... must stand under the condition under which alone I can ascribe them to the identical self as my representations, and thus can grasp them together, as synthetically combined in an apperception, through the general expression *I think*.

This is a trivially true, 'analytical proposition' (B135): it does not say that I must grasp all representations that are had (those which occur in someone's mind) as my representations, but rather it says that I can say of those representations occurring in someone's mind that they are mine only under a certain condition under which these representations share an identical element which makes them mine in the strict sense (of being all together my representations). To put this differently, any set of representations that I have, such as a representation of the keyboard of my laptop, a representation of the white window or interface of my word processor, or a representation of the various words that appear in the window as I type, is not just a set of consecutive representations occurring during a specific time interval, but they are representations that I *take to* be mine just in case I apprehend them together to indicate the activity of typewriting that I am undertaking. What is conspicuous about this way of looking at representing is that a kind of self-awareness of one's representing is always in principle involved in the first-order representing that is going on. Note that I say 'in principle. Representations *need* not be apprehended in such a way that I always apprehend them together by 'ascrib[ing] them to the identical self as my representations'; representations could just be varyingly prompted over time without myself noticing that they constitute a unitary representation of 'all my representations' together. For example, I could just, while looking up from my screen, find myself staring into the distance, momentarily lost for

words; that is, more precisely, I could just *be* staring. In that case, various representational goings-on—catching a glimpse of the clear sky outside, detecting the smell of the coffee I had made earlier etc.—occur in my mind without them having a unitary focal point, that is, without them sharing the mark of an identical self to which I would necessarily ascribe them if they were to have that unitary focal point. This implies that representations being represented would not constitute a necessary unitary representation of 'all my representations' together if I didn't notice it; the noticing and the necessary unity among my representations hang together.

What is important here is to realize that Kant is not making a simple claim as to the fact that all representations necessarily share an identical representing 'T', an identical self, just in virtue of *being* representations. Nor, even, does he claim that, while not all representations need *actually* share the same self, they nonetheless necessarily *entail* sharing the same self; in other words, that representations *could not fail* to be accompanied by a same self at least at some point in time, or that they have a necessary disposition to being accompanied by a same self. The principle of apperception is not a psychological principle that stipulates the necessary conditions under which one can have representations *simpliciter*. The relevance of Kant's point lies rather in the fact that in order to have a unitary representation of some object or objective event, a representation that is *objectively* valid, for it to be something for one, the representations that make up this unitary representation must stand under a condition of them belonging together necessarily, and this condition is precisely the condition of ascribing them to an identical self that takes these representations together, a universal criterion, in metaphysical studies up until Kant's times, in virtue of which the objective validity or truth of metaphysical claims can be assessed. Philosophers have erected whole systems of thought dealing with the conceptual analysis of all kinds of metaphysical issues and beliefs, but they failed first to properly analyse the very capacity to understand by means of which such claims are being made (A65/B90). Only through such an analysis can a pure criterion of understanding be found in virtue of which the validity of metaphysical claims can be appraised.

By instead bringing the capacity to understand itself into the focus of philosophical analysis, Kant moves metaphysics away from a direct preoccupation with the standard metaphysical topics towards a more formal approach. The result of this is an abandonment of a realist ontology, for which the concepts analysed map being itself, in favour of what Kant comes to call transcendental idealism—but in the *Prolegomena*, after being unfavourably compared to Berkeleyan idealism, he prefers to call it a 'formal' idealism (Prol, AA 4:375). Though it is often denied by commentators, there is a direct connection between, on the one hand, Kant's formal concerns with the objective validity of knowledge claims, as a whole and not just those aspects that concern our human sensibility—that is, his *epistemology*—and, on the other hand, his doctrine of idealism, namely the doctrine that the objects of our knowledge are in fact nothing but representations, and not things outside these representations, namely, not things in themselves—that is, his *metaphysics* strictly speaking. *The Copernican hypothesis thus directly entails transcendental idealism*. This is because Kant's Critical theory of knowledge is not a standard theory of knowledge but a theory of knowledge that is as much a metaphysical investigation into the very categories that determine objects *as* objects. Kant aims to show that the categories are constitutive of the very objectivity of objects, but since the categories are in fact nothing but the functions of our representations, more specifically, the functions of our judging, objects are therefore nothing but functions of our judging too, that is, insofar as their objectivity is concerned. These objects Kant calls

appearances. Inasmuch as the objects are functions of our judging, the objects of our knowledge or cognition are limited to the appearances of things in themselves. Transcendental idealism is *both* an epistemology and a metaphysics, but at the same time it is not a theory about how things are in themselves, that is, an old-style ontology.

The central theme of this book is the inseparable connection between representation, idealism, objectivity and self-consciousness, whereby the latter, the representing *self*, is the pivot around which everything else turns. This arguably holds even more so for the post-Kantians —but I argue, this is not despite Kant, but rather because of their Kantian heritage. Apperception, as developed by Kant, fundamentally and centrally informs not just Kant's thought but *mutatis mutandis* also that of his followers Reinhold, Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel. The central thesis of this book is that all of them should be seen as Kantians in the systematic sense of being centred on the principle of transcendental apperception, and that absent an understanding of the centrality of apperception their philosophical systems cannot be really understood.

Karl Leonard Reinhold (1757-1823) argues that what we represent of things is only the represented as the direct objects of the representing consciousness, literally nothing about how the things are in themselves. Of all the post-Kantians, Reinhold remains closest to the spirit if not the letter of Kant, but unlike Kant he seems to base what in the Kant literature has been called the restriction thesis on a self-standing pure principle of representation. I believe Reinhold is absolutely right to emphasize the representationalism in Kant, but by seemingly basing his system on a self-standing principle of representation, rather than on an analysis of the capacity to understand, as does Kant, Reinhold thus might seem to risk making it impossible to utter true analytic statements about things in themselves such as God and the soul.

At first blush, for Johann Gottlieb Fichte (1762-1814) and G.W.F. Hegel (1770-1831) the idealism becomes much more radical, one that dispenses entirely with the thing in itself. For Fichte and even more for Hegel, the identity that lies in the activity of the judging subject becomes an absolute identity that is no longer constrained by pure forms of sensibility that, in Kant's view, alone gives our concepts real possibility. Transcendental idealism has turned, with Hegel, into an absolute idealism that has no use for independently given intuitions (or things in themselves) as markers of real possibility. The self's knowledge of its own thinking activity is no longer bound by constraints from outside, and maps onto being itself *simpliciter*—there is an identity of sorts between the thinking self and its apperceptive activity, on the one hand, and the world of objects insofar as it can be known, on the other hand; and there is no restriction that says that we can have knowledge of appearances only, but not of things in themselves. This has often been considered a ground for dismissing absolute idealism, for while Kant's restriction thesis modestly refrains from making unwarranted existence claims, absolute idealism apparently makes intemperate metaphysical claims that it cannot not prove. But I think (and shall argue in Chapters 7-9) that especially

Hegel's conception of absolute idealism is much closer to Kant's formal idealism than most so-called metaphysical interpretations make it out to be. Hegel, in other words, builds on Kant's transcendental Turn, rather than turning his back on it by returning in some way to a pre-Critical metaphysics, that is, by advancing an old-style metaphysics or some sort of conceptual realism in pseudo-critical form. My view is closer to Pippin's so-called a-metaphysical or non-metaphysical reading of absolute idealism than

to most other current interpretations, which tend to read it in a more ontologically committed way much less beholden to a Kantian, transcendental approach.

First, in Chapter 2, I examine the central element of Kant's metaphysics which he himself highlighted in the already mentioned preface to the second edition of the *Critique*, namely its Copernican nature. The pivotal role of the subject in Kant's thought can be traced back to his so-called Copernican Turn. Kant's analogy with Copernicus's revolution in astronomy is of course often cited and discussed, but it is also often misunderstood. I claim that there are clear systemic parallels between Kant's revolution in metaphysics and the Copernican revolution in astronomy. It is commonly thought that Kant makes the Copernican analogy solely in order to point out the fact as such of a paradigm shift in philosophy. The reference to Copernican is then merely a *façon de parler*, in the sense that one should not read it as if a *systematic* parallel should be drawn between Copernicus's thoughts and Kant's. I argue that this is too historical an interpretation of the analogy. It leaves unexplained both Kant's and Copernicus's *reasons* for advancing their respective hypotheses, which brought about major changes in the conceptual schemes of philosophy and astronomy. My contention is that something much more specific, systematic is at issue, which contrary to the received understanding makes Kant's analogy in fact particularly apt.

Understanding the basic facets of the Copernican revolution in general as well as the Copernican 'revolution in the way of thinking, as Kant called it, will greatly help grasp the centrality of the subject in Kant's philosophy, and why the subject as agent of thought is an ineliminable, constitutive feature of human cognition. It will also help in comprehending the specific nature of *transcendental* idealism.

In Chapters 3 to 5, I focus on the theme of transcendental apperception in Kant and his predecessors. Although the notion of transcendental apperception as such is original to Kant, the term 'apperception' itself is, as I said earlier, of course owed to Leibniz, and there are parallels especially with Wolff's idea of consciousness of self as derivative of object consciousness, as a kind of reflexive consciousness that accompanies the consciousness of objects.' For Wolff a central aspect of consciousness is that it expresses a two-way relation to objects: consciousness is not just consciousness of things but also, at the same time, a consciousness of self.. There is thus always a reflexive element involved in the perception of an object, and this element is consciousness or apperception (*apperceptio*), which points to the subject of representation or perception. Apperception is the consciousness of the self's own activity present *in perceiving objects outside of herself* This idea of apperception is based on Wolff's definition of consciousness as the capacity to distinguish. In being conscious of things, one differentiates things from one another, but also thereby from *oneself* as the agent of differentiation. So the subject is differentiated from objects precisely in her being conscious of those various objects through differentiation.

This fundamental and specifically non-psychological concept of self-consciousness as reflexivity, which has its roots in Wolff, is to become central to Kant's thought and that of the later German Idealists, not least Hegel's. Kant's view of self-consciousness is similar to Wolff's in that the 'derivative' model of consciousness that Wolff adopts (Thiel 2011:308) is *mutatis mutandis* applicable to Kant's view of transcendental consciousness as constitutive of the objective unity of representations as defining an object. While Kant's view is much less overtly characterized in terms of explicit subject-object oppositions, as are later, presumably, Fichte's and Hegel's, transcendental apperception must not be seen as prior to, and somehow independent of, the perception of objects, but—to put it in terms proposed by Pippin (1997a)—as 'adverbial' to it. Transcendental consciousness and consciousness of objects are, in some sense, equiprimordial. As Kant puts it at A108,

the original and necessary consciousness of the identity of oneself is at the same time a consciousness of an equally necessary unity of the synthesis of all appearances in accordance with concepts ... for the mind could not possibly think of the identity of itself in the manifoldness of its representations, and indeed think this *a priori*, if it did not have before its eyes the identity of its action, which subjects all synthesis of apprehension (which is empirical) to a transcendental unity, and first makes possible their connection in accordance with *a priori* rules.  
my underlining

The 'necessary unity of the synthesis of all appearances' is—as explained in this section of the A-Deduction—what first constitutes a possible object of experience. However, this necessary unity is nothing but the necessary unity that results from **the** act of synthesis of representations that also, simultaneously, first constitutes one's identity as self-consciousness. 'I here is no discrepancy between the application of a priori rules that bring unity to one's representations of an object and the a priori rules that unite one's very representations as one's own

They are the same set of rules. Both the representation of an object and self-consciousness rest on the very same act of synthesis, i.e. transcendental apperception. Transcendental apperception could then be said—similarly to Wolff's reflexive understanding of consciousness—to be that which lies at the origin of the differentiation between subject and object,<sup>4</sup> and is, in a sense, 'derivative' of, or adverbial to, the consciousness of objects, since it does not exist other than in the act of synthesis that enables the perception of objects. The equiprimordiality of the synthesis that enables object perception and the consciousness of one's identity *in* this very act explains Kant's phrase 'at the same time' in the above-quoted passage at A108 in the A-Deduction.

In Chapter 3, I first approach apperception historically, through a discussion of its appearance chiefly in the metaphysics lectures that are contemporaneous with the Critical phase of Kant's work. The lectures give a good idea of how apperception is rooted in Kant's reading of the works of his predecessors, chiefly Wolff and Baumgarten. I explore to what extent, and in which context, transcendental apperception and consciousness are featured in the lectures and what changes (or not) in the conception of these notions from the pre-Critical to the Critical phase of Kant's lecturing activity. After introducing the theme of apperception and consciousness in Kant and addressing some terminological issues, I look first at the Leibnizian and Wolffian background of Kant's theory of apperception, and the usage and occurrence of the term 'consciousness' in the lectures notes and in Kant's pre-Critical published work. I also address aspects of Leibniz's theory of obscure representations in order to clarify Kant's differentiation of apperception from mere consciousness. Subsequently, I examine how Kant's conception of 'consciousness' develops from the pre-Critical *Herder* and *Poltz* metaphysics lectures to the lectures of the Critical period, specifically the *Metaphysik von Scholl* and *Metaphysik Mrongovius*, where the notion of 'apperception' first crops up and which show that Kant departs from the Leibnizian-Wolffian conflation of apperception and consciousness, although there appear to remain some carry-overs from the pre-Critical lectures. I then briefly consider a lingering ambiguity about the relation between inner sense and transcendental apperception in the *Mrongovius* notes and conclude that, in line with Leibniz's gradual theory of perceptions and his law of continuity, Kant espouses a gradual theory of consciousness. The central argument of the chapter is that Kant's principle of apperception should not be conflated with a putative principle of consciousness *simpliciter*.

In Chapter 4, in a systematic account of Kant's theory of self-consciousness I concentrate on two connected elements: the transcendental conditions for establishing the identity of self-consciousness, which first enable the awareness thereof, namely self-consciousness strictly speaking, and the relation between self-consciousness and self-knowledge. I contend that two mistaken assumptions underlie the critique of Kant's 'derivative' or so-called 'reflection-theoretical' view of self-consciousness, namely the belief that it does not accommodate a *sui generis* theory of self-consciousness: (1) that the identity of self is somehow a priori given, and presumably any act of transcendental apperception, which is interpreted as an act of reflection, always already presupposes this a priori self-identity, and (2) that the awareness of the identity of self-consciousness *ipso facto* amounts to self-knowledge. Concerning assumption (1), often it is thought that Kant's so-called reflective 'I think, which accompanies my representations, is only secondary to, or derivative' of, the transcendental unity of self-consciousness, or indeed, secondary to the identity of self-consciousness.

In Section 4.2, I address some more general, systematic issues, which directly bear on the aforementioned topics. In particular, I address criticisms of putatively Kantian type forms of self-consciousness as grounds of cognitive knowledge ('epistemic consciousness'), which, presumably, lack the means to account for a *sui generis* self-consciousness. The general criticism, which goes back to Fichte, is that if the identity of self is first established in the *reflection on oneself* (a turning back into oneself), then the self-identity and the knowledge thereof is not immediate, but secondary to the reflection. But at the same time, it is argued, the reflection *presupposes* the identity of the self in order to be able to carry out the reflection, for the reflection is of course done by the same person or self whose identity is reflected upon. Such a cognitive model of self-consciousness *ipso facto* cannot attain determination of self-identity per se, or indeed self-consciousness, because it fundamentally misconstrues the nature of self-consciousness or the 'I' as a function of thought or cognition. I point out that Kant's view of transcendental consciousness is not vulnerable to this charge of circularity.

In Section 4.3, I approach assumption (1) from an interpretative point of view, by looking more closely at Kant's argument in §16 of the B-Deduction (B131-6). This will show that Kant's view of self-consciousness is in fact not derivative (in the 'reflection-theoretical' sense of unoriginal), and that instead it shows how any account of self-consciousness and the identity of self is first made possible by transcendental consciousness or transcendental apperception, which is nothing but the act itself of accompanying, through the 'I think, one's representations as one's own. Transcendental consciousness is an original consciousness, which a priori grounds any form of self-consciousness or self-knowledge, and is 'the consciousness of myself as original apperception' (A117n). In Section 4.4, I consider (ad assumption 2) why, for Kant, awareness of the identity of self-consciousness does not *ipso facto* amount to self-knowledge, and explain that, in addition to transcendental self-consciousness, what Kant calls the 'affection' of inner sense is needed for self-knowledge to be possible.

Chapter 5 addresses a topic that concerns the possibility of animal perception in relation to Kant's conception of objectivity, and the question whether Kant allows animal intentionality in the same vein as human discursive objective intentionality. This relates centrally to Kant's concept of object and the necessary form of reflexivity that is part and parcel of that concept. Kant observes that the principle of apperception is uniquely characteristic for beings that have a representation of themselves as subjects: as an 'I' that thinks and is thereby aware of herself as existing as thinker (I am'). This implies that non-human animals do not apperceive the representations that they have. In early work and in the lectures,

Kant clearly sided with his rationalist predecessors in denying animals inner sense, that is, a consciousness of self, identified with inner sense (V-Met/ Herder, AA 28:901). But commentators have read this as saying that animals have no consciousness *simpliciter*. That belief appears to be informed by the standard interpretation of the principle of apperception as a principle of mere consciousness. If animals do not have apperception, then by implication they do not have consciousness. But this reading of apperception is mistaken on purely interpretative grounds, as I have argued in detail elsewhere. Transcendental apperception is not a necessary nor a sufficient condition of consciousness. Scientific evidence moreover supports the view that most vertebrates do arguably have at least creature consciousness and some mammals such as dolphins and elephants have shown evidence even of some form of bodily self-awareness. Another implication of the claim that animals do not have the capacity for apperception is that, because apperception grounds objective cognition, animals also do not have awareness of, or represent, objects. But this seems a rather unwelcome consequence of Kant's claim about the intimacy between self-consciousness (apperception) and the experience of objects. Animals are as much part of phenomenal nature as we are, one should think. In this chapter I argue that Kant's concept of object and what it means to be reflexively aware of an object excludes the idea that animals can have objective intentionality; but also that it does not exclude complex animal interaction with determinate spatial objects nor that animals have creature consciousness.

Chapter 6 is dedicated entirely to Reinhold, who must be considered the first major post-Kantian, but, at least in his early work, also the most consistently *Kantian* post Kantian, despite his reputation as being the first to have (Woods) the original Kantian message. Like Kant, Reinhold wants to base his theory of knowledge on a firm a priori, transcendental footing, which for him is the principle of consciousness. With this principle in hand, we can further analyse the diverse elements of cognition as well as the transcendental constraints of knowledge. One of the most significant outcomes of Reinhold's account is the idea that the concept of representation itself provides the ground of cognition. Reinhold denies that in our representations we represent anything of the thing itself that we represent because we represent the thing only *as* represented, not *as* it is in itself. So nothing of the thing itself qua thing in itself is represented in our representation of it as represented. We still need the thing as it is in itself, metaphysically, though. So, unlike Fichte and in some sense Hegel, Reinhold does not give up on the thing in itself. In this chapter, I want to zero in on the Kantian idea that Reinhold elaborates on in his first major work *Versuch einer neuen Theorie des menschlichen Vorstellungsvermögens*, published in 1789, namely that, whilst things in themselves must logically be presupposed as the ground underlying appearances and things are not reducible to their representations, (1) objects as appearances are not properties of things in themselves, and (2) things in themselves or the thing in itself cannot properly be represented or even thought—though the *notion* of a thing in itself must of course be able to be conceived, and things in themselves must be taken to exist independently. I am here interested neither in the extent to which Reinhold's interpretation of Kant is correct or even adequately represents Kant's thought in all of its aspects, nor whether Reinhold's attempt to present a systematic philosophy based on a rigorous deduction from a single principle (his strong foundationalism) stands up to scrutiny. I am here solely interested in some of Reinhold's positive insights, in the *Versuch*, concerning elements of his representationalism that may shed light on Kant's idealism, specifically, the relation between appearances (as objects of knowledge) and things in themselves, i.e. points (1) and (2) described above. I read the early Reinhold of the *Versuch* as confirming the Kantian view that objects as appearances are not properties of things in themselves and that we are radically ignorant of things in themselves, in the sense

that we can neither know things in themselves (through the senses) nor even intellectually grasp things in themselves through the understanding alone. Reinhold's representationalism, which is based on what he calls the principle of consciousness, is not a tautological representationalism. It is not based on the trivial idea that whatever is not a representation can not be represented. By comparing his views to Sellars' view on representationalism in his *Science and Metaphysics* (1992 [1968]) I show that Reinhold's representationalism provides useful insights as to why Kant rightfully restricts possible knowledge to appearances and prohibits knowledge of things in themselves.

In Chapter 7, I am particularly interested in pursuing the question of how, following Hegel's critique of Kant, Hegelians have recently interpreted, under the influence of a Fichtean reading, Kant's theory of apperception and the cognitive role of self-consciousness, as chiefly elaborated in the Transcendental Deduction. Hegelians such as Pippin think that in the Deduction Kant effectively compromises or wavers on the strict separability between concepts and intuitions he stipulates at A51/B75. For if the argument of the Deduction, in particular in its B-version, is that the categories are not only the necessary conditions under which I think objects, by virtue of applying concepts, but also the necessary conditions under which anything is first given in sensibility, the fixed separation of concepts and intuitions seems incompatible with the very aim and conclusion of the Deduction. I want to examine these charges by looking more closely at Pippin's reading of the Deduction and his more general approach to Kant's strategy, in particular by looking at Pippin's reading of the scope of the principle of apperception as the principle of representational content. Pippin believes the orthodox Kant cannot be retained if we want to extract something of philosophical value from the Deduction. He defends a Kantian conceptualism shorn of the remaining nonconceptualist tendencies, which are in his view antithetical to the spirit of Kant's Critical revolution. I believe, however, that we must retain the orthodox Kant, including its nonconceptualist tendencies, in order not to succumb to an intemperate conceptualism. This means, as I argue, that the principle of apperception must be read in a modally less strong sense than Fichte and following him Hegel and Pippin do. Not all representations that are occurrent in one's head need be accompanied by an 'I think', even if it is of course true to say that representations must be so accompanied for them to have epistemic relevance, that is, objective validity.

In Chapter 8, I consider the relation between Kant and Hegel from a different, more overtly Hegelian angle, while expanding on the central theme of Chapter 7.

This will be done in a somewhat more programmatic or speculative vein than before. The rationale for this and the following chapter is to show that there is a direct connection between Kant's theory of apperception to Hegel's idea of a metaphysical logic, and that Hegel's metaphysics is wholly continuous with Kant's. I want to look at some aspects of Pippin's compelling arguments, in his recent essay *Logik and Metaphysik: Hegels "Reich der Schatten"* (Pippin 2016),

for seeing Hegel's logic as a metaphysics, which takes objects, in some sense, to be a product and content of thought. Pippin's general conceptualist approach to Hegel's metaphysical logic is, it seems to me, the only viable one, interpretatively as well as philosophically, though other recent readings that are more ontologically inclined, such as Martin (2012), and Kreines (2015), and in particular Houlgate (e.g. 2006, 2015, 2018), merit closer attention (I have only space to look at some of Houlgate's arguments). I beg to differ however with respect to some of the details of Pippin's reading in relation to Kant, which I shall be focusing on in this chapter. Pippin rightly emphasizes the subjective, reflexive element of Hegel's

metaphysics. As Pippin says, it is noteworthy that Hegel connects the 'universal' (*Allgemeine*) with 'activity' (*Tätigkeit*). Concepts themselves do not make assertions. Rather, it is *self-consciousness*, thinking, which 'drives' the logic of concepts. But equally, Pippin is keen to point out that Hegel is not a mere category theorist. The logic of concepts is not merely a logic of the intelligibility of our conceptual claims, but it is a metaphysical logic that concerns Being itself. Hegel's absolute idealism is therefore not a form of subjective idealism that reduces reality to how things are merely for us; rather, it is an idealism that demonstrates the conceptual conditions under which reality itself can and must be understood without there being a gap between a putative conceptual scheme and its objective application conditions.

However, as Pippin argues, Hegel wants the identity that exists between the two set of conditions that govern the 'making sense of our understanding' and the 'making sense of things' of how things are, to go deeper than Kant's putatively 'excessively subjectivist approach' (2016:172). The identity between thought and being is a real one, and not restricted to *human* spatiotemporal experience. Pippin argues that Kant did not go far enough in affirming the identity between the forms of thought and the categories of objective experience, reasoning that the relation between general logic and transcendental logic is far closer than Kant acknowledges. This brings me back to the theme of the previous chapter: For Hegel, there simply is no gap that needs bridging, given his denial of a sharp distinction between the pure concepts and pure intuitions, and given the systematic and consistently immanent deduction of the pure concepts, which does not require any application, schematization, or demonstration of the instantiation, of concepts in objects or intuitions of objects. But I argue that, appearances to the contrary, Kant is much closer here to Hegel than Pippin and Hegel make it out to be, despite the fact that Hegel insists more overtly on the intrinsic intelligibility of Being itself, more so than Kant would appear to allow.

In the last chapter of the book, Chapter 9, I elaborate on the arguments broached in the previous two chapters by addressing two broadly naturalist readings of Hegel's criticism of Kant's transcendental logic and idealism. Such a reading espouses the idea that nature or reality is not reducible to what subjects make of nature or reality, but is rather that into which the cognitive agent or subject is herself integrated. The subject is, on such an account, as much *part* of nature as it has *knowledge of nature*, and as such it is constrained and determined by it. Hegel is often read as if he abandoned the transcendental perspective that Kant inaugurated in philosophy, whereby nature or reality, insofar as the physical realm of spatiotemporal objects is concerned, depends for its objectivity wholly on the transcendental subject. Hegel, it is thought, rejects such a subjective, transcendental idealism in favour of an idealism that is actually a fully-fledged realism in all but name, a realism *sans phrase* which makes substantial claims about the fundamental structure of reality itself and that encompasses knowledge about how things in themselves are constituted. Unlike Kant, Hegel is often considered a thoroughbred naturalist. There are a couple of assumptions here that persist among Hegelians discussing Kant's philosophy and Hegel's relation to it, and that create the continuing misunderstanding of the core of Kant's Copernican thought. Unlike what Hegelians—but not Pippin, it seems—continue to believe, Kant's category theory is not at all subjective in the bad sense ('bad' as opposed to my 'radically' subjectivist reading as espoused in Schulting 2017a), and so least of all 'solipsist' in whatever sense, and it does not entail scepticism or epistemological relativism. On the other hand, Hegel should not be read as if he were returning to a pre-Kantian metaphysics, which sees our forms of thought as conforming to the objects, rather than the objects as a priori conforming to our thought forms as it is on the Copernican hypothesis. In my view,

Hegel's absolute idealism is informed by a *transcendental* logic that is thoroughly Kantian in spirit, which excludes the possibility of reading absolute idealism as a naturalism or realism *sans phrase* which is seen to replace transcendental logic. The main difference with Kant is that Hegel sees no reason to restrict this idealism to *empirical* objects. The idealism in absolute idealism is, if anything, not less but more idealist than transcendental idealism. <>

## **EMOTION AND VIRTUE** by Gopal Sreenivasan [Princeton University Press, 978-0691134550

A novel approach to the crucial role emotion plays in virtuous action

What must a person be like to possess a virtue in full measure? What sort of psychological constitution does one need to be an exemplar of compassion, say, or of courage? Focusing on these two examples, *Emotion and Virtue* ingeniously argues that certain emotion traits play an indispensable role in virtue. With exemplars of compassion, for instance, this role is played by a modified sympathy trait, which is central to enabling these exemplars to be reliably correct judges of the compassionate thing to do in various practical situations. Indeed, according to Gopal Sreenivasan, the virtue of compassion is, in a sense, a modified sympathy trait, just as courage is a modified fear trait.

While he upholds the traditional definition of virtue as a species of character trait, Sreenivasan discards other traditional precepts. For example, he rejects the unity of the virtues and raises new questions about when virtue should be taught. Unlike orthodox virtue ethics, moreover, his account does not aspire to rival consequentialism and deontology. Instead Sreenivasan repudiates the ambitions of virtue imperialism.

**EMOTION AND VIRTUE** makes significant contributions to moral psychology and the theory of virtue alike.

### Review

"**EMOTION AND VIRTUE** presents a new and very appealing account of virtue and its relationship to emotion. Sreenivasan elaborates a view of virtue exemplars, focusing on two virtues: compassion and courage. In his arguments, Sreenivasan engages in illuminating discussions of topics of central importance to virtue theory in the recent literature, including the unity of the virtues, situationism, and moral deference. I highly recommend this book to anyone interested in ethics as well as the nature of virtue."—**Julia Driver, author of *Consequentialism***

"**EMOTION AND VIRTUE** is a book of considerable sophistication and rigor. The originality of the arguments provided and the author's novel approach to perennial questions are second to none."—**Kristján Kristjánsson, author of *Virtuous Emotions***

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As the title suggests, this is a book about virtue. More specifically, it is about the role that emotion plays in virtue. In a line, my view is that emotion plays a central and indispensable role in virtue. Naturally, there are various ways to understand what makes different roles in virtue more or less `central. For my part, I take it that acting virtuously is the central and most important dimension of virtue. By 'acting virtuously,' I do not mean to emphasise *how* one acts—in this manner, as opposed to that. Rather, I simply mean doing the virtuous thing—actually performing the virtuous act, as opposed to some other act or to not acting at all. Thus, as I understand it, the centrality of roles in virtue is a matter of their being tied to virtuous action somehow. Any such role is more central than every role in virtue that is not tied to virtuous action.

By contrast, in some other traditions, including illustrious Western ones, reference to virtue serves to emphasise the moral significance of certain ways of *being*, instead of doing—for example, being 'for the good,' to borrow from Robert Adams's (2006) subtitle. Emotion may be held to play a notable role in virtue on this other front, too. I do not deny or oppose any such claim. Indeed, it may be considerably easier to defend. However, it is not the claim I mean, to advance myself.

In discussing emotion and virtue, I am mostly interested in individual virtues and particular emotions. On my view, particular emotions play a central role in specific virtues. By and large, I shall concentrate on two virtues (compassion and courage) and two emotions (sympathy and fear). Within each category, my two examples are meant to stand in for various others. For opening, purposes, though, I shall confine myself to compassion, since courage **is actually** a fairly complicated case (as we shall discover).

With compassion, the fundamental thesis I shall defend in this book is that having a modified sympathy trait is indispensable to being a reliably correct judge of which action, if any, compassion requires in this or that practical situation. What 'ties' this role for sympathy to virtuous action—thereby making it central to virtue—is the very basic fact that reliably doing the compassionate thing <sub>pr</sub>esupposes that one is a reliably correct judge of what the compassionate to do is (under the circumstances).

My fundamental thesis is therefore a thesis in moral psychology. More specifically, it is a thesis about the psychological constitution of *exemplars* of virtue, that is, of agents who have a given virtue in full measure (e.g., compassion). I do not claim that doing the compassionate thing on some occasion or sprinkling of occasions requires an agent to have (the trait of) sympathy. But exemplars of compassion must have a reliable sympathy trait. For one of the ways they are distinguished from the rest of us is by their high degree of reliability in doing the compassionate thing. Even for the rest of us, however, it follows that sympathy is needed to do the compassionate thing *as* the exemplar of compassion does it.

Although my fundamental thesis is in moral psychology I aim to contribute to the theory of virtue more generally as well. Now, in any theoretical domain, some measure of controversy is likely to attend declarations that certain positions represent the orthodoxy and others are unorthodox. Nor is it clear which is better. My own analysis of virtue represents a mixture, I think, of the orthodox and the unorthodox. Nevertheless, since it may have some heuristic value, let me describe in advance three points on which my analysis of virtue is either unorthodox or introduces a twist on the orthodoxy.

First and foremost, I should flag a signal respect in which I differ from orthodox virtue ethics. Virtue ethics shares my focus on the relation between virtue and right action (or perhaps I should say, I share its focus). However, virtue ethics combines this focus with an aspiration to accord some distinctive theoretical significance to 'virtue,' as compared to other concepts in ethics or other perspectives on the moral life. At the same time, it equally aspires for virtue to anchor a complete ethical theory. Together these aspirations drive virtue ethics to position itself as a distinctive and complete theory of right action to rival consequentialism and deontology.

I reject this 'imperialist' ambition, as I call it. In my view, the virtues are simply one province of morality among others. As a result, the perspective that virtue offers on right action is essentially incomplete, though not any less significant or interesting for that. While I understand that virtue winds up being less distinctive on my approach, I am more interested in what is true of virtue than in what may be distinctive of it. I engage very little here with consequentialism or deontology.

Next, there are two distinct ways in which virtue terms are understood in contemporary moral philosophy. On the first understanding, which is more widely established, virtue terms function as evaluations of goodness — ultimately, the moral goodness of the agent who performs some virtuous act. On the second understanding, virtue terms function as evaluations of rightness. If some act is kind, for example, then other things being equal that act is morally right. In other words, other things being equal, the agent *ought* to perform it. While these understandings are compatible, one difference between them lies in their implied attention to the agent's *motives*. In the first usage, an act's being kind entails something about the moral goodness of the agent's motives, whereas the second usage abstracts from the agent's motives.

In this book, I follow the second, minority usage of virtue terms. My account of the moral psychology of exemplars certainly accommodates the majority usage. For example, in having a reliable sympathy trait, exemplars of compassion will characteristically act from a sympathetic motive and sympathetic motives are morally good motives. However, in discussing compassionate acts, as well as other virtuous acts, I shall largely abstract from the agent's motives. I shall usually be much more concerned with the entailment that the acts in question are ones that *any* suitably situated agent—exemplars of virtue and the rest of us alike—ought to perform, other things being equal. Among other things, following this line

will put us in position to articulate a novel aspect of the practical relevance of exemplars of virtue. Exemplars are ideals. But as we shall discover, their relevance is not confined to exemplifying a character trait that the rest of us should strive to cultivate or acquire.

Finally, I reject the ancient thesis of the unity of the virtues. Among contemporary philosophers, this probably makes me one of the crowd. However, the argument I shall develop in defence of disunity is entirely my own. Indeed, as we shall see, it is closely related to anti-imperialism about virtue. Moreover, I shall also pursue the implications of disunity in the virtues rather further than is customary. We shall see that taking the disunity of virtue seriously and in some depth turns out to have some surprising consequences.

**EMOTION AND VIRTUE** has twelve chapters. Chapters 2 and 6 to 9 represent the heart of the book. Chapter 2 simply lays out the position I wish to defend, which I call the 'integral view.' It corresponds to what I have described as my fundamental thesis, though chapter 2 states this position with more subtlety and completeness than I have attempted here.

My main arguments for the integral view are conducted in terms of two specific virtue and emotion pairs: compassion and sympathy, and courage and fear. I believe the integral view holds for a good number of virtues—many more than two, certainly. But I leave open which other virtues are defensible as examples. I also leave it open that some virtues may not fit the view.

Each of chapters 6, 7, and 8 develops a distinct and independent argument for the integral view, all using the compassion and sympathy pairing. In my experience, many philosophers find something like the integral view either immediately attractive or immediately repellent. But few provide serious arguments for or against it. My paramount aim is to advance some actual arguments for the integral view, arguments that depart from more or less neutral premisses.

The heart of the book can, I think, be read on its own. In fact, each pair of chapter 2 and one of chapters 6, 7, or 8 can be read on its own. Readers who proceed in this way may find some important premisses undefended or some notions either unfamiliar or underdeveloped. But these impediments are far from insuperable. Chapter 7 is where the integral view is fleshed out in the fullest detail.

Chapter 9 recapitulates my previous arguments with the pairing of courage and fear. It adds no new argument for the integral view. One of its functions is to provide a summary and overview of my arguments in juxtaposition. The other is to extend the scope of my conclusion not just to another example, but to a wholly different kind of virtue. In this chapter, I emphasise courage's character as an *executive* virtue, as distinct from run-of-the-mill virtues like compassion or generosity. As a bonus, I also defend answers to some old chestnuts about courage, namely, must the end pursued in courageous action be a good end? (no) and is Aristotle's distinction between continence and virtue tenable in relation to courage? (no again). Chapter 9 can be read on its own.

The other seven chapters of the book scaffold its heart. Chapters 1 and 3 to 5 lay down various pieces of background material, while chapters 10 to 12 extract different consequences of the integral view for other moral philosophical puzzles. Such contributions as the book makes to the theory of virtue (or to moral philosophy) are largely to be found in these scaffolding chapters. Its contributions to moral psychology come from the heart.

Chapter 1 explains what I mean by a 'virtue: I adopt the traditional definition of virtue as a species of character trait, but also distinguish various alternatives to this definition. In addition, I specify what else is involved in a virtuous character trait besides the reliable performance of virtuous actions and discuss the venerable question of what qualifies a character trait to be a virtue. Here I mainly state my theoretical beliefs without argument (hence, 'credo'). I do argue for a few points, either when I have something significant to add or when I just cannot help it. The most original argument is a critique of eudaimonism. This is also where I disavow the imperialist ambition of virtue ethics.

Chapter 3 gives readers who need it a background primer on emotion. It covers a mix of philosophy and science. Various elements of my argument, especially in chapters 7 and 9, employ a moderately sophisticated understanding of emotion. Chapter 3 makes no attempt to contribute anything new to debates about emotion.

Chapter 4 contains my argument against the unity of the virtues. As I have said, my interest in virtue is primarily an interest in individual virtues, taken one at a time. This makes more sense when the virtues are not unified. Some, but not all, of the arguments advanced later in the book presuppose that the virtues are not unified. Part of the argument here also vindicates my antiimperialism about virtue.

Chapter 5 defends the traditional definition of virtue against the situationist critique. This critique is wielded by empirically minded philosophers, but its materials originate in the situationist tradition in social psychology. Chapters 3 and 5 carry most of the burden of my aspiration to demonstrate that my philosophical arguments and position are consistent with a scientific psychology. Chapter 5 is also where I regiment my use of virtue terms as evaluations of rightness and connect this use to a significant additional way in which exemplars of virtue are relevant to the rest of us.

Chapter 10 aims to settle one of the debates flagged in chapter 1 in relation to the definition of virtue. Many philosophers seem to take it as criterial of virtue's being theoretically distinctive that the definition of virtue somehow assign priority to the agent (who acts virtuously). As I have suggested, I harbour no particular hankering after distinctiveness, and I also think that assignments of priority to the agent in these contexts are often overblown. However, I still think it is defensible to assign some priority to the agent, and I defend that position here.

Chapter 11 shows how and why this modest assignment of priority to agents is nevertheless theoretically consequential. Philosophers who extol the importance of virtue are frequently, though not invariably, inclined to some form of anti-theoretical stance in ethics or to some form of particularism. In arguing for significant restrictions on the role that moral principles can play in moral justification, I attempt to vindicate a version of this inclination. However, the strategy I employ to this end is radically different from those pursued by either John McDowell or Alasdair MacIntyre, for example.

Chapter 12 pursues a very interesting but scarcely discussed question, namely, whether virtue *should* be taught. Philosophical discussions of character education typically assume that virtue should be taught and concentrate instead on whether it can be taught. Plato comes to mind here. I develop two rather different arguments for the paradoxical conclusion that virtue should *not* be taught, even when it can be taught. One of them completes the argument of chapter 4, by conveniently exhibiting a further way in which my moderate disunity position is preferable to the radical disunity of the virtues.

Let me close with a note about my notes. Somewhat unusually, this book features both footnotes and endnotes. The point of this apparent complexity is in fact simplicity. By dividing the notes, I aimed to streamline the reader's progress through the text, without sacrificing a level of precision and detail. Thus, the endnotes are designed to be ignored on a first pass (or any pass, for those robustly disinterested in fine points or further details). Anything I regarded as either vital or an interjection or aside that would be pointless at the back of the book has been placed in the footnotes, which are limited in number. But this is only a rough rule. As with arguments in chapter I, some things are in a footnote simply because I could not help it. <>

## READING DAVID HUME'S "OF THE STANDARD OF TASTE" edited by Babette Babich [De Gruyter, 9783110585346]

This collection of reading and essays on the *Standard of Taste* offers a much needed resource for students and scholars of philosophical aesthetics, political reflection, value and judgments, economics, and art. The authors include experts in the philosophy of art, aesthetics, history of philosophy as well as the history of science. This much needed volume on David Hume will enrich scholars across all levels of university study and research.

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## Signatures and Taste: Hume's Mortal Leavings and Lucian by Babette Babich

[Stay sober and remember not to believe.] — Epicharmus / David Hume'

### Of Books and Signatures

In his introduction to his collection of David Hume's essays, Alasdair MacIntyre writes what surely wins the palm for an introductory first sentence to a book collection: "An introduction should introduce."

The point is elegant and MacIntyre is compelled to explain: "It should not be an attempt at a substitute for the book it is introducing."

In the essayistic case of David Hume's essays, and collections of the same, of which there are a number, Hume's essays speak for themselves, that is to say, apart from an 'advertisement,' without an editor's introduction. Additionally, there is a tradition of scholarly reflection on Hume's essays as such. The current collection adds to this and hopes to inspire reflection on what is arguably the most exceptional of Hume's essays.

"Of the Standard of Taste" was written to avoid damages threatened in response to the planned publication of Hume's *Five Dissertations* (a book including: "The Natural History of Religion," "Of the Passions," "Of Tragedy," "Of Suicide," and "Of the Immortality of the Soul"). The threats were promised by William Warburton (1698 — 1779), the influential theologian who subsequently went on to become Bishop of Gloucester (and dedicated Shakespeare aficionado), who guaranteed a suit for excommunication of Hume *and* his cousin (the clergyman and playwright, John Home, author of *Douglas*), as well as Hume's publisher Andrew Millar (1706 — 1768) were Hume's *Five Dissertations* to be published as originally designed. Millar duly urged Hume to revise the first essay and cut "Of Suicide" and "Of the Immortality of the Soul," literally slicing the final two sections from the already printed book. The three remaining essays were insufficient to make the book a book and Hume quickly composed "Of the Standard of Taste" to fill out the missing signatures, permitting the book to be published, with a new title, *Four Dissertations*.

The version of "Of the Standard of Taste" included here follows that same first publication, including punctuation, and spelling, if not to the letter — f s and all — indicating in brackets the pagination of the original printing.' But if today's extant facsimile edition claims that it brings together, in the words of James Fieser: "the long-separated essays ... united as Hume intended," this would not be entirely precise. To such an end, one would need the original live essays, in accord with Hume's original design, less "Of the Standard of Taste" substituted in place of the elided essays. The socio-political and theological (and legal) reasons that compelled Hume to revise "The Natural History of Religion," i. e., the first offending essay, and to exclude his final two essays were thus quite different from his reasons for including "Of the Standard of Taste," although one might well read the essay itself as a commentary on the judgment, such as it was, that necessitated the exclusions.

Why that should be so requires something of the contextual sensibility Hume tended to foreground in his own discussion of taste: a matter of delicacy, refined but not less scientific,' and not less dependent on the culture of polite society but also technical precision and convention, as the "standards" for the same. "Of the Standard of Taste" would prove to be Hume's very last philosophical essay." And a

relation to final things, including a philosopher's reflection on his philosophical legacy, including his contemporary reception, requires both convention and the optic of distance.

## The Volume

The essays in the present volume accompanying "Of the Standard of Taste" offer a varying range of interpretations of this one text and reading between these different assessments can enhance an understanding of the breadth and complexity of Hume's essay.

Regarded more comprehensively — and beyond the specific theme of "Of the Standard of Taste," — there has been sustained scholarly engagement with Hume's essays, complex as this history is, including a tumultuous focus, beginning in Hume's own lifetime of the falling out, on the one hand, between Hume and Rousseau. Added to this is a complicated aesthetic "contest," at least as art historians assess these contests as "philosophical" disputes — this point being not rendered more perspicuous by considering the analytic-continental divide (and vigorous analytic denial of the very idea of any such distinction) that today haunts professional, disciplinary discussion' apart from the historical complications added by the 18<sup>th</sup> century articulation of what can seem to have been a parallel divide. To this must be added a more Brexit-minded focus on Hume and Smith (and the Scottish Enlightenment beginning by foregrounding the routinely not often-noted James Dunbar), but more recently still focussing on the same Adam Smith already discussed above with reference to Lucian (and Hume's deathbed reading).

Where the lion's share of Hume scholarship continues to look to his political and moral theory, or to his work as a historian, or indeed and at the heart of philosophy proper, at his epistemology, specifically on the nature of causation (here represented in Shiner and, in connection with continental philosophy of science, Babich), Hume's reflections on taste, are as central to aesthetics as to the philosophy of art and beauty (Scruton), including delicacy (Costelloe) — and not coincidentally juridical and critical reflection (Caygill), but also to art and as much to speculative or economic investment, as to 'standards,' (Kivy, MacLachlan, Costelloe, Townsend, Demuth/Demuthova), these including historical philosophical reflections (Caygill, Mazza), involving antiquity with Plato (Freydberg) as well as moving forward to Nietzsche (Babich), while also including questions of gender (Korsmeyer, but also referenced in Townsend, Demuth/Demuthova, and Mazza).

Significantly, as this is a volume dedicated to an essay written to take the place of excluded essays, this volume also and alas has its own excluded essays — chapters the editor had originally hoped to include but which could not be included owing to prohibitive publisher's fees.' The one comfort to be taken here is that these particular texts are published, if not as easily accessible as one might wish for fruitful scholarship in the best sense of Nietzsche's "*la gaya scienza*" — *Die frohliche Wissenschaft*.

By contrast, Hume's essays, at least initially, were suppressed: excluded from his *Five Dissertations* as already seen and quite for reasons of literary style or judgment (and parallels on such judgments of taste corresponding to Warburton on Shakespeare, versus Hume on John Home).<sup>1</sup> To this extent, one might sidestep the kind of exaggerated claim sometimes made in writing about the virtues of a monograph or collective volume. It is not that Hume's essay "Of the Standard of Taste" has been neglected as it has been read in the extensive literature with respect to classical and aesthetic judgment, as well as with respect to calculative evaluation or estimation. But Hume's essay on taste and the standard by which one might evaluate claims of the same all too often functions as a mere mention and there are no

*collective* studies that have made this essay and its related concerns a central theme. The current collection offers a range of reflections for scholars of aesthetics, art and beauty, together with questions of disputations, addressed to students and to philosophers, both analytic and continental, not to mention the occasional oenophile, in addition to issues of diet, physiology, and anatomy, slightly contra Hume's own ambitions to establish a standard but for the sake of further thinking. Hume's essay is key to this undertaking and thus we begin with it below. <>

## Inerview with Babette Babich by Alexandre Gilbert, September 30th, 2017

*Babette Babich is an American philosopher and a founder of the New Nietzsche Studies.*

### **Could you tell us the meaning of what David Allison calls the New Nietzsche ?**

David Allison coined the title term, the 'new Nietzsche' to express a distinctively European, specifically: 'continental' Nietzsche. This reflected Martin Heidegger's Nietzsche as this influenced a wide range of French interpreters. This range or profusion was the most remarkable thing about Allison's book collection translating these French voices, foremost among whom for Allison and myself was Jean Granier, author of a massive book on Nietzsche and truth (still as yet unavailable in English) in David's pathbreaking collection. Thus, this slim volume — and David loved 'slim volumes' — altered the landscape of Nietzsche interpretation. David's book also featured Jacques Derrida, Gilles Deleuze, Pierre Klossowski, Michel Haar and Paul Valadier, Maurice Blanchot, and Sarah Kofman, in addition to David's personal favorite —mysterious to me as David was a dedicated atheist — Henri Birault. For Anglophone readers who had been brought up on the mind-numbing limitations of analytic accounts of Nietzsche, The New Nietzsche was everything something dubbed 'new' really ought to be: it was really new, this was not just publisher's hype. What is interesting is that this book appeared forty years ago, ushering in a bunch of imitators, the new this and the new that. To this day, just because analytic philosophy has only tightened its death grip on the field, the new Nietzsche remains fruitful for scholars. Indeed, it was so valuable that when David wrote his own book he highlighted the same orientation: Reading the New Nietzsche. The journal New Nietzsche Studies was founded in 1996 to express an explicit openness to non-analytic readings and it remains a unique voice in a sea of 'grey' scholarship as Nietzsche would speak of it.

### **Would you say Simone de Beauvoir's feminism was a Nietzscheism ?**

Certainly! But at the same time, de Beauvoir was very wide ranging and she, like Sartre and like Merleau-Ponty, was influenced by Husserl and especially Heidegger. Yet Nietzsche's gift for seeing through overlayers of culture suffuses de Beauvoir — as a scholar with a breadth of reading and focus to match Nietzsche's own, de Beauvoir draws on antiquity, anthropology, history, literature, political economy in addition to psychology and sociology. And she almost echoes Nietzsche's trenchant observation: "It is men who need to be educated better." In that spirit, de Beauvoir although her focus was on women never did lose sight of a kind of non-Hegelian but Nietzschean dialectic attunement, looking not only at women but at the dynamic with the 'other.' This was Nietzsche's variation on the master-slave dialectic and it foregrounded what de Beauvoir called women's complicity and the very grave dangers to woman's being in the world, existentially expressed to be sure, as de Beauvoir, before Hannah Arendt already paid attention to the dynamic of lived life in all the dimensionalities of a human

lifetime, from birth to death. The American de Beauvoir scholar, Debra Bergoffen captures one aspect of the Nietzschean focus on educating men better, as she remarked on The Hallelujah Effect where I speak of the great Leonard Cohen regarding his often-observed womanizing, to point out that women were not what his focus was about: it was for Cohen as she noted the point I made about self-absorption, not ultimately misogynistic because Cohen's focus was always Cohen.

**Lana del Rey, who studied Metaphysics at Fordham University attends an homage concert to Leonard Cohen in november, in Quebec. What is the Hallelujah Effect you compared to the Empedocles Effect (Gaston Bachelard's concept in Psychoanalysis of Fire)?**

I wish this concert were in NY! Today, on the sabbath after Yom Kippur in the subsiding days of awe as you frame your question, I am as astonished as ever by the wonder of Cohen who, as the Germans say, trägt seinen Namen zu recht: a priest for all of us. Anyone in doubt of this might listen to his song written at the end of his life, You Want it Darker. Stephen Freedman, Provost of Fordham University — and a native of Montreal — told me that Cohen's own congregation spent some time with that very song, even before Cohen's own death. But that song, such reflections, do not constitute the 'Hallelujah Effect.'

The 'Hallelujah Effect' is the power of song as a song deliberately composed, orchestrated, calculated to work on us — what Rolling Stone and many others call a mix of sex and religion. The focus is on erotic power, obscurity and desire, including and not less the very same male-female dynamic of sex and love, affirmation and shattering, that is also the reason I pay attention to k.d lang, even when everyone tells me, sometimes unbidden, that they prefer not even Cohen's own version or John Cale's orchestration, say, but Jeff Buckley, an almost universal favorite or Rufus Wainwright. Thus any talk of k.d. lang is a ringer and most of us, quite in spite of the over-suffusion of Hallelujah covers in our culture, return again and again, to a certain favorite, which favouring or 'liking' is a direct result of programming. The 'Hallelujah Effect' is effected, deliberate, this is where Adorno matters even more than Nietzsche, although Adorno also learns from Nietzsche, via the constant repetition and plugging of specific songs what H. Stith Bennett the sociologist of rock music calls 'recording consciousness,' where what our minds know more than the song is the very precise or exact sound of a specific track: this, the effect of market branding or priming, is your brain on Hallelujah.

I love your allusion to Gaston Bachelard's 'Psychology of Fire'! Yet I would also say that Hölderlin's poem Empedokles captures the allure and heroic danger of the 'Empedocles effect. Perhaps as one can imagine this might have struck Cohen himself, as Empedocles chronicles the succession of love and strife, of lover's quarrels as these echo the raging and waning of desire, to use Cohen's final word, like Sophocles, on desire: the wretched beast is tame.

A poet like Cohen, Hölderlin wrote of Empedocles:

Life you sought, seeking, and welling up and gleaming  
from the depths of earth, for you a divine fire,  
And you, aquiver with desire,  
Hurl yourself down into Aetna's flames.

Thus what Cohen calls ‘the holy and the broken Hallelujah’ echoes one of the oldest poetic dreams of ancient Greece. This is the lover’s idea of dancing on the volcano, dancing, for Cohen, ‘to the end of love,’ including the naked consequences of what it is to be, like Hölderlin, like Cohen, ‘head-drenched in fire.’

I read it that way but media moguls have other ideas and from the beginning of the book Adorno called the ‘current of music,’ the ‘radio effect’ — i.e., your brain on YouTube — hijacks your consciousness, brands you with one song, and sends you in a spin of both attention and disinterest. That branding, that mind-hack, is the ‘Hallelujah Effect,’ and it’s all around us, no need to read Hölderlin’s poetry or Cohen’s poetry or any other kind of poetry.

**I asked Peter Trawny about the collusion between German academy and the ideology of AFD extreme right members that recently joined the Bundestag. What could you add on this subject?**

Peter’s insights are always excellent, if disturbing. To my mind, the current constellation is a frightening one, especially as I write from the United States where the extreme right has arguably never had more influence. Indeed and this is perhaps the most alarming, the extreme right has become so utterly ‘banal’ in Hannah Arendt’s phrase, that it seems that this is what political danger looks like, for those who live in dark times.

To this, I would add a point that Peter rarely notes for his own part, as most academic philosophers in the US and in Germany rarely note it, but that I myself cannot help but emphasize as the Reiner Schürmann did before me: that is the key detail of the culture of the academy, that is: the dominion of ‘analytic’ philosophy (I use this as a generic term), as a political fact, of academic, university life.

The turn to analytic philosophy, complete with university level instruction in English, has watered down the German academy — and this affects funding for research and university appointments — just to the extent that this is the kind of philosophy currently taught in Germany and not Adorno, not Heidegger, certainly not Nietzsche. When these thinkers are taught they are taught in analytic ways....

In Germany, dating back to the 1970s and 1980s when I was there, analytic philosophy was deliberately, even conscientiously brought in or ‘imported’ in order to distance the German academy from the likes of Heidegger and not less from Nietzsche, thanks to Lukàcs and again via Habermas. For this reason, for one example, Nietzsche scholarship in Germany is dominated by literary scholars and features an overweening focus on his sources but not the implications of his thinking, especially not his critiques of epistemology, of science, of morality (unless via analyticized Foucault), judgment, etc.

This perhaps would simply be a matter of the internecine woes always endemic to the academy but as it turns out, analytic modalities in philosophy seem to be singularly inept at ‘thinking,’ to use Heidegger’s terminology (although this is also the way Adorno speaks, as it is also Arendt’s terminology). For its part, analytic philosophy seeks to be like the natural sciences. As a result, an unquestioning scientism seems to be the legacy of analytic philosophy but this same scientism is not without its problems for the academy as natural scientists repay this admiration by dismissing philosophy as ‘dead’ or else as having nothing to offer. (Note just to be clear, that scientists are not dissing Heidegger — he’s not at the center of philosophy — but their university colleagues in analytic philosophy who write on physics

thought experiments and neuroscience and so on, just where analytic philosophy, especially analytic philosophy of science, aspires to tell science what to do).

Nietzsche has long been unread in philosophy departments in both Germany and in the United States, just as the Frankfurt School under the leadership of Habermas and Honneth turned away from the original founders of Critical Theory, Adorno and Horkheimer. Today, the kind of philosophy we do at university is 'analytic' in Germany as in France and the UK, as in the US and Canada, etc., a way of doing philosophy which — quite apart from the Heideggerian question of whether it can or cannot think — seems demonstrably incapable of raising a challenge to the far right. Thus the challenge Peter raises is exacerbated by the nature of philosophy, as it increasingly defines itself in the academy. <>

## **AFTER HEIDEGGER?** edited by Richard Polt and Greg Fried [New Heidegger Research, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 9781786604859]

This unique volume collects more than 30 new essays by prominent scholars on what remains philosophically provocative in Heidegger's thought. His writings continue to invite analysis and application — and, particularly in the light of his political affiliations, they must also be critiqued. Philosophy today takes place after Heidegger in that his views should not be accepted naively, and there are new issues that he did not address — but also in that we continue to think in the wake of important questions that he raised.

The contributors to this volume ask questions such as:

- What does it mean to think “after” Heidegger?
- What is valuable in his early work on finite existence, and in his early and late phenomenology?
- What is the root of his political errors? Are there still elements in his thought that can yield helpful political insights?
- Should we emulate his turn toward “releasement”?
- Can he help us understand the postmodern condition?

Readers will find thought-provoking echoes and points of contention among these engaging and lively essays.

### Review

This extremely rich volume gathers more than thirty brand-new essays by leading scholars to explore the many meanings of “**AFTER HEIDEGGER?**.” Is his philosophy a thing of the past? Is our way of thinking influenced by Heidegger like Francis Bacon’s “Study after Velázquez” is indebted to the Spanish painter? Do we go 'after' Heidegger like spurned lovers or dogged investigators? (Dieter Thomä, Professor of Philosophy at the University of St Gallen, and editor of the Heidegger Handbuch)

After a careful reading, the most striking traits of this volume are the diversity and the originality of the ways of thinking opened by dealing with Heidegger's legacy [...]. The substantial mix of the topics, which range from Heidegger's fundamental questions [...], concepts and ideas [...], critiques [...], his accounts

on life, phenomenology, hermeneutics, ontology, art, poetry, history, to matters concerning his historical situation [...], makes this volume relevant for a wide range of researchers. [...] Overall, with its rich and original content, renowned international authors and thematic diversity, “*After Heidegger?*” has all the ingredients to be a sought-after milestone when one genuinely embarks on the adventure of thinking after Heidegger. (*Meta: Research in Hermeneutics, Phenomenology, and Practical Philosophy*, Vol. X, no. 1, June 2018)

**AFTER HEIDEGGER?** has the larger scope, in that it attempts to engage with pretty much every major phase and dimension of Heidegger's intellectual career from his earliest teaching on life and existence to his late thoughts on East–West dialogue, with a view to distinguishing what remains fruitful from what should be discarded. (*European Journal of Philosophy*)

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### « AFTER HEIDEGGER? » ou Le grand marécage américain

Gregory Fried et Richard Polt ont réussi l'exploit de rendre leurs collègues américains englués jusqu'au cou dans un marécage interprétatif Outre Atlantique. C'est à se demander même si certains ont encore la tête hors de l'eau. Quand on a terminé la lecture de ce spectre d'interprétations on se demande s'il existe encore une intelligence américaine. Du « crazy horse » anti Faye de Thomas Sheehan monté par Lawrence J. Hatab au « robot girl » de Trish Glazebrook tout respire la santé de l'hôpital psychiatrique. Comment un tel aveuglement concernant la réception de l'œuvre de Heidegger est-il encore possible ?

Assurément les « penseurs » américains et leurs associés ont encore beaucoup de travail à faire pour comprendre le « non-dit » heideggérien et s'élever à la hauteur de la philosophie. En lisant les « contributions » de tous ces spécialistes de l'« Œuvre heideggérien » je me demande s'il existe encore un esprit critique sur terre. Vers quel point de l'horizon regardent-ils pour être victimes d'un tel aveuglement ? Assurément ils doivent regarder le soleil en face et celui-ci au lieu de leur donner la lumière nécessaire à l'éclairage de la voie à suivre les éblouit au point de leur rendre tout chemin imperceptible.

Les sept sections du marécage délimitées par les initiateurs de l'entreprise de « spectrographie » n'en sont finalement qu'une : tous les regards sont orientés dans la même direction et les auteurs qui auraient pu apporter un peu de clarté au débat ont été écartés et priés de rester hors du ranch. Ce serait à mourir de rire si l'affaire n'était pas aussi grave. Car enfin, de quoi s'agit-il ? De faire oublier que Heidegger est le commandant suprême de l'extermination nazie et de conduire les lecteurs à penser qu'il est un homme respectable car il traite de sujets qui donnent à penser à tous les habitants de la planète.

Bien sûr que les cours et les écrits de Heidegger traitent de sujets qui intéressent tous les hommes de la Terre. Reste à savoir comment il les traite. Et c'est ici que le bât blesse. Car Heidegger est plus subtil que ses lecteurs. Pour arriver à ses fins sans se faire prendre au piège des paroles émises il a tâché de se rendre incognito le plus longtemps possible. Il s'est efforcé de sauver les apparences et de garder le secret de son entreprise criminelle jusqu'au terme de sa vie terrestre. Mais il n'a pu s'empêcher de commettre deux « erreurs » tactiques qui ont trahi sa stratégie d'extermination à finalité prophylactique pourtant bien calculée : celle de la période rectorale et celle de la publication des cahiers noirs.

Ces derniers faisaient suite, de manière explicite, à la volonté de relance du mouvement nazi lorsqu'il s'était risqué en 1953 à publier son cours sur l'Introduction à la métaphysique, cours qu'il avait professé en 1935 et dans lequel après sa démission des fonctions rectorales il affirmait sa pleine et entière adhésion à « l'essence » du nazisme et à la « grandeur » de ce mouvement. Le Malin n'avait pas réussi à cacher entièrement les ruses de la stratégie perverse qu'il avait élaborée pour parvenir au but qu'il s'était fixé et dont il avait révélé la teneur en 1930 : « dresser constamment le bûcher avec du bois approprié et choisi jusqu'à ce qu'il prenne feu enfin ». Telle était, disait-il ouvertement dans son cours sur la Phénoménologie de l'esprit de Hegel « l'œuvre que nous voulons aujourd'hui porter à son efficace » avec la « patience » nécessaire pour éviter que « l'impatience de la masse de tous ceux qui veulent en avoir fini avant de commencer » ne fasse échouer notre démarche.

Après qu'il eut prêché l'extermination de « l'ennemi intérieur » en 1933 dans son cours intitulé De l'essence de la vérité (*Vom Wesen der Wahrheit*) et donné l'ordre de la « mise à feu », au semestre d'été 1942, dans son pseudo commentaire de l'hymne de Hölderlin *Der Ister* : « Jetzt komme, Feuer ! » (« Viens maintenant, feu ! »), ordre qui fut exécuté sur le champ une fois transmis, comme il se devait alors, par le Chancelier-Führer à ses Einsatzgruppen, on sut à quelle fin le bûcher avait été préparé. Il ne s'agissait pas seulement de brûler des livres, c'est-à-dire des idées, mais de brûler le peuple qui les avait émises et qui les émettrait encore si on le laissait en vie car les idées étaient censé être un produit de la race (condition nécessaire, selon Heidegger, « roi secret » dicit, 1933). Après quoi il fallait faire croire comme l'avait déclaré Dietrich Eckart, premier mentor d'Hitler dans son écrit sur « Le bolchevisme de Moïse à Lénine », que ce peuple qui avait une propension à s'autodétruire s'était éliminé de lui-même.

Voilà quels sont les enseignements qu'il faut tirer à n'en pas douter de l'œuvre de ce « grand philosophe » si l'on écoute les boniments flatteurs des membres de l'aréopage réunis par Gregory Fried et Richard Polt. Naturellement cette réalité odieuse a été passée sous silence et ces docteurs du « savoir absolu » heideggérien n'ont présenté que les « éclats de lumière du serpent vita », pour reprendre une expression de Nietzsche, en oubliant de parler du venin stocké dans les glandes du saurien et qui ne manquerait pas de réitérer sa morsure létale si l'appel à l'anéantissement se faisait plus pressant puisque le travail n'avait pas été terminé. Car le maître, le « vénérable » de la « Hütte » aryenne, après l'échec de son entreprise de purification terrestre, de 1946 jusqu'à sa mort, et au delà, grâce à ses publications post mortem rassemblées dans sa *Gesamtausgabe*, n'avait cessé de rappeler ses « ouvriers » à l'obligation de « la tâche » qu'il leur avait prescrite dès 1927, ou, autre formulation du Maître, à la « mission » qui était censé leur incomber, selon la révélation de son pouvoir de voyance (*Offenbarkeit*), *Allégorie*, 1930, *Hymnes*, 1934-1935.

Maintenant si des docteurs en philosophie réunis autour de l'appel au « combat » heideggérien veulent continuer à brandir l'étendard de la « gigantomachie » heideggérienne « Dionysos contre le crucifié », étendard levé par le phénoménologue renégat dès 1929, tout en sachant, par un regard objectif porté sur l'histoire quelle a été la nature réelle du combat qui visait à instaurer le règne du nouveau dieu, libre à eux. J'ose espérer tout de même que certains d'entre eux, mieux informés par une approche plus fine de la *Gesamtausgabe*, finiront par ouvrir les yeux avant que ce nouvel anti-Christ qui s'est autoproclamé Dieu dans ses *Contributions à la philosophie (Beiträge)* et dans ses commentaires des *Hymnes tardifs de Hölderlin (la Germanie et le Rhin)* ne les conduise, par delà les portes du Mal transfiguré en Bien, dans

l'enfer d'un nouvel Auschwitz. Ces portes ont été ouvertes lors de son cours sur Schelling, en 1936. Ce second Auschwitz inscrit dans la temporalité apocalyptique heideggerienne serait cette fois d'envergure planétaire compte tenu du stock d'armes nucléaires produites par toutes les grandes puissances mondiales depuis la tentative avortée du projet exterminateur des V2.

„After Heidegger“: Auschwitz replay, donc. Entendons bien : „Heidegger befiehl, wir folgen dir“. Voilà ce que nous disent les membres de ce prestigieux aréopage d'herméneutes « métasophiques » prétendument très compétents. A bon entendeur, salut ! proclament-ils. J'en appelle, pour ma part, à tous ceux qui ont encore des oreilles pour entendre et des yeux assez ouverts pour voir.

### **"AFTER HEIDEGGER? " or The Great American Swamp [translation]**

Gregory Fried and Richard Polt have achieved the feat of making their American colleagues stuck up to their necks in an interpretive swamp across the Atlantic. One wonders even if some still have their heads above water. When one has finished reading this spectrum of interpretations one wonders if there is still an American intelligence. From the "crazy horse" anti Faye by Thomas Sheehan ridden by Lawrence J. Hatab to the "robot girl" of Trish Glazebrook all breathes the health of the psychiatric hospital. How is such blindness regarding the reception of Heidegger's work still possible? Certainly, the American "thinkers" and their associates still have a lot of work to do to understand the "unspoken" Heideggerian and to rise to the height of philosophy. Reading the "contributions" of all these specialists of the "Heideggerian Work" I wonder if there is still a critical mind on earth. To what point on the horizon do they look to be victims of such blindness? Surely, they must look at the sun in front and this one instead of giving them the light needed to light the way to follow dazzles them to the point of making them any path imperceptible. The seven sections of the swamp delineated by the initiators of the "spectrography" enterprise are finally one: all eyes are oriented in the same direction and the authors who could have brought some clarity to the debate have been dismissed and asked to stay off the ranch. It would be to laugh if the matter were not so serious. Because finally, what is it about? To make forget that Heidegger is the supreme commander of the Nazi extermination and to lead readers to think that he is a respectable man because he deals with subjects that give thought to all the inhabitants of the planet. Of course, Heidegger's courses and writings deal with subjects of interest to all men on Earth. It remains to be seen how he treats them. And this is where the problem lies. Because Heidegger is more subtle than his readers. To achieve his ends without being trapped by the words spoken he tried to go incognito as long as possible. He tried to save appearances and keep his criminal enterprise secret until the end of his earthly life. But he could not help but make two tactical "mistakes" that betrayed his strategy of extermination with a prophylactic purpose, however well calculated: that of the rectoral period and that of the publication of black notebooks. The latter explicitly followed the desire to revive the Nazi movement when he had ventured in 1953 to publish his course on the Introduction to Metaphysics, a course he had professed in 1935 and in which, after his resignation from the rectoral office, he affirmed his full adherence to the "essence" of Nazism and the "greatness" of that movement. The Evil One had failed to fully conceal the tricks of the perverse strategy he had developed to achieve the goal he had set for himself and whose content he had revealed in 1930: "constantly erect the pyre with appropriate wood and chosen until it finally catches fire." This, he said openly in his course on the Phenomenology of Hegel's spirit, was "the work we now want to bring to its effectiveness" with the "patience" necessary to prevent "the impatience of the mass of all those who want to be finished before we begin" from derailing our approach. After he preached the extermination of the "inner enemy" in

1933 in his course entitled *From the Essence of Truth (Vom Wesen der Wahrheit)* and gave the order of "firing" in the summer semester of 1942, in his pseudo-commentary on the anthem of Hitler: "Jetzt komme, Feuer!" ("Come now, fire!"), an order that was executed on the spot once transmitted, as it was then, by the Chancellor-Fuhrer to his Einsatzgruppen, it was known to what end the pyre had been prepared. It was not only a matter of burning books, that is, ideas, but of burning the people who had issued them and who would still issue them if left alive because ideas were supposed to be a product of race (a necessary condition, according to Heidegger, "secret king" says, 1933). After that, Dietrich Eckart, Hitler's first mentor, had said in his writing on "Moses' Bolshevism to Lenin," that this people, who had a propensity to self-destruct, had eliminated themselves. These are the lessons to be learned from the work of this "great philosopher" if we listen to the flattering bonuses of the members of the areopage gathered by Gregory Fried and Richard Polt. Naturally this odious reality was ignored and these heideggerian "absolute knowledge" doctors presented only the "bursts of light of the serpent vita", to use a Nietzsche phrase, forgetting to talk about the venom stored in the saurian glands and who would not fail to repeat his lethal bite if the call for annihilation was more urgent since the work had not been completed. For the master, the "venerable" of the Aryan "Hette", after the failure of his earthly purification enterprise, from 1946 until his death, and beyond, through his post-mortem publications gathered in his *Gesamtausgabe*, had constantly reminded his "workers" of the obligation of the "task" he had prescribed to them as early as 1927, or, or, another formulation of the Master, to the "mission" that was supposed to be theirs, according to the revelation of his power of vision (*Offenbarkeit*), *Allegory*, 1930, *Hymns*, 1934-1935. Now if doctors of philosophy gathered around the call to the Heideggerian "fight" want to continue to brandish the banner of the Heideggerian "gigantomachia" "Diongerian" 1929, with an objective look at history, the standard raised by the renegade phenomenologist as early as 1929, knowing by an objective look at history what was the true nature of the struggle to establish the reign of the new god, free to them. I would still hope that some of them, better informed by a finer approach to the *Gesamtausgabe*, will eventually open their eyes before this new anti-Christ who has proclaimed himself God in his *Contributions to Philosophy (Beiträge)* and in his comments of the Late Anthems of Hitler (Germany and the Rhine) will lead them, beyond the gates of the Malfigured into Good, in the hell of a new Auschwitz. These doors were opened during his course on Schelling in 1936. This second Auschwitz, enshrined in heideggerian apocalyptic temporality, would be of global scale, given the stockpile of nuclear weapons produced by all the world's great powers since the failed attempt of the V2 exterminator project.

"After Heidegger": Auschwitz replay, so. Let's hear: "Heidegger befiehlt, wir folgen dir". This is what the members of this prestigious areopage of "metasophical" hermeneutes supposedly very competent tell us. A good listener, hi! they proclaim. I appeal, for my part, to all those who still have ears to hear and eyes open enough to see. <>

### **Essay: AFTER HEIDEGGER? Aftermath by Babette Babich pp. 87-97.**

The question after any disaster is the question of what remains and that, to the extent that there is still something that remains, is the question of life. It is life that is the question after Auschwitz—how go on, how write poetry, how philosophize? What is called thinking after Heidegger? Are we still inclined to thinking, after Heidegger? And what of logic? What of history? And what of science? In addition, we may

ask after ethical implications, including questions bearing on anti-Semitism, but also issues of misogyny, as well as Heidegger's critical questions concerning technology and concerning animal life and death.

### Philosophizing in the Wake of Heidegger

We modern, postmodern, ideally even transhuman human beings want to go further. Not only with Heidegger but generally. And we want to overcome, if not exactly ourselves (as Nietzsche's Zarathustra had recommended), at least those restrictions we find constraining, traditions that seem obscure or outdated. As an aid to getting all of this behind us, we academics find ourselves seeking to define a center that will not hold: writing handbooks and encyclopedias as if their entries alone could make their contents certainties. We are especially minded to do this in these days of truths contested, "alt-facts," "post-truth." Certainty seems essential, yet where shall we find it? And what to do about Heidegger? Indeed, what to do after Heidegger?—a question to be asked given all the things we have learned of his person. Nor can we but imagine that new publications will bring ever more detail, ever more dirt, to light.

But even apart from the moraline cottage industry whose self-appointed role it is and has been to denounce Heidegger, there is another problem. There is the analytic-continental divide which we are anxious to dispense with: analytic philosophers do not like to be called analytic philosophers and viciously resist the idea that there might be any kind of divide. Things are compounded in various departments of philosophy by the triumph of analytic philosophy, pushing out philosophers who had been named continental, dominating appointments made, and changing the curriculum in the process just to secure the change. Thus these days we no longer teach traditional texts, having dusted them from the philosophical canon as all so very much "history of philosophy," "old philosophy" by contrast with new. Thus analytic philosophy maintains its death grip on the field.

After denying the divide, we are encouraged to do "good work," as opposed to the "bad work" we might otherwise do. (What is "good work"? What does it look like? Who decides?) Those of us interested in thinkers like Heidegger or Nietzsche or Empedocles morph into so many historians of philosophy, as the analytic philosophers describe scholars with such interests. But are we historians? Did we study history? Or is specializing in some figure from an era not the contemporary sufficient to make us historians?

What is certain is that the publishing world has never seen so many introductions, all written as if leagues of new philosophers stood in need of these. In addition to encyclopedias and handbooks, one can find a range of "companion" type volumes. One can almost imagine a volume on "the compleat" phenomenologist, perhaps as part of a matching set, with another on hermeneutics, encased in a steampunk cassette, just to lock in all the bells and whistles. And there are such volumes (less the slipcase), together with histories of analytic philosophy and classifications of philosophical kinds—one analytic historian of philosophy counts six of these.

### Philosophy and Philology

Assemblages of this kind, as Borges noted, as Foucault notes in another spirit, as Nietzsche also writes for his own part, are signs of decay. The point is also one Nietzsche spent some time reflecting upon: for what, for whom do we collate such handbooks? Nietzsche might have been an even more central part of this culture of decay than he already is. For Nietzsche was slated to prepare, with Hermann

Diels, what would become *Die Fragmente der Vor-sokratiker*.<sup>3</sup> And had he done so, as he factually did not, we scholars might be invoking not DK—Diels-Kranz—when we cite the pre-Socratic fragments but ND—Nietzsche-Diels. Diels, some four years Nietzsche’s junior, and privileging Aristotle and the doxographic tradition (where Nietzsche, by contrast, specialized in Diogenes Laertius), would not publish *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker: Griechisch und Deutsch* until 1903. The resultant standard work in classical or ancient philology and ancient philosophy makes modern scholarship possible, distinguishing it from the nineteenth-century disciplines of philology and philosophy. Indeed: Diels’s edition meant that, as of the first years of the twentieth century, scholars could read the ancient Greeks without being able to read ancient Greek.

Heidegger, who invokes Anaximander’s fragment in 1946, cites it following not Diogenes Laertius but Simplicius, but he proceeds to cite Nietzsche’s rendering from his *Philosophy in the Tragic Age of the Greeks*. Here Heidegger also refers to Nietzsche’s Basel lecture courses, on the Preplatonic Philosophers. And:

In the same year, 1903, that Nietzsche’s essay on the Preplatonic philosophers first became known, Hermann Diels’ *Fragments of the Presocratics* appeared. It contained texts critically selected according to the methods of modern classical philology, along with a translation. (EGT 13)

Adding that the work is dedicated to Wilhelm Dilthey, Heidegger then quotes Diels’s translation. Some seventy years on, Heidegger seems to have had a point: Anaximander’s terms are difficult to translate to everyone’s satisfaction.

On the matter of translation, Heidegger’s 1942 lecture course on Hölderlin’s “Ister” reflected on the meaning of *deinon* (GA 53: 74/61). Here we read (in translation) an explicit reflection on translation as such, just because Heidegger’s translation, following on Hölderlin’s own rendering of Sophocles, had been criticized: Was it accurate? Heidegger reflects on the inevitable conventionality and thus the very circularity of reproof, both in his own respect and with regard to the poet:

who decides and how does one decide, concerning the correctness of a “translation”? We “get” our knowledge from a dictionary or “wordbook” [Wörterbuch]. Yet we too readily forget that the information in a dictionary must be based upon a preceding interpretation of linguistic contents from which particular words and word usages are taken. In most cases a dictionary provides the correct information about the meaning of a word, yet this correctness does not guarantee us any insights into the truth of what the word means and can mean given that we are talking about the essential realm named in the word. (GA 53: 74–75/61–62)

Heidegger’s own reading/rendering of *aletheia* had similarly been called into question. But, as Heidegger goes on to say, the precision of *le mot juste*, the ideal of an accurate lexical definition, a one-to-one correspondence, word to word, as it were, drawn from a given “wordbook,” attests to what Nietzsche for his own part would name a “lack of philology.” For Heidegger:

every translation must necessarily accomplish the transition from the spirit of one language into that of another. There is no such thing as translation if we mean that a word from one language could or even should be made to substitute as the equivalent of a word from another language. (GA 53: 75/62)

There have been many reflections on the challenge this poses for us, even as we continue to stipulate Heidegger’s translations as idiosyncratic (at best) and perhaps misleading (at worst).

Nietzsche's philological reflection on philology goes beyond the question of veridicality to consider just who we might be thinking of when it comes to the readers of our compendia, our handbooks, our critical editions—including, as just this is a contested matter today, a critical edition of Heidegger. Many scholars find employment in the production of such editorial ventures—think only of the production of Heidegger's own Gesamtausgabe, or the varied commentaries produced, again and again, on Nietzsche's own texts, or think of Kant or Hegel or Hölderlin and so on. Here it is useful to recall Nietzsche's meditation on his own discipline in *The Gay Science* (§109):

A remark for philologists. That some books are so valuable and so royal that whole generations are well employed in their labors to produce these books in a state that is pure and intelligible—philology exists in order to fortify this faith again and again. It presupposes that there is no lack of those rare human beings (even if one does not see them) who really know how to use such valuable books—presumably those who write or could write, books of the same type.

There is a lot to unpack here, and Nietzsche offers as much challenge as clue to the “few and rare,” as Heidegger describes those for whom he writes, borrowing this designation from Nietzsche. Nietzsche, a little less loftily in this locus, characterizes such “rare human beings” as effectively invisible readers (“even if one does not see them”), “who always ‘will come’ but are never there.”

Who are the readers for our current reflections after Heidegger?

We know at least this: the revelations of Heidegger's Nazism, Heidegger's anti-Semitism, tell us unpleasant truths about a man whose work we might otherwise admire, once we are done truth-checking his translations and his reflections on ancient words for truth. Indeed, Heidegger has always been “a bit ‘post truth,’ ” and we are gaining, thanks to the current US political regime under Trump, vastly more insight than we had perhaps wished to gain into the fluidity of truth and metaphor. And yet—and I remark on current politics for this reason—it turns out that one can do terrible things, from swindling—as this is the essence of the “art” of the (real estate) deal—and calumniating others, including misogynistic attacks (quite patently serial ones, as most misogynists are systematically repetitive about it), and still be elected to office. We do not mind misogyny in politics—heck, we practice it in philosophy, we denounce it and talk about it, and go on practicing it. Ditto racism. Ditto anti-Semitism. But for me it matters that we are prepared to tolerate Heidegger's misogyny (he gets a free pass: think of Arendt, not that we actually do) but not his anti-Semitism.

And when we are done, given that Aristotle was a massive misogynist—Aristotle wrote the book, as it were—we may come to understand why Heidegger thought that we could say of Nietzsche, another massive misogynist, as it was thought appropriate to say of Aristotle, that he was born, he worked, he died (GA 18: 5/4). Still: the “new” Nietzsche introduced for Anglophone readers in the 1970s, making them “continental” in the process, was ushered in under a specifically Heideggerian flag, because without Heidegger, no French Nietzsche.<sup>8</sup> Still we have learned to do philosophy hermeneutically, hermeneutico-phenomenologically.

And Heidegger is hoist on his own petard.

To quote the title of Thomas Sheehan's 1981 book collection, Heidegger:

The Man and The Thinker, Heidegger is henceforth not to be read apart from his Nazism, his anti-Semitism. But that said, how is one to read Being and Time? Are we to read it as a Nazi volume, *unterwegs*, *avant la lettre*? Oh, yes: Richard Wolin and Emmanuel Faye tell us, Tom Rockmore tells us, and another generation likewise. But are those readings useful? Surely. It is another question to ask whether those readings translate the work of 1927 into our times. Do they, to use Heidegger's query with respect to translation, "accomplish the transition from the spirit of one language into that of another?" I have argued that to do so would require a Heidegger philology we have yet to develop. Hence, I am not sure that knowing Heidegger's misogyny, however smarmily egregious it happened to have been, helps. So: should we just bracket it? Heidegger, like Aristotle, lived, worked, died, "and there's an end on't"? Surely it matters that Heidegger, anti-Semitic in a world-historical sense and convinced Nazi devotee (*avant la lettre* to be sure), wrote Being and Time. Here the question might be, did he also happen to write Being and Time, or was being a world-historical anti-Semite/Nazi-devotee-to-be/inveterate misogynist or any part of the preceding a necessary or even contributing condition? Most scholars will take the lesser charge, so Heidegger gets a plea bargain. We add this to our thinking about Being and Time as about his other works. And many of us, troubled as we should be, wonder if we might save ourselves some trouble (and some reading) by fixing on the later Heidegger (or as the move is a similar one, the early Heidegger). It goes without saying that this is a surface remedy at best; convicted Nazis remain so, and so too anti-Semites, and so too ladies'-man-style misogynists.

The "decadence," to use Nietzsche's language and to which decadence I began by referring—pointing to our obsession with companion volumes, dictionaries, encyclopedias, introductions—comes with a death certificate issued by the famous, public-intellectual-type scientist Stephen Hawking, who some years ago made the pronouncement: "philosophy is dead." Hawking's declaration was tailor-made for the trans-generation, the humanity 2.0 scholars, the transhumanists, surfing the cutting edge. And yet, as with Nietzsche's reflections on decadence, Hawking's certification of philosophy's death is not new, and an appeal to the crowd, the popular voice that is the voice of the public intellectual, has been with us since antiquity. How else was Socrates able to corrupt the youth in his old age? Or why would acolytes flock to sit at the feet of various Stoics, or Plotinus have his own cult following? Make no mistake: we academics, we scholars, are keen on recognition. Hegel made it the cornerstone of his dialectic of consciousness, Kojève enshrined it for all of Paris: the locked key to Lacan's master's discourse. And we want to be up on the latest thing, which latest thing, we are convinced, simply must be better than anything past. And that is understandable, as scholars tend to have a reputation for being fuddy-duddy types, nose-in-a-book types. Writing on the "new" Heidegger, post the devastating publication of the Black Notebooks and the pronouncement of Heidegger's anti-Semitism to match his well-known Nazism, we write "after" Heidegger.

It's a wake, forty years late.

And we will not be distracted by efforts to take the question too much back to Heidegger himself, reflecting, as we do, that perhaps this language, given the current constellation that impels us to raise questions once again, might yet shed light on Heidegger's thinking on questioning, on raising or posing the question concerning technology, not to mention "Being."

Heidegger is hardly alone in being subject to this, if his circumstances do outclass other scholarly scandals. Philosophy is thus just what every textbook about philosophy suggests: a list of names for

popular consumption. The great philosopher is identifiable by a Google or Twitter ranking. Maybe just, more soberly, by citation frequency. Nietzsche's new Zarathustra might have to be rewritten as "A Book for All and Everybody."

I began by noting our passion for drawing lines, and there seems little that is not post-or anti- or "After-philosophy." Yet this does not seem to be like a vernissage, a celebratory after-party. Indeed, "After-philosophy" bears comparison to "After-philology," and considering the constellation introduces Nietzschean reflections. If the science in question for Nietzsche—ancient philology, ancient linguistics, ancient comparative literature, ancient history—hasn't in the interim managed to pose the question of its own discipline, what does that tell us? Thus, what Classics has not done is to pose the question of its own foundations, as Nietzsche argued that it should, namely to raise the question of its own discipline, which Nietzsche himself called the question of science qua science. Nietzsche claimed he was the first to do this, and, having written on Nietzsche and science for these many years, I am fairly sure that apart from Heidegger and in ways no Heideggerian has taken up, no one has sought to raise this question as a question since—not in the sense that Nietzsche meant by speaking of "the problem of science itself, science considered for the first time as problematic, as questionable" in the second edition of *The Birth of Tragedy*.

There is a parallel failure to pose the problem of philosophy itself. If this benumbed circumstance does not mean that philosophy is "dead," as Hawking contends, it is spellbound. The becalmed circumstance is not Hawking's doing and has nothing to do with the Black Notebooks scandal: we are adrift, and have been for quite some time.

Still, and as my passing remark on the problem of science suggests, the larger question or unframed theme is the absence of a thinker of the rank of a Nietzsche or a Heidegger today.

That would be the elephant in the room.

Asking after Heidegger, it matters that Heidegger could be utterly misogynistic and still write *Being and Time*. So too for his anti-Semitism, we must suppose. Perhaps the question should be what just what it is that we expect of philosophy, before, during, or above all, after Heidegger?

### Logical Reflections

May we go on reading Heidegger? Is this not a finished endeavor, of a limited term? This question as such takes its cue from Emmanuel Faye and Richard Wolin and already had its best expression in pithiness in Gilbert Ryle's "wasn't a good man" apothegm. But as Richard Rorty pointed out in good American pragmatist fashion in response to Fariás, we do read "Gottlob Frege, a vicious anti-Semite and proto-Nazi" without being hindered by his anti-Semitism. Sitting in my office in New York is Michael Beaney's collection *The Frege Reader*. In my office I also have a book by Andrea Nye, *Words of Power: A Feminist Reading of the History of Logic*. Nye reads from Parmenides through to Frege with an indispensable chapter, *A Thought Like A Hammer*.

In the current context, after Heidegger, at stake is the logical point of view as such. Every detail concerning human beings—whether we name them Preplatonic (Nietzsche) or Presocratic (Diels), or whether we read Nietzsche from Heidegger's perspective or from the point of view of the Nazi hegemony in university courses then offered on Nietzsche, or else with respect to our current concern,

thinking after Heidegger—from the logical point of view, all these details are distractions, which means that they shift our focus.

Indeed, all of our ethical discussions on the advantages and disadvantages of tossing or not tossing a fat man onto the tracks in the path of a passing trolley, in the so-called trolley problem, depend on this irrelevance. In fact, no one is throwing anyone, regardless of girth, anywhere: it is the conception that counts in ethical thinking.

And yet perhaps philosophy, the doing of, the reading of, is not an inherently edifying enterprise. How many outstanding philosophers are outstanding human beings? And of these exemplary beings, how many are outstanding because they are philosophers? Philosophy may not, as Nietzsche argued, referring to the educational institutions of Basel (and the rest of Europe), make us better citizens. Nietzsche had in mind the Swiss requirement that all citizens have a classical education, meaning an education in ancient philology and ancient philosophy. But what philosophy was for the ancients (and that is why the gods are involved in every case) had to do with preserving one's mind or "soul" in the transition from one life to another, saving one's place in the transition that is part of metempsychosis. If one has abandoned that metaphysical notion of the soul along with the Christian version, it would seem that philosophy's value for life (or life eternal) might also be abandoned.

### Science and Critical History

Perhaps, after Heidegger, we might work to be relentlessly critical in our reading of Heidegger, highlighting the negative. This would be scientific, and yet Heidegger emphasized "science" as a question. In the spirit of both Kant and Nietzsche, Heidegger had supposed that we might attend to the prerequisites for putting philosophy on the path of a science. This reflection was still with him, as it might be given the death of Husserl in the Spring of 1938. To this extent, Heidegger offers a sustained reflection on understanding the significance of Nietzsche's meditations on history as a science, invoking standard references, but also seeking to explore the relevance of Nietzsche's own conjunction of use (calculation) and value for life (GA 46: 106–14/88–94).

Here I note only that few scholars have taken up the issue of "Heidegger and Science" and that those who have done so are inclined not to notice the work done by others in the same field. For my part, I elsewhere argue that philosophers get over their allergies to citing one another, as if noticing the work of others somehow diminished one's own originality. The problem of non-citation (obliviousness) is an endemic one in philosophy; it crosses the analytic-continental divide, Heidegger and Nietzsche studies, and much else besides. And to those meaning to invoke Heidegger's reservations concerning "the literature" to defend their ongoing philosophical autism, I would respond by observing that the topic of Heidegger and Science, like Heidegger and Theology, or Heidegger and Anti-Semitism, is nothing but literature.

We can, as we have seen and as has been done for years now, read Heidegger for the dirt: we can stand around and lament his anti-Semitism, as we might and should. And yet it is instructive (and we should think about this) that we, as philosophers, do not lament his deep and thoroughgoing misogyny. And there is a lot of dirt there, even more than we can guess at, when it comes to the woman question that we could add to the Jewish question, or the American question, or the question of Heidegger's unrelentingly critical take on the same techno-science that we deeply believe will save us (all we need

for that is to declare our “belief” in climate change and then, with a little help from science, we will be saved).

### On The Death Animals Do Not Die

Elsewhere, I advert to the difficult question of Heidegger in conjunction with the animal question, which is, so I argue, less a matter of the animal’s putative world-indigence—though this is part of it, just insofar as this poverty is engendered—a matter of our obliviousness to the lives of animals. This was true for Heidegger too, despite his attention to Karl von Frisch, who was no friend to animals (quite in spite of his observations and as attested by the same). In Heidegger’s sense, the same indigence is manufactured by way of the systematic breeding of animals that deprives them of their lives as much as it deprives them of their own deaths. Animals are manufactured, as Heidegger says in the purest of metonymic connections, as so many corpses-to-be, as the standing reserve of industrial agribusiness, and quite as such, they do not die. Specifically, they do not die their own deaths in mass slaughter but are instead challenged forth into technological reserves and by-products, for the production of food and—in addition to clothing and shoes, cosmetics and paint, soap and ink—their organs, destined to be used for the sake of human life extension and preservation.

We might think about that. <>

## ROUTLEDGE HANDBOOK OF DEMOCRACY AND SECURITY edited by Leonard Weinberg, Elizabeth Francis, Eliot Assoudeh [Routledge, 9781138799981]

This handbook explores how democracies around the world seek to balance democratic values with the requirement to protect their citizens from the threat of politically motivated violence.

Over the past few decades, the majority of the world’s democracies have had to confront serious security threats, and in many instances these challenges have not come from rival states but from violent groups. This volume offers readers an overview of how some democracies have responded to such threats. It examines the extent to which authorities have felt compelled to modify laws to evade what would ordinarily be regarded as protected rights, such as personal privacy, freedom of movement and freedom of speech. Grounded in historical analysis, each of the sections addresses past and emerging security threats; legal and legislative responses to them; successful and unsuccessful efforts to reconcile democracy and security; and a range of theoretical questions. The case studies provided vary in terms of the durability of their democratic systems, level of economic development and the severity of the threats with which they have been confronted.

The volume is divided into three thematic parts:

- ➔ Strong democracies: United States, Great Britain, France, Germany, **Italy**, Spain, Australia, New Zealand and Israel
- ➔ Challenged democracies: India, South Africa, Brazil, Argentina and Romania
- ➔ Fragile democracies: the Philippines and Nigeria.

This book will be of much interest to students of democracy, security studies, political philosophy, Asian politics, Middle Eastern politics, African politics, West European politics and IR in general.

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## Democracy, Security and the Rule of Law

We come to this project at a time when democracy is experiencing a recession on a worldwide basis. Not all that long ago, at the end of the Cold War, it appeared to many as though the democratic prospect could not be brighter. In 1989-1990 the countries of Eastern Europe, formerly part of the now defunct Soviet Union, underwent transitions to democratic rule after experiencing the largely peaceful (Romania was an exception) replacement of one-party dictatorships by promising, newly installed democracies.

The ex-Yugoslavia was another story. In that Balkan republic the end of communism led to the end of the country itself. During the period 1990-1992 Yugoslavia broke apart, fragmenting into various ethnic mini-states: Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Montenegro, Macedonia, Bosnia—Herzegovina, and later Kosovo. Exceptionally brutal civil wars broke out in the course of Yugoslavia's disintegration. Despite episodes of mass murder, mass rape and other genocidal incidents, the newly independent mini-states evolved into ethnically based democracies.

Democracy returned, by and large, to Latin America. After undergoing bouts of military dictatorship or bureaucratic authoritarianism during the 1970s, Argentina, Brazil, Peru, Chile, Uruguay, Colombia, Venezuela and the rest of the continent restored democratic rule. The situation in Central America was far more problematic.

In South and East Asia, India sustained its democracy despite violent Hindu vs. Muslim clashes, a severe wave of terrorism launched by Sikh separatists in the Punjab and a continuing struggle with Pakistan over Jammu-Kashmir. In East Asia, South Korea, Taiwan, Indonesia and Malaysia evolved democratic institutions — typically following from or accompanying dramatic economic growth. In the Philippines democracy was restored when the Marcos dictatorship toppled under pressure from largely peaceful protests, with some assistance from the United States.

Sub-Saharan Africa offered one major success story. In 1994, under the leadership of Nelson Mandela, South Africa abandoned its system of Apartheid to become a multi-racial democracy ('the rainbow nation'). Change was achieved with a minimum of violence. In East Africa, Kenya — along with Ghana, Nigeria and certain other West African states — also achieved democratic rule despite inter-tribal and inter-religious conflicts.

The Middle East was an exception. After a period of military rule, Turkish democracy was restored when the country's military returned to its barracks. Lebanon's civil war ended in 1989-1990 and a semblance of democratic rule returned, albeit structured along sectarian lines. Israel's continued occupation of the West Bank and Gaza marred its democratic credentials, but no serious effort to replace the Jewish state's democratic institutions occurred. Elsewhere in the region there were democratic stirrings, but little was achieved by way of replacing existing authoritarian systems — either secular (Syria) or religious (Iran).

These developments led various observers to conclude that the democratic wave was irreversible. History had finally rendered its judgement in favor of democracy, a conclusion based on more than vapors floating in the *zeitgeist*.

Observers marshaled evidence to support this claim. Wealth, they asserted, was a crucial component in the trend towards democracy. Poor countries typically were unable to develop or sustain democratic rule. Situations in which the many were poor and an elite possessed most of the country's wealth created a dynamic under which the poor would be driven to revolt, assuming there were leaders prepared to steer them in that direction. The wealthy, on the other hand, would become fearful of just such a prospect and enlist the help of the military and para-military forces to prevent such an outcome.

During the 1990s it appeared as if the world in general was becoming wealthier. Increasing per capita income brought with it an expanding middle class, a growing segment of the population both literate and politically attentive. Analysts suggested the middle class would become invested in the rule of law and political freedoms: the wealthier national populations became, the greater the pressures towards democracy.

The political scientist Ron Inglehart borrowed from Abraham Maslow's well-known 'hierarchy of human needs' to forecast the impact of growing prosperity on the things people valued.<sup>2</sup> The more successfully basic human needs for food, clothing and shelter were met, the more people were likely to commit themselves to such 'higher values' as social and political involvement in public life. Material considerations would count for less as 'post-materialist' values emerged and gained in significance. The democratic cause would concurrently gain in strength.

Religious considerations also played a role. Religious values tend towards the absolute and the uncompromising, at least as far as the Abrahamic ones are concerned. Confucian values seem less likely to ignite the same degree of passion but nonetheless stress the need for order and hierarchy, so that ideas about political equality appear alien to its proponents. Students of political development reasoned that as countries became more secular the chances for popular acceptance of the give-and-take of democratic politics would improve. Such reasoning was challenged when the 1979 Iranian revolution that toppled the monarchy and brought the Ayatollah Khomeini and his followers to power offered a warning that a decline in the role of uncompromising religion in politics was hardly inevitable.

We should not forget the impact of urban growth. Thomas Jefferson, arguing with Alexander Hamilton, claimed that the survival of democratic governance was largely contingent on yeomen, independent farmers whose values and interests were not only congruent with, but essential to, rule by and for the citizens of a democracy. Large landowners, plantation owners — in today's language agribusiness — do not provide the social basis for democratic governance. If we regard Jefferson's claims from a comparative perspective, we see that they have rarely proven to be true. In the developing world of the twentieth century, landless peasants repeatedly supported anti-democratic revolutions that produced authoritarian regimes (e.g. China and Vietnam). Instead of, and despite Marx's predictions to the contrary, farmers and peasants provided the social basis for most twentieth-century revolutionary upheavals. The fact that urbanization occurred throughout much of the world over the past century became a cause for democratic optimism. The literature suggests that rapid urbanization creates populations vulnerable to recruitment by anti-democratic movements. But once urban populations stabilize, sympathy for democratic values increases and becomes a basis for commitment to democracy.

Finally, two obvious alternatives to liberal democracy — fascism and communism — both failed dramatically, the first mid twentieth century, the second during the late twentieth century. Their failure seemed to suggest there were virtually no options to democratic rule.

## What could go wrong?

Before attempting to answer this question, we should pause and take a closer look at democracy's components. Political scientists from Robert Dahl to Yascha Mounk have observed that liberal democracy consists of two elements. The first element includes the rule of law and the protection of civil liberties (such as rights to freedom of expression and thought, among them the right to contest peacefully the policies of those in power). The second element of liberal democracy is the right of mass participation in political life: the right of all adults (citizens at least) to vote in free and open elections. The very idea of 'citizenship' suggests that political passivity and indifference to public affairs are incompatible with liberal democratic rule.

These two elements of democracy may not be compatible with one another. A long list of writers, including James Madison and John Stuart Mill, recognized that popular involvement in political life carries with it the risk that the 'masses,' or popular majorities in the population, may not or will not abide by the self-restraining rules of constitutional democracy. Unless a majority of the population develops and adheres to a set of often informal norms of conduct involving (among other things) mutual trust and respect, democratic rule will be put in jeopardy whenever a country is confronted by a crisis, internally or externally generated.

Wealth and its distribution are also at issue. As Aristotle and another long list of analysts have written, vast differences in the distribution of wealth within a society are incompatible with the development and persistence of democratic rule. It is hardly true in every case, but a large middle class is the *sine qua non* of democratic stability.

A partial answer to the 'what could go wrong' question is the appearance of what Fareed Zakaria and others have labelled 'illiberal democracy'. Illiberal democracy represents a continuation of mass involvement in politics, but shorn of its liberal component. Symptoms of 'illiberal' or authoritarian democracy reflect the outlook of a country's rulers: (1) Do rulers reject or display weak commitment to the democratic rules of the game? (2) Do they deny the legitimacy of political opponents? (3) Do they tolerate or encourage violence? (4) Are they ready to curtail the civil liberties of their opponents?<sup>5</sup>

A number of democracies have gone down this path in recent years. Thanks to their manipulative and demagogic skills the leaders of Venezuela, Ecuador, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Turkey, the Philippines and several of the other new or newly restored democracies have become the victims of illiberal democratic rule. The growing power of rightwing populist parties in the long-standing democracies, including France, Germany, Austria and Italy, represents cause for concern. The willingness of the American President Donald Trump and his followers to attack the free press, the country's own Justice Department and the independent judiciary are clearly worrisome.

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## Chapters in this volume

Democracies are hardly alike. They vary in terms of strength (their ability to apply and enforce law) and durability (how long they last.) Some are interrupted by military interventions, then resume. Some are resilient; others falter as they confront critical challenges of the types described above, challenges of either foreign or domestic origin. Of particular interest to us is the frequency and severity of democracies' resort to extra-legal or extra judicial means to achieve security. Equally interesting is the

balance democracies establish between security and the rule of law (rule of law conceived from both legislative and judicial perspectives).

Based on these standards we have divided the countries included in our analysis into three categories: strong democracies, challenged democracies and fragile democracies. Strong democracies include the United States, Great Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Australia, New Zealand and, at least arguably, Israel. These democracies are far from perfect, to put it mildly. Certainly, America's performance under the Trump administration has demonstrated certain glaring weaknesses with respect to democracy. Nevertheless democratic institutions in this group of nations have shown a repeated ability to withstand challenges and threats from within and from abroad.

By contrast, Argentina, India, South Africa, Brazil and Romania face serious challenges to the stability of the democratic order. With the exception of South Africa and Romania, challenged democracies have either been displaced by the military in the not too distant past or may be vulnerable to coups in the event they suffer serious economic downturns. Brazil is currently led by President Bolsonaro, a former army officer, who has expressed contempt for Brazil's democratic norms. India has been able to sustain democratic rule since its national independence in 1947. Nevertheless we regard India as challenged because its democratic institutions have had to control serious armed opposition from both its Sikh minority in the Punjab and a sustained violent separatist movement in Jammu-Kashmir. From time to time India also has experienced serious waves of violence inflicted upon the country's large Muslim minority by radical elements within the Hindu population. South African and Romanian democracies have been marred by widespread corruption; corruption alienates many voters from the prevailing order.

We consider democracy in the Philippines and Nigeria to be fragile. In the former case President Duterte (in the second half of his six-year term) openly advocates violation of the rule of law by endorsing the extra-judicial killing of suspected drug dealers and other alleged wrong-doers. Manila is also confronted by at least two armed insurgencies that have plagued the country for many years. The first, a Maoist insurgency pursued by the New Peoples' Army, has declined recently. The second, launched by Muslim separatists on Mindanao and other southern islands, has waxed and waned. Abu Sayyaf, a jihadist group, continues to kidnap and kill local opponents and foreign tourists.

Nigeria has oscillated between democracy and military dictatorship since it achieved independence from British rule in 1960. Not only has its democracy experienced massive waves of corruption based on its vast oil resources, but Nigeria's democracy still struggles to overcome profound tribal and religious cleavages that result in widespread violence throughout the country. Boko Haram, a violent jihadist movement, continues to threaten populations in the Muslim northeast region of the country. Given our concern about the means democracies employ to achieve security, we should note that the Nigerian military has carried out indiscriminate killings of villagers alleged to have ties to Boko Haram.

Our distinguished group of contributors tackles the problems posed by security threats to democratic governance by placing them in historical and/or legal context. Whether the writers are political scientists or scholars schooled in the law, they all seek to understand current threats by placing them against the background of earlier experiences. In general, the countries we label 'strong' have had to confront threats posed by terrorist activity, either home-grown or international. The more 'challenged' or 'fragile' democracies have had to respond to threats posed by internal wars, as in the cases of India, Nigeria and

the Philippines — wars which oftentimes include insurgents who receive support from outside forces (e.g. Pakistan in the case of India). The volume is selective rather than comprehensive; contributors write from a variety of theoretical perspectives and employ a range of analytic methods. It is time to let them speak for themselves. <>

## **AUTHORITARIANISM: CONSTITUTIONAL PERSPECTIVES** by Gunter Frankenberg [Edward Elgar Publishers, 9781800372719]

In this thought-provoking book, Günter Frankenberg explores why authoritarian leaders create new constitutions, or revise old ones. Through a profound analysis of authoritarian constitutions as phenomena in their own right, Frankenberg reveals their purposes, the audiences they seek to address and investigates the ways in which they fit into the broader context of autocracies.

Frankenberg outlines the essential features of authoritarianism through a discussion of a variety of constitutional projects in authoritarian settings: the executive style of opportunist, informal governing, political power as private property, participation as complicity, and the cult of immediacy that is geared towards fantasies of a community of the followers and their leader. He also takes a comparative approach to authoritarian constitutions, drawing out the relationships between them, as well as providing a critique of the discourse around populism and authoritarianism.

Authoritarianism will be critical reading for scholars of constitutional law, as well as political scientists, who will find its comparative analysis of political systems in this context invaluable. It will also be useful to students of comparative law and political science for its clear explanation of the characteristics of authoritarianism across regimes.

### **Review**

*"Why do authoritarian regimes bother with a constitution? **AUTHORITARIANISM: CONSTITUTIONAL PERSPECTIVES** pursues this seeming paradox with deep theoretical insight and broad empirical reach. The result is an indispensable guide to understanding the emerging varieties of authoritarianism and the magical allure that constitutions offer autocrats and democrats alike. This book also holds a mirror back to liberal constitutional regimes illuminating their colonial, ethnocentric, violent and parochial features to which they may have become "comfortably numb." --Alvaro Santos, Georgetown University Law Center, US*

*"The good therapist fights darkness and seeks illumination, while romantic love is sustained by mystery and crumbles upon inspection." If Irving Yolem is Love's executioner, Günter Frankenberg is Authoritarianism's executioner. Rather than romanticizing or despising authoritarian regimes, he deconstructs their authority, technology and power to reveal their deepest pathologies. In departing from the comparative constitutional orthodoxy, obsessed with constitutional backsliding to restore liberal legalism, Frankenberg exposes the existential pain and anxiety of liberals and warns them about their complicity in authoritarianism.' --Fernanda G. Nicola, Washington College of Law, American University, US*

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A government approaches perfection, the more it persuades, by the power of its constitution, the subjects and even the least virtuous ones to voluntarily do what the common weal may demand...

Karl Marx introduced *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* with Hegel's remark that 'all great world-historic facts and personages appear, so to speak, twice'. For the sake of precision, Marx added with magisterial authority: 'the first time as tragedy, the second time as farce.' Caution would advise against contradicting two eminent philosophers at the very beginning of a book. Let's settle for a few questions instead. Did the authoritarian-populist marriage of *Cinque Stelle* and *Lega* in Italy (now divorced) provide the farce to the fascist tragedy written by Benito Mussolini and his black-shirt militias? And is the autocracy of Hungary's Viktor Orbán likewise the farce to Matyas Rakosi's Stalinist tragedy? Has Donald Trump evoked memories of Richard M. Nixon's tragedy of democracy? Or — almost forgotten in the 'Global North', although not in Ethiopia — was Mengistu Haile Mariam's 'Red Terror' a tragedy replaying the imperial farce of Haile Selassie's massacre of peasants and pastoralists? Hardly. The victims who bear indelible scars in their minds and on their bodies would object to that framing. And they would be right.

Sultan Selim I, a devout Sunni, ruled the Osman Empire from 1512 until 1520.<sup>6</sup> During his reign, the cruel and heavy-handed despot disempowered his father, had his brothers and nephews executed, fought against Shiites and Alawites and waged war against Persia. Would Marx have described this as a tragedy, since replayed as farce by Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's authoritarian sultanate? As likely as not, the Turkish president would not mind being compared to the Osman ruler. After the Turkish society had explored and accepted — or to be precise: had been forced to accept — a new post-Osman collective identity under the anything but liberal Kemal Atatürk, it seems 'the State has returned to its oldest form — the shamelessly simple domination of the sabre and the cowl'.

In short, one harbours scepticism towards the alluring metaphor of tragedy and farce, and has little confidence in their sequence, even if it could be reversed — allowing, for example, for the regime of Nicholas Maduro in Venezuela to be interpreted as the tragedy that has followed Hugo Chavez's farce. Those who suffer in the setting of political farce are likely to object strenuously against a naïve reading of Marx's correction of Hegel.

## Authoritarianism: Apocalypse Now?

If the twentieth century is remembered as the epoch of human rights, then it might be hoped that the breakthrough of liberal democracy would in the same way come to characterize the following century. However, both are eclipsed by dark shadows. Mass murder organized by governments, torture, deportations and other macro-crimes must be inscribed on the balance sheet of the past century. Modifying Marx's famous quote, one might say that the victims of past generations weigh like a nightmare on the psyche of the living.

There is ample evidence that authoritarian regimes have been on the rise for some time; unless it is to be assumed that they have been lurking in the shadows of normality for even longer, waiting for their historical moment. The renaissance and globalization of political authoritarianism" — indeed, 'the ascendancy of a [ubiquitous] new authoritarian international' — is reflected in the statistics. According to a study by the Bertelsmann-Foundation, the total population of autocracies increased continually from 2.3 billion in 2003 to 3. billion in 2017. Currently, 58 out of 128 states are governed by authoritarian regimes. In contrast, democracies registered only a modest demographic increase over the same period, from 4 billion to 4.2 billion. Other research groups count more autocratic than democratic regimes and constitutions;" although the majority of studies suggest that most societies still come under democratic rule. A sorry comfort.

No wonder, then, that recently an apocalyptic tone has sounded. Its protagonists deduce from these frightening statistics, as per a zero-sum calculation, a democratic malaise. The discourse abounds with dramatic formulae: the 'reversal of 1989'; dangers to freedom; and the 'collapse', 'decline' or even 'death' of democracy. And the scenario is indeed dramatic.

The European Union — widely deemed to be plotting a safe course towards wealth, democracy and an almost 'perpetual peace' that Kant would have appreciated — must now cope with phenomena of nationalism and political and constitutional authoritarianism. At the heart of the European Union itself, statespersons and the European Commission demonstrated little resistance to the temptations of authoritarianism during the global financial (or rather, investment banking) crisis. Moreover, the ghosts of a past that it was believed had long been exorcised — nationalism, racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism — are alive and well in many member states as movements, parties or governments that have already yielded to the authoritarian temptation. Both at Europe's centre and at the peripheries, one witnesses transitions to autocratic forms of participation and decision making, intolerance of minorities, dismantling of the media and independent courts, harassment of opposition movements and parties, and so on. The Bermuda triangle of nation, race and ethnicity<sup>17</sup> has become the site in which resentment organizes under the banner of identity politics, rises up against strangers and elites (in a turn generally referred to as 'populist') and promotes intolerance against all groups of society that come under the term 'minority'.

Autocrats have seized power and hijacked constitutions. Anti-democratic rhetoric and propagated illiberalism reap considerable electoral benefits — even in societies that should know better from the experiences of their own submission and liberation, and that seemed to be well on their way to sustainable democratization, such as Hungary and Poland.

Authoritarian movements and parties continually try to obtain power. In France, piqued by electoral defeat, the nationalist-chauvinist *Rassemblement National* (better known until 2018 as *Front National*) hoped that the protests of the Yellow Jackets (not gloves)<sup>18</sup> might help them to overthrow the Macron government and finally have power placed in their authoritarian laps. In Italy, the *Lega Nord* (then *Lega*) successfully morphed from an extremist xenophobic and nationalist movement to a no less extremist party and coalition government partner — first Berlusconi IV and finally *Cinque Stelle*.<sup>19</sup> With immigration increasing and Euroscepticism rising, Britain witnessed the rise of first the 'right-wing populist' UK Independence Party and then in 2019 the Brexit Party, shaking up the two-party system at least momentarily. The Sweden Democrats, with their roots in Swedish fascism, began as a white nationalist movement and remained isolated in Parliament; but in 2019, they were invited to commence negotiations with the Christian Democrats to form a coalition." Likewise, other Scandinavian, Central and Eastern European countries must deal with extremist, authoritarian nationalist movements and parties — some of them already in government.

In 2016, courtesy of the country's antiquated election system, the 'majority' of US voters — or certainly the majority of those who believe that being white is important — succumbed to the authoritarian temptation and voted for Donald Trump. As president, he has since demonstrated how fast what had been assumed to be a consolidated democracy can be transformed into a semi-democratic autocracy — in particular, by deploying the rhetorical arsenal of authoritarianism. Since his victory, Trump has demonstrated how a political culture can be officially poisoned by the official normalization of racist, sexist and xenophobic language and practices, and how a president can create an atmosphere of siege.

To better understand the logic of authoritarianism, it might be preferable to disregard particularly egregious versions of despotism — such as Robert Mugabe, until recently the cruel dictator of Zimbabwe; his Sudanese colleague, Omar al-Baschir, or the Ethiopian dictator Mengistu; or the post-Soviet despot from Turkmenistan, Gurbanguly Berdymuhamedov. In the category of the bizarre fall the absolutist centre of Islamic-Wahhabite fundamentalism in Saudi Arabia and the absolutist monarchy of Brunei Darussalam. By avoiding these outlandish specimens, one can gain a better view of regimes and protagonists that mark the often less conspicuous, but no less dangerous standard of authoritarianism — the autocratic middle of the road, so to speak. Here Vladimir Putin (Russia) and Xi Jinping (China) take centre stage as global actors.

However, in perusing the register of authoritarianism, one should not overlook Narendra D. Modi in India; the theocratic regime in Iran; the al-Assad clan in Syria; Paul Kagame, president of Rwanda since 2000; I tun Sen, Cambodian prime minister for more than 30 years; Alexander Lukashenko, well into his fifth term as president of Belarus; and Viktor Urban, who since 1998 has managed to convert Hungarian democracy into a façade for a despotic, radically nationalist regime with a xenophobic agenda. One may also want to take a look at Thailand, Bangladesh, Burundi, Pakistan, Lebanon, Turkey, Uganda, Moambiique, Malaysia, Egypt, Poland, Morocco, Vietnam and many more.

Not to forget hybrids such as the para-civilian military regime of Myanmar; and the recently elected, far-right extremist president of Brazil, Jair Bolsonaro, who makes no bones about his admiration for the military, torture and other forms of violence — like torching the rainforest, terrorizing the indigenous people and, most recently, the violence of a pandemic. After the orchestrated impeachment of former President Dilma Rousseff— who had long been persecuted by evangelical groups as an enemy of the

family — on charges of breaking budgetary laws, and after the protracted lawfare against popular former President Lula, the conservative economic elites finally cleared the decks for Bolsonaro to re-establish in 2019 the dictatorship of 1964-85 as a mix of militarism and electoral democracy. Meanwhile, sharp turns towards authoritarianism were also taken by erstwhile revolutionary, now despot Daniel Ortega in Nicaragua; and by Nicholas Maduro, heir of *Chavismo*, in his struggle to stay in power in Venezuela. They all will be revisited below.

## The Constitutional Question

Rut why draft and adopt a constitution in an autocracy where repression is always an option, in the form of show trials, deportations, arrest of opposition groups, discrimination against minorities, intimidation of political adversaries and even mass murder (albeit that not all of these measures are always available to the same degree)? Do constitutions actually have any impact or are they mere paper tigers? Where constitutions are bestowed with authority, whom do they address and what purposes do they serve in an authoritarian context? Do they come with practical import or are they intended merely as empty rhetoric and window-dressing for authoritarian regimes? Together, these queries — which will be answered in the following chapters — encompass the 'constitutional question'.

Given the deep aversion of autocrats to control by parliaments and courts, by the media and, of course, by the people, as well as their dislike of democratic political risks and actionable legal obligations, one wonders why they would submit to a charter of government — albeit merely symbolical. Why bow to a founding document if constitutional constraints can ultimately be shaken off, flouted or manipulated? Why pay tribute to a constitution that has been established by the constitutive power of a previous generation? Thus, the constitutional question harks back to a theme that has been agonized over for centuries — at least since the times of the Old Testament: why would an almighty God submit to a covenant?

## How to Answer the Constitutional Question

A tentative answer to the constitutional question in autocratic settings might be that the authoritarian heart of darkness hides a paradox that combines odium and fascination. The discursive hegemony of liberalism suppresses this paradox without solving it. The radiation of liberal constitutionalism does not illuminate ambivalence, but casts a shadow over what can be neither measured nor resolved.

As political authoritarianism proliferates globally, and in some regions runs riot, it may be propitious to suspend the rehearsed perspective of liberal dominance in order to take authoritarianism — and thus authoritarian constitutionalism — seriously. Authoritarian regimes and their constitutional practices should be brought under close scrutiny and assessed from a critical distance. In this way, authoritarianism is not analysed as deviant or distorted liberalism — liberalism in deficit or liberalism's other — and thus cannibalized; but instead is treated as a phenomenon in its own right that should be submitted to analysis and critique on its own terms. The methodological challenge is 'how the deeply different can be deeply known without becoming any less different; the enormously distant enormously close without becoming any less far away'

This programme of approaching and investigating, critiquing and rejecting political authoritarianism will be embarked on primarily from the perspective of constitutional theory and practice. After this introduction, the constitutional question is posed once again, illustrated by a few historical scenes and

projects (Chapter 1), without examining *why* autocrats bother with drafting or revising constitutions. It seems crucial to clarify, first, how even authoritarian regimes work the constitutional narrative as a way to perceive and shape reality. Second, I am interested in uncovering the benefits that autocrats may hope to reap from constitutions and the extent to which (if at all) they obey the grammar of authoritarianism. Third, it strikes me as crucial to explore whether and how authoritarian constitutionalism mobilizes the magical powers accredited to constitutions for instrumental and/or symbolic purposes, as did the charters of the *ancien regime* which incorporated society (as body politic), personalized monarchic rule and transformed constitutional-legal obedience into a duty that subjects owed to their king or, later, leader.

This preliminary treatment of the constitutional question is followed by an attempt to clarify the complex notions and relations of power and authority, of authoritarian and totalitarian regimes (Chapter 2), so that they may inform the further study of authoritarian constitutionalism. Authoritarianism is investigated as a collective singular less for attitudes and psychic dispositions than for concepts of power, forms of governance and communication, and political technologies.

The relationship between power and authority determines the spectrum and the pathologies of political authoritarianism and its constitutional brand. If authoritarian constitutionalism is to be understood and criticized, one must maintain a distance from the liberal orthodoxy which considers authoritarian constitutions to be mere facades or shams, or 'constitutions without constitutionalism' which have nothing to contribute to the understanding of 'authentic constitutionalism' (Chapter 3). This jargon of authenticity will be confronted with the authoritarian moments of liberalism that it denies or camouflages — not to denounce liberalism or democracy, but rather to open the space for a robust analysis of functions of constitutions other than warranting rights, limiting government or separating powers — functions that autocratic systems might avail themselves of.

Chapters 4 to 7 assemble what I consider to be the crucial building blocks or modules of authoritarian constitutionalism. As a whole, they configure the essential elements that determine — in diverse combinations and specificity, depending on historical contexts, political constellations, cultural practices and economic imperatives — how political authoritarianism is moulded and constituted.

Rather common are authoritarian techniques of governing (Chapter 4). Drawing on my earlier work, I define these techniques (or political technology) as the ensemble of practices, norms and principles, forms of knowledge and skills, calculations, strategies and tactics that actors and institutions of the state bring to bear in their operations and decisions.<sup>25</sup> Autocratic political technology — that is, methods of exercising power — are characterized not only by 'shifting the weights' to the executive branch, but also by their *constitutional opportunism* and preference for *informal governance*. Opportunism connects claims to power with strategies to give authoritarian practices the dignity of law. Informality means that autocrats operate in the shadow of the constitution and institutions, not bound to forms and procedures, between law-rule and arbitrariness, and always shoulder to shoulder with the state of exception.

Furthermore, authoritarianism intimately connects *political power* and *private property* (Chapter 5). Autocrats (single leaders, groups, clans or political parties) tend to see and treat their political-legal powers — whether obtained by election or appointment, manipulation or usurpation — as their personal effects, which they are entitled to dispose of like proprietors. The right to centralize power,

determine its termination and select a successor are all co-opted to their private domain and disposition. More often than not, they feel entitled to enrich themselves pursuant to a perverted Hobbesian 'right to everything'

Whether authoritarian regimes invite or even depend on participation, or avoid it like the plague, is a matter of controversy (Chapter 6). I intervene in these debates with a thesis that does not seek a happy medium, but rather tries to accommodate both autocrats' fear of risk and their desire to be hailed and supported by the people; their affinity for repression and their yearning for acclamation. Autocracies, I argue, permit and encourage forms of participation that are targeted at attuning rather than voting, in order to entrap the citizenry as accomplices of government without actually sharing information or granting an active part in decision making. For *complicity* to come into being, both leader and followers must be present in the public sphere — whether at rallies, parades, referendums or (manipulated) elections — or must communicate through 'authoritarian speech situations', such as national consultations, rulers' monologues or tweets.

Such participation and resulting complicity pave the way for the *cult of immediacy* celebrated by autocrats who occupy the theatrical dimension of politics and bring their charisma and propaganda to bear without institutional or media control (Chapter 7). They deactivate intermediary organizations (associations, guilds, political parties), the media and mediating institutions (parliament, courts). In this way, they replace the distanced, yet potentially civilizing law-rule and democratic representation with varieties of direct communication either 'their' people aimed at inspiring delusions of *community* between leaders and followers.

Chaplet 8 translated these elements of authoritarian constitutionalism — the techniques of governing, the concept and practices of power, participation as complicity and the cult of immediacy—into a matrix composed of instrumental and symbolic purposes, as well as internal and external audiences. Since constitutions do not wear their purpose on their sleeves, and the motives of their drafters usually remain unknown, this matrix offers a heuristic that allows for plausible readings and attributions of authoritarian constitutions. It also generates constitutional patterns related to the political manifesto: the constitution as *manual of governance*, *tool for mobilization*, *identity card* in international relations and *showcase*.

After this manuscript had been written, the coronavirus pandemic hit the world and a global drama of human suffering began to unfold — also on the stage of authoritarianism. While a thorough analysis of how the virus spread and the destruction it caused is beyond the scope of this book, it seemed important to refer to authoritarian methods of infection prevention and to add some brief observations on the challenge of coping with a pandemic in a situation of uncertainty. Therefore, Chapter 9 discusses, albeit briefly, aspects of the coronavirus crisis as a driver of authoritarianism.

## How to Read Constitutions

Constitutions are not hermetically closed texts, but rather opaque and porous. Therefore, they are open to interpretation. The constitutions of authoritarian regimes are no different. (Napoleon is said to have wanted them 'short and dark'.) They have interesting stories to tell if one does not dismiss them as mere poetry or facades, but takes them seriously as texts with specific purposes written for specific audiences — competing elites, the opposition, the people, international actors and so on. Very much

like liberal constitutions, authoritarian charters of government should not be expected to delineate a reliable map that neatly registers the allocation of power and how it can be controlled, or the use value of rights. But while they may be deceptive, they are not without merit (as the thesis of constitutions as façades or shams would have it). Authoritarian constitutions are difficult to read and interpret. Between naïve constitutional faith (routinely given to liberal constitutions) and cynical disdain (usually implied with regard to authoritarian constitutions), there is a wide area to be covered by careful differentiated analysis. This looks out for imprudent moments, camouflaged premises or marginal comments that may reveal the purposes to be pursued and the audiences to be reached through a constitution. This is the project that will be undertaken in these chapters. <>

## **HORRIBLE WHITE PEOPLE: GENDER, GENRE, AND TELEVISION'S PRECARIOUS WHITENESS** by Taylor Nygaard and Jorie Lagerwey [NYU Press, 9781479885459]

Examines the bleak television comedies that illustrate the obsession of the white left with its own anxiety and suffering

At the same time that right-wing political figures like Donald Trump were elected and reactionary socio-economic policies like Brexit were voted into law, representations of bleakly comic white fragility spread across television screens. American and British programming that featured the abjection of young, middle-class, liberal white people—such as *Broad City*, *Casual*, *You're the Worst*, *Catastrophe*, *Fleabag*, and *Transparent*—proliferated to wide popular acclaim in the 2010s. Taylor Nygaard and Jorie Lagerwey track how these shows of the white left, obsessed with its own anxiety and suffering, are complicit in the rise and maintenance of the far right—particularly in the mobilization, representation, and sustenance of structural white supremacy on television.

Nygaard and Lagerwey examine a cycle of dark television comedies, the focus of which are “horrible white people,” by putting them in conversation with similar upmarket comedies from creators and casts of color like *Insecure*, *Atlanta*, *Dear White People*, and *Master of None*. Through their analysis, they demonstrate the ways these non-white-centric shows negotiate prestige TV’s dominant aesthetics of whiteness and push back against the centering of white suffering in a time of cultural crisis.

Through the lens of media analysis and feminist cultural studies, Nygaard and Lagerwey’s book opens up new ways of looking at contemporary television consumption—and the political, cultural, and social repercussions of these “horrible white people” shows, both on- and off-screen.

### Review

"A bold, insightful analysis of what Nygaard and Lagerwey identify as a key cycle of sitcoms: 'horrible White people' shows. With an insistently anti-racist and feminist lens, they connect this cycle to shifts in the contemporary media industry and U.S. culture in order to show how Whiteness, yet again, reinvents itself.", Sarah Projansky, author of *Spectacular Girls: Media Fascination and Celebrity Culture*

"Makes an important contribution to television and media studies, which is in the beginning stages of grappling with its own Whiteness. Cannily, Nygaard and Lagerwey focus on series that appear less nakedly racist, even liberal, to show how White supremacy is more common and insidious than most scholarship recognizes. Yet they never forget to attend to the nuances of representation, how race intersects with other indices of identity -- class, gender, etc. -- and how representationally groundbreaking series can simultaneously reinforce norms and obfuscate systemic privilege. This book fills a much-needed gap in media studies and will find a place in my syllabi for the foreseeable future.", *Aymar Jean Christian, author of Open TV: Innovation Beyond Hollywood and the Rise of Web Television*

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## The Fraying Fantasies of White Supremacy

The day before US President Donald Trump's inauguration on January 21, 2017, Abbi Jacobson and Ilana Glazer, the writers and stars behind *Broad City* released a video about inauguration day as part of their offseason "Hack into Broad City" YouTube series (Comedy Central 2017). The video opens with a panicked Abbi waiting for Ilana to answer her video call. Mimicking disaster films, Abbi is stuck in an unmoving elevator, and Ilana is standing in a dark locker in what appears to be her apartment building's underground storage space. Both women are dressed for the apocalypse with warm beanies covering messy hair, sweatpants, and no makeup. Abbi wears plaid flannel and a shearling vest, carries a massive backpack, and is desperate to maintain her weak phone signal. Ilana wears camouflage and waits for Abbi in front of stocked shelves, a hiker's backpack, and camping lanterns (although she reveals she forgot to collect food and batteries). The scene is apocalyptic, but the girls are counting down not to asteroid impact or nuclear Armageddon but to the minute Trump is sworn in as president. Despite their obvious agitation, Abbi reveals that she got stuck leaving a laser- hair-removal appointment, which she had prepaid and could not pass up, even for the end of the world. As the dramatic countdown ends, Abbi and Ilana realize their lives won't be immediately impacted: Abbi's elevator starts functioning normally, and the New York City stalwart *Law & Order: SVU* shoots a scene outside liana's window. Their race and class privilege becomes palpable as they pause, confused and unsure how to act; Abbi decides she will come over to liana's as planned, while Ilana says, "And you know what? We'll just Google how to Google our local representatives."

The girls' fear and rage at Trump's election is the guiding theme of the scene, but throughout, their lack of real urgency (forgetting food, worrying about hair removal) belies the inherent security of their position as White middle-class characters.' Their incompetence dealing with the realities of political unrest also reflects the limits and ineptitude of millennial White allies and White identity in comedic televisual representations that are the subject of this book. The video illustrates how the series engages in explicit critical political discourse while, like the other programs we examine in *Horrible White People*, aligning itself with the ultimately ineffectual White shock, dismay, and panic at the election of Donald Trump that dominated liberal reactions in social, fictional, and nonfictional media. *Broad City* is part of a prolific cycle of transatlantic television comedies we analyze in this book and call "Horrible White People" shows. They emerged mostly between 2014 and 2016 and target affluent, liberal, White audiences through prestige aesthetics and innovative, progressive representations. Yet they also reflect the complicity of the White Left, obsessed with its own anxiety and suffering, in the rise of the Far Right—particularly in the mobilization, representation, and sustenance of structural White supremacy on television.

### How to Read This Book: Our Structure and Argument

We have created a parallel structure in each chapter that opens with an indicative example like the *Broad City* sequence just presented. From there, we lay out the argument of the chapter and proceed to outline extensive background and contextual information about that chapter's key concepts. Our chapters are based on a research model that combines media industries studies' concerns with political economy and cultural studies' concerns with identity, power, and inequality. Through the combination of these methodologies, we seek to expand our understandings of a significant trend in contemporary televisual representation and interrogate how industry and culture relate to and constitute each other. Each chapter begins by mapping how the Horrible White People cycle extends or breaks from historical legacies in industry, genre, and representation and concludes with close textual analysis that draws out the ideological implications of those extensions and breaks. This methodology insists on the importance of tracing historical trajectories of genre, identity, and political representation to contextualize how contemporary representations can be considered either progressive or regressive, while also acknowledging how television industrial logics, both cultural and economic, impact those trajectories.

This book may challenge readers because it analyzes the workings of structural White supremacy in a beloved cultural institution (television). As we discussed and presented this work in progress, readers and listeners often responded emotionally, as though confronted or implicated. That feedback illustrated how painful it can be to grapple with the idea that prestige TV shows, programs that wear progressive social credentials on their sleeve and—maybe most of all—characters with whom readers (perhaps especially White readers) might identify, are complicit in maintaining unequal, rhetorically and physically violent structures of power. We had to deal with that reaction in ourselves as well, and it became central to the theoretical underpinning of this book. As we explain in detail later in this introduction and throughout the book, White people's emotional reactions to conversations about racial inequality—often reactions of anger, denial, or flight—are what Robin DiAngelo (2018) calls "White Fragility." White fragility is on prominent display throughout the Horrible White People programming cycle, and the tone of despair is in fact a constitutive element of our definition of it. Only by diving in, wading through, having the patience to feel that denial or anger and then trying to keep reading, thinking, and writing with an open mind will readers get the most out of our arguments and hopefully join us in the project of

acknowledging and thus working to dismantle White supremacy. Our argument is that even television that is culturally and socially relevant, award-winning prestige TV, technologically innovative, and generically, representationally, and artistically progressive—even that beautiful television—can function to sustain and perpetuate White people's cultural centrality and power. *Horrible White People* thus contributes to the growing field of Whiteness studies, expanding beyond the more mainstream focus on lower-middle-class rural masculinity (see Garner 2017, 1591) to expose the hypocrisies and invisibilities of other complicit intersectional White identities during the global conservative turn of the early twenty-first century; particularly that of upper-middle-class or affluent, liberal. White women. <>

## **THE DISAPPEARANCE OF BUTTERFLIES** by Josef H. Reichholf, translated by Gwen Clayton [Polity, 9781509539796]

In the last fifty years our butterfly populations have declined by more than eighty per cent and butterflies are now facing the very real prospect of extinction. It is hard to remember the time when fields and meadows were full of these beautiful, delicate creatures – today we rarely catch a glimpse of the Wild Cherry Sphinx moths, Duke of Burgundy or the even once common Small Tortoiseshell butterflies. The High Brown Fritillary butterfly and the Stout Dart Moth have virtually disappeared.

The eminent entomologist and award-winning author Josef H. Reichholf began studying butterflies in the late 1950s. He brings a lifetime of scientific experience and expertise to bear on one of the great environmental catastrophes of our time. He takes us on a journey into the wonderful world of butterflies - from the small nymphs that emerge from lakes in air bubbles to the trusting purple emperors drunk on toad poison - and immerses us in a world that we are in danger of losing forever. Step by step he explains the science behind this impending ecological disaster, and shows how it is linked to pesticides, over-fertilization and the intensive farming practices of the agribusiness.

His book is a passionate plea for biodiversity and the protection of butterflies.

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*Foreword by John F. Burton*

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In the last 50 years, our moth and butterfly populations have declined by more than 80 per cent. Perhaps only older people will recall a time when meadows were filled with colourful flowers and countless butterflies fluttered above. Nobody would have thought of wanting to count them then. Why would you! Butterflies belonged to summer, just like bees and wildflowers. Larks sang from early spring until midsummer. They would sing from first light, suspended in the air over the fields. There were yellowhammers, partridges, hares. Frogs lived in the ditches and ponds. In the 1970s, treefrogs still called so loudly from a pool near my home at the edge of the fields that their chorus was audible through the veranda door during a telephone interview with the Bayerischer Rundfunk. The topic: proceedings at the Bavarian District Court regarding noise pollution caused by frogs.

I became familiar with butterflies when I was just a child. I saw dozens of large swallowtails with their distinct black lattice over paleyellow wings. They flew to our vegetable garden to lay their eggs on carrot leaves. Their green caterpillars with red spots gave me particular pleasure when I discovered them weeks later. If I touched them near the front, they would shoot out the strangest orange-yellow fork from a wrinkle behind their head. They emitted a peculiar odour that I later learnt was a deterrent.

Blues of various species, which I could not tell apart at the time, flew over the meadows that stretched from our little house at the edge of the village to the woodland along the river. The shimmering blue butterflies were so abundant that, looking back, I could not even have estimated how many there were. One barely noticed the cabbage whites. They were part of the nature that surrounded us, like the chirruping of the field-cricket in May and June and the chirping of the grasshoppers in midsummer. I used to enjoy tickling the field-cricket out of their burrows with a stem of grass. Their bulky, brawny-looking heads amused me. There did not seem to be much going on in there — they were so easily tricked.

In the pollarded willows by the stream that snaked through the meadows behind our house, hoopoes would make their nests. With raised crests, they would stride around the grazed pastures, nodding their heads and poking around in the cowpats left behind by the cows. These birds were in the pastures during the day throughout the whole summer and far into the autumn. The air would teem with starlings. These black-feathered birds would follow the cows as if obsessed, sometimes even sitting on their backs. Every garden had at least one nestbox attached to a high pole for the starlings. When the

cherries ripened, they feasted and took a significant share and made themselves heard in the process. Driving starlings away from the cherry trees was a great pleasure for older children, since they were allowed to climb right up into the tree crown, where the cherries dangled in front of their mouths. At our house, a colony of sparrows lived under the roof — a good dozen, maybe even more. They were always there, but our cat paid no attention to them. She went mouse-hunting and was very successful. A country idyll. Romanticized memories of childhood and early youth in a valley of the lower reaches of the River Inn, Lower Bavaria?

Perhaps nostalgia has affected our perception of the past. For this reason, one must be conscious of every attempt to reconstruct the 'former' as a basis for the 'present'. Memory supplies whatever we would like to have had, and it tends towards nostalgia and a yearning for what is gone. Nevertheless, I shall begin this book with descriptions of the natural beauty and abundance that I once experienced myself, in part to explain why the disappearance of the butterflies affects me so deeply. The first part of the book is intended to provide the basis from which we can make a judgement about the loss of the species. I have selected my examples so that the reader need not be a specialist in order to have observed and experienced similar things. These examples come from my own work and observations in Bavaria, but could equally have been taken from similar studies elsewhere in Europe or in the British Isles.

Together, these examples ought to show that the abundance of moths and butterflies, for reasons that are yet to be explained, has nevertheless shown a generally downward trend over at least the last 50 years (bearing in mind that it has always fluctuated substantially). The causes of this are discussed in the second part of the book. In order to do this, it is crucial to distinguish ordinary fluctuations from the general trend. This is critical, not only for understanding the natural cycles, but also for identifying the correct measures required to reverse the downward trend. It will not be achieved, for example, by simply reducing the application of poisons, as worthwhile as this might be. Whatever we commonly associate with 'green' and 'eco' holds its own problems with respect to the conservation of species. The second part of the book will therefore inevitably touch on environmental policy. The ecology movement lost its claim to scientific integrity, in my opinion, when it was converted into a 'nature religion' through crises that lent themselves to political manipulation. I am ready to be contradicted: I am used to this and it belongs to the principle of scientific discourse. Such discourse differentiates itself from the exchange of publicly entrenched opinions by accepting better findings. This makes natural science stronger, but also increasingly unpopular. It remains qualified and flexible, while people today seem to delight in dogmatically countering one principle with another. Scepticism does not disqualify you from being a natural scientist; instead, it is the praiseworthy habit of someone who does not submit to dogmas, even if they are currently supposed to be in fashion.

The same is true for the limitation of our freedom of expression under pressure from 'political correctness'. Whether we say 'plant protection products', as some demand, or 'poisons' does not change their effect, since that is what they are supposed to be: substances that kill what is supposed to be destroyed. Moreover, I have been unable to avoid writing in general terms of 'agriculture', 'maintenance measures' or 'nature conservation'. Farmers, if they so choose, can farm in an insect-friendly manner; a maintenance squad that cares for roadside verges can sometimes do this without mowing down all the grasses and flowers; and gardens can be designed in a very butterfly-friendly way. But the expressions 'agriculture', 'landscape and garden care' or even 'nature conservation', when

referring to organizations and government works, are correct for the typical circumstances, since certain consequences emanate from them, and this book is generally concerned with these. For this reason, the impact of my statements will also depend on the spirit in which this book is read: I wrote it from a sense of responsibility that I feel we owe to future generations. Many people, a great many people, have been commenting on industrial agriculture for several decades, but they are still too few to achieve the political pressure that would be required to bring about a change for the better. <>

## **MOVEMENT AND TIME IN THE CYBERWORLD: QUESTIONING THE DIGITAL CAST OF BEING** by Michael Eldred [De Gruyter, 978-3110657302]

The cyberworld fast rolling in and impacting every aspect of human living on the globe today presents an enormous challenge to humankind. It is taken up by the media following current events through to all kinds of natural- and social-scientific discourses. Digitized technoscience develops at a breakneck pace in all areas accompanied by sociological analysis. What is missing is a philosophical response genuinely posing the basic ontological question: What is a digital being's peculiar mode of being? The present study offers a digital ontology that analyzes the dissolution of beings into bit-strings, driven by mathematized science. The mathematization of knowledge reaches back to Pythagoras, Plato and Aristotle, and continues with Descartes, Galileo, Newton, Leibniz. Western knowledge from its inception has always been driven by an unbridled will to efficient-causal power over all kinds of movement and change. This historical trajectory culminates in the universal Turing machine that enables efficient, automated, algorithmic control over the movement of digital beings through the cyberworld. The book fills in the ontological foundations underpinning this brave new cyberworld and interrogates them, especially by questioning the millennia-old conception of 1D-linear time. An alternative ontology of movement arises, based on a radically alternative conception of 3D-time.

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## Approaching the question concerning digital being

The question concerning digital being remains open, for its meaning and historical origins, which lie ultimately in Western metaphysics, are still not clarified in a philosophical sense.<sup>2</sup> What is digital is commonly counterposed to what is analogue. This amounts to a technical definition. Nowadays, this distinction relates primarily to the difference in electromagnetic signals of all kinds, whether it be in telecommunications, electronic music or in computer data-processing. Digital beings are characterized by the fact that they are composed of discrete binary digits or bits. Signals in telecommunications, for instance, are transmitted in a digital or binary form through a medium (cables of many different kinds, the air, cosmic space). Basically, an ordered sequence of zeroes and ones (nothing and something, pure difference) is transmitted which at the other, recipient's end can be and must be recomposed in such a way that the appropriate result (a voice, a text, an image, a sound, a TV spot, a control command, etc.) is brought about. The difference between 0 and 1 may be any arbitrary difference in physical beings such as transmitting a signal with two different frequencies or two arbitrarily different energetic states of an electromagnetic system such as the orientation of iron molecules. Maxwellian electromagnetic force-fields of all kinds (radio waves, electricity, magnetism, light, molecular bonds, electron spins, even quantum-indeterminate states) may be harnessed and dichotomized in some way to generate a binary difference. The difference *as a difference* is something that we humans understand, i. e. we are able to understand (binary) difference *as such* and employ this understanding of a basic ontological category to ultimately bring forth digital effects. Already in Greek metaphysics, the category of (the other) vis-à-vis (the same, identical), the difference of the one from the other, plays a crucial role in the thinking of being and non-being, especially in Plato's dialectic, and therefore ultimately in the Greek ontology of movement.

Electromagnetic signals as physical beings (or beings that of themselves come to stand in presence including, in this context, also produced things, cultural things), however, in their natural state are not

structured or discretely articulated in any form, but continuous. They, or rather: their movement and change, can be represented mathematically by continuous functions of time ( $y = f(t)$ ). Aisthaetic beings (Gr. *atothra*, sensuously perceptible beings) are naturally or of themselves continuous. At first we humans always perceive a whole (that is not articulated, e. g. we see a car drive past down the street. This is conceived as a continuous happening, a movement in linear time. A video camera can record this scene, and the video can be broadcast on television. The television viewers will still perceive a whole, namely, the scene of a car passing by. Between the live scene and the perceived television sequence there lies the articulated decomposition (or analytical taking-apart) of the scene into digital bit-strings and its technical reconstitution as a moving image on a screen by way of differing, moving light intensifies and wave-lengths.

So far, so good. This articulated dissolution of what is perceived requires, however, ontological clarification. What is happening, i. e. what must be already given a priori, for digital technology to understand and gain an effective grasp? What does it mean for a being to be whole or one? What does dissolution, decomposition or taking-apart mean ontologically? What does it mean for a being to move or change continuously in time, i.e. what is *movement*, *continuity* and *time*, and what conception of time is here presupposed? What does the discreteness of digital beings have to do with beings *as such*? What does number have to do ontologically with beings *as such* and with movement? And what is the connection between digital dissolution and the (language, reason, knowledge)?

In digital technology, there must be two different, constant signals, polarizations, bits, spins, states of matter which are *understood as* (i.e. interpreted as) 0 and 1, as nothing (and something). The categories of something and another something in constancy are presupposed ontologically. Furthermore, there is also unity and duality. How are all these elementary categories indispensable for grasping the digitization of beings ontologically interrelated?

We humans perceive and understand electromagnetic currents, states, etc. not only *as such* but *as* simple binary difference because these currents, etc. have from the start, i. e. a priori, been interpreted, for instance, by the technological knowledge of the hardware or the communication technology, *as such* binary differences.

It is impossible to explain, say, the perception of a whole as a linear-temporal process in the brain, for the categories of the whole ( $\alpha\chi\omicron\nu$ ), of something (Ti) are already 'visible' implicitly to the mind's eye in advance, i.e. before any 'data' have been 'registered' by the brain somehow in its neuronal networks. This a priori mental dimension — the very general, elementary and universal schemata or scaffolding of the categories (cf. also the hermeneutic *As*-structure with its "pre-structure" (Vor-Struktur) as the "scaffolding" (Gertist) "from which something becomes understandable as something" (aus dem her etwas als etwas verstand-lich wird, SZ:151<sup>3</sup>) — must be attributed to the metaphysical (or rather: ontolog-ical<sup>4</sup>) power of the human mind's vision and has been traditionally one of the two major foci of metaphysics. Today metaphysics is despised by the modern sciences, which have long since staked their pretension to be *the* 'natural', non-metaphysical locus of truth based on an utterly naive belief in experimental scientific method. The sciences investigate their respective subject matters on the basis of an a priori, presupposed understanding of the being of the region of beings into which they do research. Thus the mathematized casting of nature — which made possible modern physics from the seventeenth century on as one of the most momentous events in the history of Western thinking and, in view of its

far-reaching consequences, in the history of the world —cannot, despite science's asseverations to the contrary, itself be a question within physics but rather is presupposed by it. Analytic philosophy of science aids and abets modern mathematical science as its handmaiden by failing to pose the pertinent, a priori, ontological questions since, for analytic philosophy, ontology has shrivelled to unrecognizability as a taxonomic pastime of classifying what 'exists', where the meaning of 'existence' is taken for granted.

The same unquestioning stance pertains to the digital dissolution of beings in progress today which, as we shall see in more detail, is the consummation of the mathematized ontological casting of the being of beings. The digitization of the world is, in the first place, an event in the historical transformation of the cast of mind through which the world in its totality is interpreted (pre-)ontologically *as* digitally composed into discrete bits of information. Such discretization is apparent in all areas of science such as chemistry where the structure of molecules is conceived as kind of combinatorics of atoms according to certain rules of combination such as valency, or in biochemistry and genetics, where the structure of molecules is treated as a code, as in the genetic code of DNA which, of course, is digitizable. As a totalizing epochal digitized mind-set, the cyberworld is an all-encompassing cybermind, but in the narrower sense normally employed in this study, it signifies both the technoscientifically, artificially constructed, electromagnetic, digital network and the existential experience of we human beings living in and with this artificial, algorithmically driven world.

These foundations of the digitized world in onto-theological metaphysics wilfully suppressed, denied and dismissed as empirically 'non-verifiable' and 'speculative' guff by modern scientific thinking, and inoculated and defanged by analytic philosophy, must be brought expressly to light in order to see the cast of being on which digital technology and the cyberworld are unknowingly, unwittingly, but nevertheless underhandedly based.

Not only Plato (and the Pythagoreans), but above all Aristotle are called upon for assistance, for their thinking is not something past, but, whether we admit and comprehend it or not, maintains its hold on us — i.e. on our ineluctably shared historical mind — to this very day. As a starting-point for these considerations, I take the following passage from Martin Heidegger's *Sophist* lectures in Winter Semester in Marburg in 1924/25:

It must be noted here that for Aristotle, the primary [i.e. conceptual ME] determination of number insofar as it can be traced back to the *in*\* as the *has* a much more originary connection with the constitution of beings themselves insofar as the determination of the being of any being includes that it 'is' and that it is 'one'; every *is* a *hi*. Thus the *in* in the broadest sense — the *stands* here for the *esse* — gains a more fundamental significance for the *structure of beings as a whole* as an ontological determination. At the same time, it enters into a relation with the *\*fog* insofar as beings in their ultimate determinations are only accessible in a special *Aoyoc*, in *winatc*, whereas the geometric structures are seen solely in *diacritic*. It is where the geometric contemplation has to stop *has* a stand. In arithmetic, by contrast, as at work which abstracts from every other, from every intuitive dimension and orientation.

The oneness of each being is indebted to its unambiguous presence within the well-defined contours of its *edios*, its 'look'. These are only initial, bare hints from Heidegger, and the passage requires further commentary and deeper probing under the guidance of his phenomenological hermeneutics,' to which task I will now turn. Later on, I shall have to take leave of Heidegger's guidance to escape the orbit of

what will be called the *productivist paradigm* of metaphysics, comprising both ontology and theology, in its modern mathematized garb. <>

## **ADVANCED INTRODUCTION TO LAW AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE** by Dr Woodrow Barfield, Ugo Pagallo [Elgar Advanced Introductions, Edward Elgar Publishing, 9781789905120]

Elgar Advanced Introductions are stimulating and thoughtful introductions to major fields in the social sciences and law, expertly written by the world's leading scholars. Designed to be accessible yet rigorous, they offer concise and lucid surveys of the substantive and policy issues associated with discrete subject areas.

Woodrow Barfield and Ugo Pagallo present a succinct introduction to the legal issues related to the design and use of artificial intelligence (AI). Exploring human rights, constitutional law, data protection, criminal law, tort law, and intellectual property law, they consider the laws of a number of jurisdictions including the US, the European Union, Japan, and China, making reference to case law and statutes.

Key features include:

- a critical insight into human rights and constitutional law issues which may be affected by the use of AI
- discussion of the concept of legal personhood and how the law might respond as AI evolves in intelligence
- an introduction to current laws and statutes which apply to AI and an identification of the areas where future challenges to the law may arise.

This Advanced Introduction is ideal for law and social science students with an interest in how the law applies to AI. It also provides a useful entry point for legal practitioners seeking an understanding of this emerging field.

### **Review**

*'A much needed comprehensive and up-to-date introduction to the law of AI, a must read for all ICT lawyers!'*  
--Giovanni Sartor, University of Bologna and European University Institute, Italy

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## Introduction to law and artificial intelligence

This book is written to serve as an advanced introduction to the law which relates to artificial intelligence and is intended for law students, legal practitioners, and researchers from different academic disciplines who wish to gain an understanding of how the law currently applies to increasingly smart systems controlled by artificial intelligence (AI). Particularly in the last few years there has been a growing interest among legal scholars and legislators in the US, European Union (EU), Australia, and Asia to propose regulations for technologies which are fueled by AI.' This is due in part to the many challenges to the law which have resulted from systems that are becoming increasingly smart, lacking transparency in their decision making, and either semi or fully-autonomous from human input and control.

Due to the worldwide interest to regulate AI we take a comprehensive approach to the subject and present the law which relates to AI found at the level of state, Federal, and international jurisdictions. We think this approach will give the reader a broad understanding of current efforts to regulate AI and sufficient knowledge of the approaches to develop a law of AI being pursued in the US, the EU, Australia, and Asia. This approach also reflects our view that an international response will be necessary to effectively regulate AI (therefore a convergence in how to regulate AI among jurisdictions will be necessary) given the ability of AI to seamlessly cross international borders, and because the numerous legal issues raised by AI, such as the use of smart weapons in international conflict, or the use of intelligent bots for commercial transactions, affect the global community.

In some respects, this book is an extension to our coedited *Research Handbook on the Law of Artificial Intelligence*, also published by Edward Elgar, but is written more in the form of a textbook for second or third-year law students, or for students in other related disciplines, focusing on what we think are the most important legal (and policy) issues which relate to AI. Additionally, the book is written to serve as a resource for those in academic disciplines such as engineering, computer science, and the social sciences, and may benefit practicing attorneys desiring an overview of the law which applies to current legal issues which relate to AI.

In order to provide an advanced introduction to law and AI in a fairly short format — a requirement for Edward Elgar's Advanced Introduction series — we selected the topics which we think represent the most pressing legal issues on how the law is being challenged by developments in AI. We should note that an attempt to provide a coherent framework for the law and AI controlled systems, especially in a succinct format, is an immense challenge; mainly because many areas of law, from civil to criminal, are currently being challenged by the use of entities guided by AI. For example, AI is embedded within our consumer appliances, our highways, and our power grids, serving as our digital assistants, controlling semi-autonomous weapons, creating intellectual property, and is helping guide robotic surgeons as they perform life-saving operations. These diverse examples bring up the issue of whether legal rules for AI should be broad taking into account the different application areas that together use similar techniques of AI; or whether legal rules regulating AI should be focused on specific application areas which may

require narrowly tailored rules; or perhaps a hybrid approach will be necessary. We address these and other issues in the chapters which follow.

Looking at AI from the perspective of law, it is clear that the use of AI in numerous applications is already challenging many areas of established law. For example, constitutional law issues are involved when speech is produced by algorithms and spoken by "intelligent" robots or by our digital assistants, and discrimination law is applicable when algorithms are biased in decision making involving historically oppressed members of society. In addition, contract law is implicated when AI-driven bots engage in commercial transactions and the rules of civil procedure come into play when AI crosses jurisdictional boundaries or is proffered as evidence in a court proceeding. Further, tort law, and specifically negligence and products liability, are triggered when a person is harmed, or property is damaged by a machine (such as a robot) which is controlled by AI. Reflecting the need to provide a legal framework in which to regulate AI, California Supreme Court Justice Mariano Cuellar commented that the ubiquity of machines that act as though they are intelligent in some meaningful sense may exacerbate political, regulatory, and institutional disruptions at a global scale; for this reason alone, he posits, the law, has a meaningful role to play in the design and use of AI.

Research in AI includes several key areas that mimic human behaviors, including reasoning, knowledge representation, planning, natural language processing, perception, and generalized intelligence. As AI entities reason more as humans do, they will become more valuable and ubiquitous in society, resulting in issues which may challenge established law.

1. *AI reasoning* includes performing sophisticated mental tasks that people can do (for example, play chess, solve math problems).
2. *Knowledge representation* is information about real-world objects that AI can be used to solve various problems. *Knowledge* in this context is usable information about a domain, and the *representation* is the form of the knowledge used by the AI entity.
3. *Planning and navigation* include processes related to how an AI controlled entity such as a robot moves from one place to another. This includes identifying safe and efficient paths, dealing with relevant objects (for example, doors), and manipulating physical objects.
4. *Natural language processing* includes interpreting and delivering audible speech to and from users.
5. *Perception* research for AI includes improving the capability of computer systems to use sensors to detect and perceive data in a manner that replicates humans' use of senses to acquire and synthesize information from the world around them.

While steps are currently being taken at the national and international level to determine how to regulate AI, for example, in the US, EU, Australia, and Asia, there have been several commissions organized to discuss the role of AI in society, as AI gets smarter and more autonomous, an even greater effort at the national and international level will be necessary. However, as the chapters which follow show, through numerous laws, statutes, and regulatory bodies, to some extent we already regulate AI. As California Supreme Court Justice Cuellar notes, whether it is tort law, contract law, intellectual property law, or consumer protection, extensive legal frameworks already exist to adjudicate questions of responsibility, ownership, and damages, even in cases involving increasingly smart systems.

As of the time this book is published, the majority of AI systems are clearly under human control, and thus are the legitimate subject of many established areas of law which are designed to access human culpability. These laws apply even if a person or organization makes a decision with the assistance of an AI controlled entity. For example, in *Mracek v. Bryn Mawr Hosp.*,<sup>4</sup> a patient sued a hospital following manual surgery that resulted in alleged damages, the lawsuit was initiated after the human doctors had to complete the surgery following the malfunctioning of the "da Vinci robot." Although the failure to use an intelligent robot may someday create liability, humans may still have a duty of care to avoid accidents, even after delegating some of the operation to a robot. This liability may arise in the use of semi-autonomous machines where humans and machines share responsibilities.

But as AI becomes more autonomous, and when problem solving occurs by AI systems using techniques that are beyond the understanding of any human in the system, the law will be challenged, mostly because much of the law that exists today logically evolved to account for human actions. For example, in disputes involving the criminal law, courts do not consider whether a robot which harmed a human had the necessary *wens rea* to commit an assault and battery or, for that matter, any other crime requiring a particular mental state. And intelligent or not, no robot has ever been a defendant in a court proceeding. Further, in the case of an industrial accident involving a machine guided by AI, based on established tort law, courts currently look beyond the machine to the manufacturer or programmer to establish fault — no court has yet to find a machine legally responsible for harm to humans or damage to property. However, as AI becomes smarter and more autonomous in its actions, and with no human involved in the system, who then will courts hold responsible for damages? This question has generated much debate in the legal community and different solutions have been offered, not the least of which is the suggestion to offer legal personhood status to AI controlled entities, which analogous to rights afforded corporations in some jurisdictions, could then sue or be sued, and hold other rights as established under the law. In fact, in Europe, artificial legal persons (like an association or a corporation) already have some of the human rights enshrined in the 1950 Convention, or European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), such as freedom of conscience and religion (Art. 9 ECHR), freedom of expression (Art. 10), or the right to an effective remedy (Art. 13). In the US, the law holds that a legal entity (like a corporation or non-profit organization) shall be treated under the law as a person except when otherwise noted. This rule of construction is specified in 1 U.S.C. §1, which states;

In determining the meaning of any Act of Congress, unless the context indicates otherwise — the words "person" and "whoever" include corporations, companies, associations, firms, partnerships, societies, and joint stock companies, as well as individuals.

As AI gets smarter, and more autonomous, courts will face increasingly complex dilemmas in applying established law to AI; in some cases, new law will be necessary, in others, existing law will need to be reformed. For example, antitrust law (or competition law in the EU), places restrictions on the formation of monopolies by firms, but we are beginning to see AI systems that are colluding and engaging in price fixing in violation of antitrust regulations. And as the use of AI becomes more common in fields like health care, perhaps what meets a standard of "reasonable care" under a theory of negligence or malpractice will need to be revisited. As California Supreme Court Justice Cuellar and colleagues note no matter how advanced AI becomes, lawyers and judges applying the law may be forced to recognize that sometimes organizations have good reasons for keeping humans in the loop—to continue accumulating 'benchmark machines' performance, or to avoid an erosion of organizational

knowledge that can leave an organization brittle and vulnerable in the event of a cyber-attack or a technological glitch.' The above examples bring up an important issue — that there are varying levels of independence within systems (physical or digital) that are operating with different levels of AI, creating among others, autonomous and semi-autonomous entities, thus, any regulation of AI will need to account for the actions of such systems which may vary by their degree of intelligence and level of autonomy.

Of course, the fact that law already impacts the use of AI by regulating the conduct of humans who use the technology does not mean that existing legal arrangements are optimal. As Justice Cuellar indicated, any discussion about how law should respond to the challenges posed by AI should start from the premise that it would be difficult to justify treating someone as essentially immune from whatever culpability they would otherwise have simply because he or she uses a system controlled by AI. This is a major issue to resolve for courts, yet the future may be one in which AI entities operating independently from humans reach then surpass humans in intelligence and thus human conduct may be irrelevant to the legal dispute. Several forecasters have predicted such an outcome,' so it is not too soon for legal scholars, legislators, and the general public to begin discussing how the law will need to respond to account for intelligent entities that will surely challenge many areas of law.

The purpose of writing this book on the role of law in regulating AI is severalfold:

1. To provide an up-to-date summary of the law which relates to AI in order to provide legislators and government agencies tasked with regulating AI, a framework in which to guide their efforts,
2. To provide a summary of the law which relates to AI in a format which can be used as a textbook aimed at second- and third-year law students and also for students in other academic disciplines requiring an accessible introduction to the subject,
3. To provide an overview of the law which relates to AI as a reference for attorneys that are just beginning to litigate disputes involving smart machines or intelligent software bots,
4. And importantly, to begin the process of organizing and presenting a legal framework for law and AI in which to generate further discussion on how the law can be used to help spur innovation in AI but also to safeguard the rights of all parties involved as AI proliferates more deeply into society.

In this *Advanced Introduction to the Law and AI*, our aim is to provide a concise but thorough overview of the relevant case law, regulations, and statutes which apply to AI. To that end, this book is composed of ii chapters. In Chapter 1 we introduce the broad topic of law and AI, including definitions and fundamental concepts in order to orient the reader to the material provided in the chapters which follow. We also provide a basic framework to provide a structure to the law of AI, as an academic discipline, as an area which will be the subject of litigation, and as a technology which will be the subject of regulation. In Chapter 2, human rights concerns raised by the use of AI are discussed and in Chapter 3 we present constitutional law issues which are impacted by the use of AI, among others, these concern free speech and due process in criminal proceedings. In Chapter 4 the issue of legal personhood for AI is discussed based on different perspectives and in Chapter 5 we discuss issues of data protection for AI, motivated by recent European initiatives on this topic. In Chapter 6 the topic of tort law and AI is presented, and in Chapter 7 criminal law issues are reviewed. In Chapters 8 and 9 we

discuss intellectual property law and AI, and particularly copyright and patent law. In Chapter 10 we briefly review some commercial law issues raised by the use of AI, and in Chapter we conclude with possible future directions of law and AI. <>

## **BEDEVILED: A SHADOW HISTORY OF DEMONS IN SCIENCE** by Jimena Canales [Princeton University Press, 9780691175324]

How scientists through the ages have conducted thought experiments using imaginary entities—demons—to test the laws of nature and push the frontiers of what is possible

Science may be known for banishing the demons of superstition from the modern world. Yet just as the demon-haunted world was being exorcized by the enlightening power of reason, a new kind of demon mischievously materialized in the scientific imagination itself. Scientists began to employ hypothetical beings to perform certain roles in thought experiments—experiments that can only be done in the imagination—and these impish assistants helped scientists achieve major breakthroughs that pushed forward the frontiers of science and technology.

Spanning four centuries of discovery—from René Descartes, whose demon could hijack sensorial reality, to James Clerk Maxwell, whose molecular-sized demon deftly broke the second law of thermodynamics, to Darwin, Einstein, Feynman, and beyond—Jimena Canales tells a shadow history of science and the demons that bedevil it. She reveals how the greatest scientific thinkers used demons to explore problems, test the limits of what is possible, and better understand nature. Their imaginary familiars helped unlock the secrets of entropy, heredity, relativity, quantum mechanics, and other scientific wonders—and continue to inspire breakthroughs in the realms of computer science, artificial intelligence, and economics today.

The world may no longer be haunted as it once was, but the demons of the scientific imagination are alive and well, continuing to play a vital role in scientists' efforts to explore the unknown and make the impossible real.

### **Review**

"A brilliant, challenging overview of the myth-driven scientific endeavors that transform human understandings of the world." — *Foreword Reviews*

"The workings of powerful computers, the processes of evolution, the market forces that drive the global economy. To conceptualize such unseen forces, researchers have long invoked thought experiments involving demons, devils, golems or genies . . . Canales has given us a glimpse into this haunted realm."---**Ramin Skibba, *Nature***

"Thought-provoking and highly readable . . . A welcome contribution to the philosophy of scientific discovery that deserves further scholarly attention."---**Jan G. Michel, *Science***



## Introduction

1. Descartes's Evil Genius
2. Laplace's Intelligence
3. Maxwell's Demon
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The history of demons permits us to see something that most social or political histories miss: the arch of modern science and technology being raised across the world. Science's demons were typically first sought after in places we now count as significant sites of historical transformation. In the Dutch Golden Age, they provided lessons about the limitations of our senses and the power of reason. In Revolutionary France, they gave scientists hope that certain natural laws were ultimately immutable and stable. In Victorian England, they showed a growing number of practitioners how to cope with industrialization. Demons played key roles in Continental Europe during World War I, in Britain and America during World War II, and in a handful of American universities during the Cold War. By the end of the millennium, enterprises where they were studied were truly global, with research taking place in select laboratories from Helsinki to Tokyo. These studies were central to the development of mechanics, thermodynamics, relativity, quantum mechanics, and cosmology. The study of demons then spread to the life sciences, where they were seen as providing the necessary oomph that jump-started life itself from its lowly origins in brute matter. They then played key roles in evolutionary biology, molecular biology, and neuroscience. Eventually, they left the desk of theoretical physicists and the laboratory benches of experimentalists to affect economic theory and monetary policy.

Not every fork is a trident, nor every bowl a cauldron. Many technologies are considered magical and fantastical without being thought of as demonic. Some celebrated thought experiments do not feature demons at all. Most descriptions where one aspect of science or technology is seen as demonic typically stick only for a short period of time before being dropped and transferred promiscuously to describe something else entirely. It is only when research is new, innovative, mysterious, and potentially transformative across broad swaths of culture and society that it is described thusly. In the case of epoch-making, world-altering technologies, we are hard-pressed to find examples that have *not* been described as demonic, in one way or another, at one time or another.

## Imagination

Our imagination works wonders, and many scholars have dedicated themselves to studying it. Yet its role in science is often assumed to be secondary. It is traditionally considered to be a "private art," too unruly to study, off limits to rational inquiry, inchoate, slippery, obscure, and perhaps even

unrecoverably unconscious.' While scholarship on thought experiments has grown in recent years, most scholars still consider them to be lesser than, or essentially distinct from, the "real" deal experiments performed in laboratories and research centers.' The role of the imagination in science continues to be portrayed as an inconvenient id hiding behind science's ego, as something that takes place primarily outside of the lab and slyly and occasionally sneaks in, as an embarrassing sibling or bastard child of the arts and the humanities showing up uninvited.' But its power does not stop when scientists enter the lab or write down their equations. The entire enterprise of science—from theory to experiment to public communication thoroughly permeated with our imagination. When we think, reason, and make decisions, we simultaneously think ahead, far and beyond.

From a distance, we can see just how much our imagination shapes technology. The great writer Victor Hugo excelled in seeing connections between the technologies of his era and imaginary creatures of yesteryear. He asked his reader to consider how steamboats had tamed the oceans much as Hercules had tamed the Hydra, how locomotives appeared to breathe fire like dragons, and how hot-air balloons were much like the griffins once imagined to roam through the air. "We have tamed the hydra, and he is called the steamer," he wrote in *Les Misérables* (1862), before continuing: "We have tamed the dragon, and he is called locomotive; we are on the point of taming the griffin, we have him already, and he is called the balloon." He envisioned future technologies as being shaped by these age-old myths. "The day when this Promethean work shall be finished," he continued, "when man shall have definitely harnessed to his will the triple chimera of the ancients, he will be the master of the water, the fire, and the air.

Castles in the sky are rarely empty. A beautiful princess may be trapped in a tower, a hunchback may live in the bell tower, or a troll may be asleep under the bridge. Our imagination is almost limitless, but it is not infinitely so. "Even in the fairytale," the philosopher Ernst Bloch reminds us, "not everything runs smoothly." Imaginary creatures cannot randomly break any and all norms and laws. They must stay in character. They cannot just go any which way and act in any way they please. Creatures of our imagination lead us into certain prescribed futures. Our fate might change if we choose to enter the dungeon, peer under the bridge, sleep in the princess's bed, climb the high tower, or summon a demon.

Not all imaginary creatures have been equally useful to science. Demons are by far the most common creature that populates the modern scientific imagination. References to them vastly outnumber allusions to monsters, and what of ghosts, werewolves, zombies, fairies, witches, unicorns, elves, giants, dragons, sirens, basilisks, hippogriffs, dracs, exotica, and so many others. Like the others, they too are representatives of universal archetypes, symbolic figures who help us express universal feelings, such as dread and fear, that are prevalent across history and culture. Yet to understand the development of science and technology, it is necessary to distinguish them from other imaginary creatures more carefully. Demons' particular ancient lineage makes them valuable for thinking about the natural world. They cannot be placed in the same basket as any other creatures. For example, while unicorns have a recent use among venture capitalists to designate unusually successful startups, they are rarely mentioned in the technical literature of science. Elves and giants, which are mostly creations of the pre-Christian mythology of the Norse and other Germanic tribes, are sometimes invoked by scientists to describe what the world looks like at different scales. Their use in technical science literature, however, is sparse. The same can be said of vampires, which are mostly of nineteenth-century eastern European origin, or of the ghouls and goblins of European folklore. Although the general category of the monstrous was very important for the development of science during medieval times, its role in modern

scientific practices is minor. None of these creatures feature as prominently in modern science as demons.

## A Demon-Free World

If it is unsurprising to see techno-science's critics highlight its demonic qualities, it is even less surprising to see that techno-science's advocates think about demons and the imagination differently. Science is often portrayed as a weapon against all sorts of pseudoscientific and superstitious beliefs that have been peddled by quacks or impostors and fanned by the forces of religion and superstition. Carl Sagan, famed cosmologist and popular science author, celebrated science for just this reason. His best-selling book *The Demon-Haunted World* (1996) described the scientific method as "the fine art of baloney detection" that permitted scientists to brush away irrational beliefs and other falsehoods from this world.

Sagan was right. When the unreal suddenly appears to be real—or worse, when real and unreal appear to blur—our imagination can be tempered by putting it to the test. The laws of nature provide us with constraints we can apply to check our beliefs and corral our runaway imaginations. They hold us back. As tough as brick and mortar, the laws of nature limit our imaginings and force our most audacious plans to fall in line with practical realities. Experiments can help. If you think you have seen a demon, you better think twice. Were you agitated, delusional, or inebriated? If that impression is not dispelled after ruling out mental causes that might have fooled you into thinking you saw a demon, you can create an experiment to rule out other causes. Turn on the lights. Check the window. Look for suspicious footprints. Prepare to catch the culprit during a future visit. Spread flour on the floor of your room to see if anyone has tiptoed in. If you find no evidence ever again, then it is extremely unlikely that a bipedal being was the culprit.

Throughout the history of civilization, we have developed clear ways of testing our beliefs. By varying conditions to eliminate false hypotheses, sensible folk act just like scientists, using experimental techniques to get to the bottom of things and arrive at the truth. The trial-and-error reasoning that characterizes sound, rational thinking has been tremendously effective at eliminating a host of hypothetical beings whose existence is thus proven to be so improbable that we might as well scratch them off the list of things to search for. A scientist brandishing a telescope or microscope, holding a test tube or swan flask, or analyzing a petri dish, all to eliminate false hypotheses, is acting much like a valiant knight slaying a dragon or a demon.

Yet it is not so simple. Scientists routinely look for new particles, forces, materials, states of nature, laws, and new combinations thereof. Enthralled by the incredible and unbelievable, they set off on voyages of discovery. Among themselves, they often describe their enterprise as a search for demons that are not yet completely understood or eliminated by current experiments. "If we knew beforehand what we'd find, it would be unnecessary to go," admitted Sagan. "Surprises—even some of mythic proportions—are possible, maybe even likely," he concluded. How can it be that scientific laws characterized by certainty, precision, and finality are improved upon, refined, and sometimes even overturned? How does new knowledge arise from determinate laws?

A contradiction lies at the heart of science. Our imagination is necessary for obtaining new knowledge. We can celebrate *homo sapiens* for having learned how to plan and calculate as no other species before it, and *homo homofaber* for having used tools better than any of its predecessors, yet we seem to have

forgotten that both were initially motivated by the creator of creativity: *homo imaginor*. The back-and-forth commerce between the real and the imaginary is what permits us to create new knowledge. Scientific laws are sturdy, but they are not fixed, and our imagination is the best tool we have for extending and improving on them. Science grows when researchers push it to new limits, striving to become smarter than the smartest, bigger than the biggest, smaller than the smallest, slower than the slowest, and faster than the fastest.

Scientists know full well that the fact that something has not yet been found does not mean it will never be. To make this point, the philosopher A. J. Ayer felt authorized to invoke the search for the abominable snowman as an example. "One cannot say there are no abominable snowmen," he warned, because complete proof of their inexistence across all time and space is practically impossible to come by. "The fact that one had failed to find any would not prove conclusively that none existed," he concluded. The gates to the Parthenon of the Real remain wide open.

The search for new entities is not blind. Trails run cold. Experienced scientists know where it is most profitable to look, what new discoveries might look like, what properties they might possess, and what they might be capable of. Well-funded research programs focus on topics that are most worthy of investigation. Luck, goes a well-known saying, favors only the prepared." It takes years and years of education and training to become prepared, and hours after hours of study to master all the preexisting literature on a given topic. Before setting out to discover the fundamental laws of nature, scientists equip themselves carefully, much like voyagers sailing off on long journeys. But luck also favors those who dare to imagine. An essential part of the work of all young scientists consists in working hard to sharpen their imagination.

Where is our imagination taking us? The science of today, it is also commonly said, is the technology of tomorrow. Yet the relation of science to technology throughout history has not been so direct or transparent. Scientist themselves are often in the dark about the repercussions of their research. Sometimes the closer they are to the topic the further they are from understanding its broader impact.

The physicist Max Born gave us one of the most honest renditions of scientists' blind spots when it comes to the impact of their research. Reflecting on his own contributions, he admitted that "anyone who would have described the technical applications of this knowledge as we have them today would have been laughed at." The path taken by the development of technology in the last centuries has gone beyond anyone's wildest dreams. During Born's youth, "there were no automobiles, no airplanes, no wireless communication, no radio, no movies, no television, no assembly line, no mass production, and so on.." Scientists working in the fields most relevant to new technologies can be completely blind to the changes about to take place right under their noses. Writers of speculative science fiction who are intent on imagining future worlds miss future developments just as much. a path cannot be traced back to scientists' conscious actions and intentions. How else can we understand the development of technological innovations? The interconnection between science and technology is so complex, and their development throughout history so confounding, that it quickly raises another question. What comes before both?

For centuries, scientists have been transfixed with studying a particular set of demons. By imagining what they can or cannot do, they have figured out some of the most important laws of the universe. When scientists developed the law of energy conservation, they imagined powerful demons that could break it.

When developing the theories of thermodynamics, they imagined tiny demons who fiddled with individual atoms and could overturn entropy. When they developed the theory of relativity, they considered faster-than-light demons that could wreak havoc in the universe in unpredictable ways. When they looked deep into atoms at the level of the quantum, they considered whether demons might be interfering in the bizarre paths taken by photons or electrons that were affecting atomic decay, transmutation, and the release of previously unknown sources of energy. The demons that are still under investigation possess sufficiently credible characteristics that experts continue to consider how and if they might pass for real.

The jury is still out when it comes to some of the fundamental questions associated with these strange creatures. The most die-hard demons—those that have survived centuries of investigation—have so far stumped the cleverest elimination methods of resourceful researchers. Weak and clumsy demons have been culled from the batch, but strong and nimble ones slip like lucky fish through the holes of the most up-to-date experimental techniques. As science helps us sift illusions and irrational beliefs from the real laws of nature, scientists' search lists have grown as they explain what nature can do, where its limits lie, and how its boundaries might be pushed. The nature of logic, virtual reality, thermodynamics, relativity theory, quantum mechanics, computing, cybernetics, artificial intelligence, information theory, origin-of-life biochemistry, molecular biology and evolution-ary biology, DNA replication and transcription—all have been advanced by reference to demons. The discovery of seemingly unrelated things—molecules, atomic bombs, computers, DNA, neural networks, lines of code, quantum computers—was part of an epic effort to find and understand them.

Modern demons arrived with modern thought, which they made into their comfortable home. In some descriptions, demonkind has deft fingers and sharp eyesight. In others, demons hold photon-emitting torches or flashlights; some of them are capable of forming families, and yet others are described as organized in an army or a society. Some shriek wildly, and others are good-natured and polite. They lurk in a demondom that is often dark, chaotic, and well insulated, as is the inside of a computer. In all of their shapes, forms, and guises, these creatures share one consistent quality: they appear intent on either aiding us in living a good life or preventing us from doing so, an ideal often designated by the Greek term *eudemonia*. It no longer surprises me that the ancient term for "the good life" was made by combining the prefix *eu-*, for "good," with the word *demonia*, for "demons."

What follows is a history of science's demons, some imaginary and some real, some impossible and others less so, and through it a history of the universe *as we have come to know it*, filled with mystery and possibility. <>

## **ON TASK: HOW OUR BRAIN GETS THINGS DONE** by David Badre [Princeton University Press, 9780691175553]

**A look at the extraordinary ways the brain turns thoughts into actions—and how this shapes our everyday lives**

Why is it hard to text and drive at the same time? How do you resist eating that extra piece of cake? Why does staring at a tax form feel mentally exhausting? Why can your child expertly fix the computer

and yet still forget to put on a coat? From making a cup of coffee to buying a house to changing the world around them, humans are uniquely able to execute necessary actions. How do we do it? Or in other words, how do our brains get things done? In **ON TASK**, cognitive neuroscientist David Badre presents the first authoritative introduction to the neuroscience of cognitive control—the remarkable ways that our brains devise sophisticated actions to achieve our goals. We barely notice this routine part of our lives. Yet, cognitive control, also known as executive function, is an astonishing phenomenon that has a profound impact on our well-being.

Drawing on cutting-edge research, vivid clinical case studies, and examples from daily life, Badre sheds light on the evolution and inner workings of cognitive control. He examines issues from multitasking and willpower to habitual errors and bad decision making, as well as what happens as our brains develop in childhood and change as we age—and what happens when cognitive control breaks down. Ultimately, Badre shows that cognitive control affects just about everything we do.

A revelatory look at how billions of neurons collectively translate abstract ideas into concrete plans, *On Task* offers an eye-opening investigation into the brain's critical role in human behavior.

### Review

"How billions of neurons come together to turn thought into action is astounding in itself, but cognitive neuroscientist David Badre takes this to new levels in his book."---**Amy Barrett, *BBC Science Focus Magazine***

"Finalist for the PROSE Award in Popular Science and Mathematics, Association of American Publishers"

"Getting things done is essential to success in life. **ON TASK** provides a highly entertaining and informative look into how the brain accomplishes this crucial feat. Expertly combining startling observations of patients with neurological disorders, breakthrough findings from cutting-edge neuroimaging techniques, and insightful accounts of everyday actions, David Badre paints a compelling picture of the nature and origins of cognitive control."—**Daniel L. Schacter, Harvard University and author of *The Seven Sins of Memory***

"Nobody has thought harder about how the brain gets things done than David Badre. In **ON TASK**, he moves from early studies of brain damage to modern neuroscience, from childhood to old age, and from human evolution and genetics to the demands of today's electronic world. This authoritative, sweeping, and marvelously accessible book is a great introduction to the questions, insights, and puzzles of modern scientific thinking."—**John Duncan, author of *How Intelligence Happens***

"In this engaging and authoritative book, David Badre introduces a critical but unfamiliar aspect of cognitive psychology, affording readers a new perspective on human decision making and behavior."—**Matthew Botvinick, Google DeepMind and University College London**

"This highly inspiring and masterful book provides historical and contemporary insights into the most fascinating of brain functions. With a welcoming narrative style, **ON TASK** is key reading not only for

those of us interested in how we master our animal base, but for anyone curious about the generative wonders and responsibilities that come with natural intelligence."—**Roshan Cools, Radboud University**

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## What Lies in the Gap between Knowledge and Action?

There is a lot of mystery in a cup of coffee—not just in the molecular structure of the drink or in the chemical interactions needed for that morning fix or even in the origin of those D-grade beans, though each these surely contains mysteries in its own right. A cup of coffee is mysterious because scientists don't really understand how it got there. Someone made the coffee, yes, but we still don't have a satisfying explanation of how that person's brain successfully orchestrated the steps needed to make that coffee. When we set a goal, like making coffee, how does our brain plan and execute the particular actions we take to achieve. In other words, how do we get things done?

Questions like these fascinate me because they lie close to the heart of what it means to be human. Our species has a uniquely powerful capacity to think, plan, and act in productive, often ingenious, ways. Moreover, our mental apparatus for doing things is somehow general purpose; that is, we are able to get things done even if we have never been in that exact situation with that exact goal before. This ability to get things done drives our common notions of intelligence and personality. We hold in high esteem those who achieve ambitious goals, and we pity those who struggle to achieve any. Yet, the exceptional achievements of the Olympic athlete or the brilliant mathematician are not really what this book is about. This book is about that cup of coffee. It is about what you, the reader, did today. Because what you accomplish on your most unremarkable day, no other species can rival, and no robot yet built can emulate. And how you did it remains an enduring mystery that science has only started to unravel.

To illustrate, let's consider what you might have done this morning. The very first thing you do is decide that your plan to wake up at 5:30 a.m. for a jog was a bit ambitious, so you hit the snooze button on your smartphone. After doing that a couple more times, you finally get up and walk to the kitchen to prepare a cup of coffee, perhaps thinking about that meeting you'll have later as you walk. You end up in the kitchen on autopilot. Before starting your familiar coffee-making routine, you throw a bagel in the toaster. All at once, you remember your intention to email your sister. You are thinking of buying a house, and you have been meaning to ask her if her mortgage broker was any good. You make a mental

note to send that email at your next opportunity. Or maybe you are the sort of person who stops whatever you are doing to pull out your phone and send your message. You know if you don't send it now, you won't remember later. When your coffee is done brewing, you turn to locate a clean mug and then also grab a plate for the bagel while you are at the cabinet. You decide to skip the sugar in your coffee today; surely that makes up for the jog you missed. You hear shouting and your children running down the hall toward you arguing loudly. As you watch the door and await the oncoming storm, your fingers idly nudge your coffee mug away from the counter's edge.

Our routine mental life is simply a marvel of goal management. Catch us at any given moment, and our head is bustling with goals, plans, strategies, and tactics. Goals are coming and going throughout our waking life, and often more than one at a time. Our goals can range from the abstract and open-ended, like buying a house, to the immediate and trifling, like looking for the cream. We frequently reevaluate our goals based on changing circumstances, desires, or maybe an estimate of our own limitations (will we remember to send that email later?). Some goals intrude unpredictably or unwanted. For example, no one plans to wash a mustard stain out of their shirt but we can make room. It is fair to say that the course and tenor of everyday human life is largely defined by our goals and the various actions we undertake to achieve them.

The human brain has the remarkable ability to manage the buzz and hum of all these goals, in order to plan and execute efficient courses of action. Indeed, our brains are so good at this that most of us view the routine of everyday life as just that: routine. No one ever produced a summer blockbuster about a typical morning making coffee. We mostly take our ability to get things done for granted and only notice it on those rare occasions when we struggle or fail. Yet, this ability is actually quite singular and marvelous, and also, unfortunately, quite fragile.

The brain requires its own elaborate class of neural mechanisms devoted to generating plans, keeping track of them, and influencing a cascade of brain states that can link our goals with the correct actions. Scientists refer to these mechanisms and the processes they support as cognitive control or executive function. Though there are some differences in usage and sense between these terms, they generally refer to the same class of mental function. For consistency, I will use the term cognitive control, only because this is the term currently employed by most cognitive neuroscientists, but I am not distinguishing between these labels.

Regardless of what label it goes by, however, cognitive control has been remarkably difficult to define for scientists and lay people alike. As we will see, some of its slipperiness results from our lack of intuition about cognitive control the way we might have about a memory, a percept, or a movement. Rather, cognitive control processes live in the murky spaces between knowledge and action, influencing the translation from the first to the second while not being either one. Yet, cognitive control is a real class of function, separate from knowledge and action, and is supported by its own systems in the brain. Some of the best evidence we have for this comes from the cases of people who have lost cognitive control function owing to brain disease or disorder. In observing these patients we recognize just how devastating the loss of cognitive control can be to the routine course of our lives and even to our image of ourselves as effective agents in our world.

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The problem of cognitive control is one of bridging the gap from knowledge to action in a complex world. With this problem of cognitive control more clearly before us, in the remainder of the book we will consider the mechanisms by which the brain might solve it. Cognitive and brain sciences in the last several years have provided us with a number of important clues to these mechanisms. We will discuss these discoveries with an eye to both the power and the limits of current evidence and theory.

In the first part of the book, we will lay the theoretical foundation for understanding cognitive control function. We will first consider the evolutionary origins of cognitive control in the mind and brain, with a focus on the emergence in our ancestors of a capacity for detailed, hypothetical future thinking and compositional action planning. Then, we will delve under the hood and take a close look at the nuts and bolts of cognitive control. We will introduce the cognitive and neural mechanisms at the basis of cognitive control function, and we will then consider how they help us to resist impulses, avoid errors, and choose the correct courses of action. We will also see how the brain has elaborated these basic mechanisms to handle complex tasks that are structured hierarchically and change over time and place.

Equipped with this theoretical background, in the latter half of the book we will consider the many facets of cognitive control in our everyday functioning. We will see not only that we are bad at multitasking but why we are bad at it. We will consider the problem of inhibition, or stopping ourselves from doing unwanted actions or thinking unwanted thoughts. We will explore the close relationship of motivation and cognitive control and will see how control systems not only help us achieve the ends we want but also balance them against the means we don't like. We will see how control makes our memories work for us. And, finally, we will consider how the mechanisms of control change over our lifespan, in childhood and through adulthood to old age.

Along the way, we will gain insight into the reasons we do the kinds of things we do. We will learn about ways that our control systems fail and ways that we might be able to make them better. We will introduce some concepts about the human mind and brain that might surprise you while also dispelling some other widely held, but incorrect, beliefs. Overall, we will build an overarching account of how we link thought and action in our everyday lives.

Finally, I feel obliged to caution the reader that these are challenging goals. There is presently no accepted, unified theory of cognitive control that addresses all the challenges we have discussed so far. This includes the theoretical ideas that will frame the topics in the rest of this book. To be frank, it is very likely that you can find someone who disagrees with just about everything I write in the following pages. Some ideas still await enough data to be fully supported, while others have seen conflicting evidence. Don't despair, however; this uncertainty and debate are the norm for a healthy science. And it is worthwhile taking this hard problem on in a unified way, despite its challenges, because the mystery of cognitive control, of that cup of coffee, is important to solve. As we have seen, cognitive control influences the very flow and enterprise of our lives. So, while trying to understand it better we might also learn something about ourselves along the way. <>

## **A RESEARCH AGENDA FOR SOCIAL WELLBEING** by Neil Thin [Elgar Research Agendas, Edward Elgar Publishers, 9781788976459]

Elgar Research Agendas outline the future of research in a given area. Leading scholars are given the space to explore their subject in provocative ways, and map out the potential directions of travel. They are relevant but also visionary.

This **A RESEARCH AGENDA FOR SOCIAL WELLBEING** introduces scholars and planners to the importance of a 'wellbeing lens' for the study and promotion of social flourishing. It demonstrates the importance of wellbeing as a public good, not just a property of individuals.

Synthesising wellbeing research from multiple disciplines, including sociology, public health, urban and social planning, moral philosophy and development studies, chapters illustrate how the wellbeing lens promotes positivity, understanding of a variety of viewpoints and systematic appreciation of lives in their social contexts. Encouraging appreciative learning and aspirational planning, Neil Thin looks beyond the implicit 'OK' line of minimal decent standards in order to appreciate and promote moral progress.

As an illuminating summary of the field, offering new avenues for employing social wellbeing research across multiple disciplines, this book will be key reading for scholars and students of sociology, development studies and anthropology. It will also benefit practitioners, such as planners, evaluators and social workers in need of practical insights into social wellbeing issues.

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All humans have an interest in social wellbeing. In order to use reason and empathy to good effect, it helps to appreciate that the social dimensions of human lives are more than just important contextual factors. Human flourishing is to a large extent comprised of relationships, cultural processes, and institutions — not merely influenced by these. Wellbeing must therefore be understood as a public

good. It happens not only at individual but at collective levels. We 'live well' not just in our minds and our bodies, but in our relationships, in our institutions, and in our cultural heritage.

So, if we want to make a benign difference in the human world, we must consider how to pay more explicit and evaluative attention to positive social qualities with a view to improving them. And it is the assumption of this book that we ought to do so aspirationally, aiming not just for a 'decent society' or a 'just society' (as described by the vocabulary of sociology) but for a really wonderful society, one that we actively love and cherish.

For social researchers and social activists or planners, this means a radical shift of attention from social pathologies to social goods. For psychologists and wellbeing promoters, it means a shift from individual to societal-level analysis. And since social qualities are elusive and subjectively experienced, this also means a shift towards intelligently nuanced appraisal of social goods, and away from the 'tyranny of numbers'. Everyone has some contribution to make towards better understanding and appreciation of social goods. We can't sit back and rely on statistical experts who put numbers on social processes and produce persuasive tables and graphics, but don't necessarily have a good grasp of the significance or value of the phenomena they are counting.

As I drafted this manuscript before the 2020 global coronavirus pandemic, I confidently opened by arguing that we can afford to shift more of our attention to social wellbeing because we live in an era of unprecedented prosperity, longevity safety, freedom, and opportunity. I had no qualms about arguing strongly in favour of aspirational social planning at all levels from local to global, collectively grasping the new opportunities opened up by global prosperity. Although I trust those appreciative and optimistic claims will survive the pandemic, it may sadly be the case that by the time you read this book many more people worldwide will have been forced back into remedial mode, focusing on survival and basic needs rather than on more positive aspects of the good life. Still, as billions of people rethink and reshape their lives and livelihoods, the current new era of disruption arguably gives us even more compelling reasons to discuss, research, and promote social wellbeing. Almost everywhere in the world, people have been obliged to undertake experiments in 'social distancing' and self-isolation, which in turn have prompted new appreciation of the power of human ingenuity to enable us to engage with and look after one another in new ways. Since the late 20th century, many people had argued that modern societies had ended up unintentionally cultivating narcissism, 'selfie culture', and new forms of mental fragility. Perhaps many people will benefit from these harsh reminders of the importance of social connection and ego transcendence.

The purpose of this book is to help and persuade people who work in 'social' (including 'cultural') disciplines to pay more attention to wellbeing, while also helping 'wellbeing' (or 'happiness') disciplines to shift some of their attention from individual to social levels. 'Social wellbeing' here means both individual-level experience of having good relationships with other people and with society in general, and the societal-level qualities - the 'social goods' - that we collectively have reason to value. I invite you to consider whether we can clarify our thinking about personal wellbeing (the good life) and social qualities (the good society), by recognising that society is an intrinsic part of our wellbeing, not merely an environment that may help or hinder us.

Part I provides a set of simple analytical tools and perspectives for talking and thinking more clearly about social wellbeing and progress. The 'wellbeing lens' is recommended as a way of learning and

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planning that promotes positivity, appreciative empathy, and holistic or integrative approaches to wellbeing and progress. The 'OK line' is suggested as a reference point for considering balances and complementarities between 'pathological/remedial' approaches (focused on what is wrong with people) and 'appreciative/aspirational' approaches (emphasizing what goes right).

Part II focuses on a theme that runs throughout the book - the idea that deliberate appreciation - a key dimension of living well - can and should also be cultivated in scholarship and more generally in our approaches to learning about the world around us. It explores the potential of 'appreciative learning' (everyday learning and research orientations) designed to improve our understanding and celebration of social goods. Just as the appreciation of food ought to be about more than food safety and basic nutrition, so the appreciation of society can become more than the avoidance of social pathologies and basic social security. And if we can afford to give children art appreciation and music appreciation classes, we can surely afford to help them learn the appreciation of social goods like love, trust, and conviviality.

Part III looks at how 'aspirational social planning can shift attention from pathologies to the cultivation of social goods. Defensive and remedial concerns will of course continue to have moral precedence, especially in poorer and more unstable parts of the world. But we can and should also plan in ways that promote ultimate social goods like kindness, laughter, fun, and collaborative creativity.

Parts II and III set out analytical approaches and examples of scholarly practice in 'appreciative learning' and 'aspirational social planning' respectively. Though far from comprehensive, they are intended to give readers a good sense of the rich variety of cross-disciplinary collaboration that is already happening under a 'wellbeing' rubric. Readers intending to remain mainly with academic institutions will be more interested in Part II, while Part III will have more appeal for planners and practitioners who are already trying to contribute towards social wellbeing. Ideally, though, the concept of 'appreciative learning' is always linked with recognition that by explicitly focusing on things that go right with society, we can strengthen our collective ability to deliberately promote social goods.

Though this is aimed primarily at early career scholars who are hoping to make social dimensions of wellbeing salient in their work, all researchers and planners at all levels of experience can improve their understanding of how a wellbeing lens helps us promote and strengthen synergies between personal wellbeing and social goods. This should make social research more appreciative, and make social ethics and planning more positive, empathic and aspirational. It should also help introduce more socially realistic and prosocial approaches among those who already research or promote personal wellbeing.

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## Bibliography

### **Covid-19 Conspiracy Theories: QAnon, 5G, the New World Order and Other Viral Ideas**

by John Bodner, Wendy Welch, Ian Brodie, Anna Muldoon, Donald Leech and Ashley Marshall, foreword by Anna Merlan [McFarland, 9781476684673]

How folkloric knowledge processes become exaggerated and facilitated through relatively new digital social media to exasperate the pandemic. An important foray into confluence folklore and public health.

As the novel coronavirus (Covid-19) spread around the world, so did theories, stories, and conspiracy beliefs about it. These theories infected communities from the halls of Congress to Facebook groups, spreading quickly in newspapers, on various social media and between friends. They spurred debate about the origins, treatment options and responses to the virus, creating distrust towards public health workers and suspicion of vaccines. This book examines the most popular Covid-19 theories, connecting current conspiracy beliefs to long-standing fears and urban legends. By examining the vehicles and mechanisms of Covid-19 conspiracy, readers can better understand how theories spread and how to respond to misinformation. <>

**[The Mission: A True Story](#)** by David W Brown [Custom House, 9780062654427 Hardcover; 9780062655875 E-Book]

How a Disciple of Carl Sagan, an Ex-Motocross Racer, a Texas Tea Party Congressman, the World's Worst Typewriter Saleswoman, California Mountain People, and an Anonymous NASA Functionary Went to War with Mars, Survived an Insurgency at Saturn, Traded Blows with Washington, and Stole a Ride on an Alabama Moon Rocket to Send a Space Robot to Jupiter in Search of the Second Garden of Eden at the Bottom of an Alien Ocean Inside of an Ice World Called Europa (A True Story)

Most Americans have probably never heard of Europa, one of the small moons circling Jupiter. Thanks to data sent back by the Galileo satellite in the 1990s, we know that it has a large saltwater ocean bubbling with thermal activity underneath a miles-thick layer of ice. Since these are very much like the conditions that scientists believe led to the appearance of life on Earth, researchers have been yearning to undertake a closer investigation of Europa and Jupiter's three other icy moons. <>

**[The Oxford Handbook of Egyptology](#)** edited by Ian Shaw and Elizabeth Bloxam [Oxford Handbooks, Oxford University Press, 9780199271870]

**[The Oxford Handbook of Egyptology](#)** presents a series of articles by colleagues working across the many archaeological, philological and cultural subdisciplines within the study of ancient Egypt from prehistory through to the end of the Roman Period. The volume seeks to place Egyptology within its theoretical, methodological, and historical contexts, both indicating how the subject has evolved and discussing its distinctive contemporary problems, issues and potential. Transcending conventional boundaries between archaeological and ancient textual analysis, it stresses the need for Egyptology to seek multidisciplinary methods and broader collaborations if it is to remain contemporary and relevant. It therefore serves as a reference work not only for those working within the discipline, but also as a gateway into Egyptology for archaeologists, anthropologists, sociologists and linguists. The book is organized into ten parts, the first of which examines the many different historical and geographical perspectives that have influenced the development and current characteristics of the discipline. Part II addresses the various environmental aspects of the subject: landscapes, climate, flora, fauna and the mineral world. Part III considers a variety of practical aspects of the ways in which Egyptologists survey, characterize and manage landscapes. Part IV discusses materials and technology, from domestic architecture and artefacts through to religious and funerary items. Part V deals with Egypt's relations with neighbouring regions and peoples, while Part VI explores the sources and interpretive frameworks that characterize different phases of ancient Egyptian history. Part VII is concerned with textual and iconographic approaches to Egyptian culture, and Part VIII comprises discussions of the key aspects of ancient Egyptian scripts and philology. Part IX presents summaries of the current state of the subject in

relation to a variety of textual genres, from letters and autobiographies to socio-economic, magical and mathematical texts. The final section covers different aspects of museology and conservation. <>

**[Aztec Religion and Art of Writing: Investigating Embodied Meaning, Indigenous Semiotics, and the Nahua Sense of Reality](#)** by Isabel Laack [Numen Book, Brill, 9789004391451]

In her groundbreaking investigation from the perspective of the aesthetics of religion, Isabel Laack explores the religion and art of writing of the pre-Hispanic Aztecs of Mexico. Inspired by postcolonial approaches, she reveals Eurocentric biases in academic representations of Aztec cosmology, ontology, epistemology, ritual, aesthetics, and the writing system to provide a powerful interpretation of the Nahua sense of reality.

Laack transcends the concept of "sacred scripture" traditionally employed in religions studies in order to reconstruct the Indigenous semiotic theory and to reveal how Aztec pictography can express complex aspects of embodied meaning. Her study offers an innovative approach to nonphonographic semiotic systems, as created in many world cultures, and expands our understanding of human recorded visual communication. <>

**[Apperception and Self-Consciousness in Kant and German Idealism](#)** by Dennis Schulting [Bloomsbury Academic, 9781350151390]

In **[Apperception and Self-Consciousness in Kant and German Idealism](#)**, Dennis Schulting examines the themes of reflexivity, self-consciousness, representation and apperception in the philosophy of Immanuel Kant and German Idealism more widely. Central to Schulting's argument is the claim that all of human experience is irreversibly self-referential and that this is part of a self-reflexivity, or what philosophers call transcendental apperception, a Kantian insight that was first apparent in the work of Christian Wolff and came to inform all of German Idealism. <>

**[Emotion and Virtue](#)** by Gopal Sreenivasan [Princeton University Press, 978-0691134550]

A novel approach to the crucial role emotion plays in virtuous action

What must a person be like to possess a virtue in full measure? What sort of psychological constitution does one need to be an exemplar of compassion, say, or of courage? Focusing on these two examples, *Emotion and Virtue* ingeniously argues that certain emotion traits play an indispensable role in virtue. With exemplars of compassion, for instance, this role is played by a modified sympathy trait, which is central to enabling these exemplars to be reliably correct judges of the compassionate thing to do in various practical situations. Indeed, according to Gopal Sreenivasan, the virtue of compassion is, in a sense, a modified sympathy trait, just as courage is a modified fear trait.

While he upholds the traditional definition of virtue as a species of character trait, Sreenivasan discards other traditional precepts. For example, he rejects the unity of the virtues and raises new questions about when virtue should be taught. Unlike orthodox virtue ethics, moreover, his account does not aspire to rival consequentialism and deontology. Instead Sreenivasan repudiates the ambitions of virtue imperialism. <>

**[Reading David Hume's "Of the Standard of Taste"](#)** edited by Babette Babich [De Gruyter, 9783110585346]

This collection of reading and essays on the *Standard of Taste* offers a much needed resource for students and scholars of philosophical aesthetics, political reflection, value and judgments, economics, and art. The authors include experts in the philosophy of art, aesthetics, history of philosophy as well as the history of science. This much needed volume on David Hume will enrich scholars across all levels of university study and research. <>

**[After Heidegger?](#)** edited by Richard Polt and Greg Fried [New Heidegger Research, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 9781786604859]

This unique volume collects more than 30 new essays by prominent scholars on what remains philosophically provocative in Heidegger's thought. His writings continue to invite analysis and application — and, particularly in the light of his political affiliations, they must also be critiqued. Philosophy today takes place after Heidegger in that his views should not be accepted naively, and there are new issues that he did not address — but also in that we continue to think in the wake of important questions that he raised. <>

**[Routledge Handbook of Democracy and Security](#)** edited by Leonard Weinberg, Elizabeth Francis, Eliot Assoudeh [Routledge, 9781138799981]

This handbook explores how democracies around the world seek to balance democratic values with the requirement to protect their citizens from the threat of politically motivated violence.

Over the past few decades, the majority of the world's democracies have had to confront serious security threats, and in many instances these challenges have not come from rival states but from violent groups. This volume offers readers an overview of how some democracies have responded to such threats. It examines the extent to which authorities have felt compelled to modify laws to evade what would ordinarily be regarded as protected rights, such as personal privacy, freedom of movement and freedom of speech. Grounded in historical analysis, each of the sections addresses past and emerging security threats; legal and legislative responses to them; successful and unsuccessful efforts to reconcile democracy and security; and a range of theoretical questions. The case studies provided vary in terms of the durability of their democratic systems, level of economic development and the severity of the threats with which they have been confronted. <>

**[Authoritarianism: Constitutional Perspectives](#)** by Gunter Frankenberg [Edward Elgar Publishers, 9781800372719]

In this thought-provoking book, Günter Frankenberg explores why authoritarian leaders create new constitutions, or revise old ones. Through a profound analysis of authoritarian constitutions as phenomena in their own right, Frankenberg reveals their purposes, the audiences they seek to address and investigates the ways in which they fit into the broader context of autocracies.

Frankenberg outlines the essential features of authoritarianism through a discussion of a variety of constitutional projects in authoritarian settings: the executive style of opportunist, informal governing, political power as private property, participation as complicity, and the cult of immediacy that is geared towards fantasies of a community of the followers and their leader. He also takes a comparative approach to authoritarian constitutions, drawing out the relationships between them, as well as providing a critique of the discourse around populism and authoritarianism. <>

**[Horrible White People: Gender, Genre, and Television's Precarious Whiteness](#)** by Taylor Nygaard and Jorie Lagerwey [NYU Press, 9781479885459]

Examines the bleak television comedies that illustrate the obsession of the white left with its own anxiety and suffering

At the same time that right-wing political figures like Donald Trump were elected and reactionary socio-economic policies like Brexit were voted into law, representations of bleakly comic white fragility spread across television screens. American and British programming that featured the abjection of young, middle-class, liberal white people—such as *Broad City*, *Casual*, *You're the Worst*, *Catastrophe*, *Fleabag*, and *Transparent*—proliferated to wide popular acclaim in the 2010s. Taylor Nygaard and Jorie Lagerwey track how these shows of the white left, obsessed with its own anxiety and suffering, are complicit in the rise and maintenance of the far right—particularly in the mobilization, representation, and sustenance of structural white supremacy on television. <>

**[The Disappearance of Butterflies](#)** by Josef H. Reichholf, translated by Gwen Clayton [Polity, 9781509539796]

In the last fifty years our butterfly populations have declined by more than eighty per cent and butterflies are now facing the very real prospect of extinction. It is hard to remember the time when fields and meadows were full of these beautiful, delicate creatures – today we rarely catch a glimpse of the Wild Cherry Sphinx moths, Duke of Burgundy or the even once common Small Tortoiseshell butterflies. The High Brown Fritillary butterfly and the Stout Dart Moth have virtually disappeared.

The eminent entomologist and award-winning author Josef H. Reichholf began studying butterflies in the late 1950s. He brings a lifetime of scientific experience and expertise to bear on one of the great environmental catastrophes of our time. He takes us on a journey into the wonderful world of butterflies - from the small nymphs that emerge from lakes in air bubbles to the trusting purple emperors drunk on toad poison - and immerses us in a world that we are in danger of losing forever. Step by step he explains the science behind this impending ecological disaster, and shows how it is linked to pesticides, over-fertilization and the intensive farming practices of the agribusiness. <>

**[Movement and Time in the Cyberworld: Questioning the Digital Cast of Being](#)** by Michael Eldred [De Gruyter, 978-3110657302]

The cyberworld fast rolling in and impacting every aspect of human living on the globe today presents an enormous challenge to humankind. It is taken up by the media following current events through to all kinds of natural- and social-scientific discourses. Digitized technoscience develops at a breakneck pace in all areas accompanied by sociological analysis. What is missing is a philosophical response genuinely posing the basic ontological question: What is a digital being's peculiar mode of being? The present study offers a digital ontology that analyzes the dissolution of beings into bit-strings, driven by mathematized science. The mathematization of knowledge reaches back to Pythagoras, Plato and Aristotle, and continues with Descartes, Galileo, Newton, Leibniz. Western knowledge from its inception has always been driven by an unbridled will to efficient-causal power over all kinds of movement and change. This historical trajectory culminates in the universal Turing machine that enables efficient, automated, algorithmic control over the movement of digital beings through the cyberworld. The book fills in the ontological foundations underpinning this brave new cyberworld and interrogates them, especially by questioning the millennia-old conception of 1D-linear time. An alternative ontology of movement arises, based on a radically alternative conception of 3D-time. <>

**[Advanced Introduction to Law and Artificial Intelligence](#)** by Dr Woodrow Barfield, Ugo Pagallo [Elgar Advanced Introductions, Edward Elgar Publishing, 9781789905120]

Elgar Advanced Introductions are stimulating and thoughtful introductions to major fields in the social sciences and law, expertly written by the world's leading scholars. Designed to be accessible yet rigorous, they offer concise and lucid surveys of the substantive and policy issues associated with discrete subject areas.

Woodrow Barfield and Ugo Pagallo present a succinct introduction to the legal issues related to the design and use of artificial intelligence (AI). Exploring human rights, constitutional law, data protection, criminal law, tort law, and intellectual property law, they consider the laws of a number of jurisdictions including the US, the European Union, Japan, and China, making reference to case law and statutes. <>

**[Bedeviled: A Shadow History of Demons in Science](#)** by Jimena Canales [Princeton University Press, 9780691175324]

How scientists through the ages have conducted thought experiments using imaginary entities—demons—to test the laws of nature and push the frontiers of what is possible

Science may be known for banishing the demons of superstition from the modern world. Yet just as the demon-haunted world was being exorcized by the enlightening power of reason, a new kind of demon mischievously materialized in the scientific imagination itself. Scientists began to employ hypothetical beings to perform certain roles in thought experiments—experiments that can only be done in the imagination—and these impish assistants helped scientists achieve major breakthroughs that pushed forward the frontiers of science and technology. <>

**[On Task: How Our Brain Gets Things Done](#)** by David Badre [Princeton University Press, 9780691175553]

**A look at the extraordinary ways the brain turns thoughts into actions—and how this shapes our everyday lives**

Why is it hard to text and drive at the same time? How do you resist eating that extra piece of cake? Why does staring at a tax form feel mentally exhausting? Why can your child expertly fix the computer and yet still forget to put on a coat? From making a cup of coffee to buying a house to changing the world around them, humans are uniquely able to execute necessary actions. How do we do it? Or in other words, how do our brains get things done? In **On Task**, cognitive neuroscientist David Badre presents the first authoritative introduction to the neuroscience of cognitive control—the remarkable ways that our brains devise sophisticated actions to achieve our goals. We barely notice this routine part of our lives. Yet, cognitive control, also known as executive function, is an astonishing phenomenon that has a profound impact on our well-being. <>

**[A Research Agenda for Social Wellbeing](#)** by Neil Thin [Elgar Research Agendas, Edward Elgar Publishers, 9781788976459]

Elgar Research Agendas outline the future of research in a given area. Leading scholars are given the space to explore their subject in provocative ways, and map out the potential directions of travel. They are relevant but also visionary.

This **A Research Agenda for Social Wellbeing** introduces scholars and planners to the importance of a 'wellbeing lens' for the study and promotion of social flourishing. It demonstrates the importance of wellbeing as a public good, not just a property of individuals.

Synthesising wellbeing research from multiple disciplines, including sociology, public health, urban and social planning, moral philosophy and development studies, chapters illustrate how the wellbeing lens promotes positivity, understanding of a variety of viewpoints and systematic appreciation of lives in their social contexts. Encouraging appreciative learning and aspirational planning, Neil Thin looks beyond the implicit 'OK' line of minimal decent standards in order to appreciate and promote moral progress. <>

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