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Wordtrade Reviews: Focus on the True Self

Contents: Focus on the True Self

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. <>

HOW TO FOCUS: A MONASTIC GUIDE FOR AN AGE OF DISTRACTION by John Cassian, translated by Jamie Kreiner [Ancient Wisdom for Modern Readers, Princeton University Press, ISBN 9780691208084]

How can you learn to focus like a monk without living like one?

Distraction isn't a new problem. We're also not the first to complain about how hard it is to concentrate. Early Christian monks beat us to it. They had given up everything to focus on God, yet they still struggled to keep the demons of distraction at bay. But rather than surrender to the meandering of their minds, they developed powerful strategies to improve their attention and engagement. **HOW TO FOCUS** is an inviting collection of their strikingly relatable insights and advice—frank, funny, sympathetic, and psychologically sophisticated.

This wisdom is drawn from John Cassian's fifth-century CE Collationes, one of the most influential manuals for monks from late antiquity. The Collationes follow Cassian and his friend Germanus as they travel around Egypt, asking a series of sage monks how they can make their minds stronger. In response, these monks offer a range of techniques for increasing focus, including setting goals, training the body, managing the memory, using mantras, taking breaks, consulting others—and, most of all, being honest about yourself. As Cassian and Germanus eventually realize, we can't escape distraction—but we can learn how to confront it and, eventually, to concentrate.

Featuring an engaging new translation by Jamie Kreiner and the original Latin on facing pages, **HOW TO FOCUS** can help even the least monkish of us to train our attention on what matters most.

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Distraction is not a new problem tied to our technology. It's something that people have struggled with for centuries, even at a time when books counted as newish devices and the main way to glance at the "clock" was to look outside at the sun. We're not the first to complain about how hard it is to concentrate, or even to moralize the issue. Christian monks in the late Roman Empire beat us to it. Their work required intense concentration, which made them all the more aware of how hard it was to master.'

Like many of their contemporaries, monks saw cognition as an activity that both expressed who they were and made them what they were.' Thinking about how to focus therefore amounted to thinking about how to live, as the person one wanted to be. And what monks wanted, in late antiquity, was to dedicate their lives and attention to God and to their ethical obligations within a divinely ordered universe.

The problem was that the mind (like the self) is an inherently slippery thing. John Cassian, whose thoughts about thinking influenced centuries of monks, wrote in the 420s that the mind "gets pushed around by random distractions." It rifles through the past rather than staying fixed on the present. It thinks about dinner when it's supposed to be concentrating on a psalm. It careens haphazardly between stimuli. It falls asleep during the night prayers. It wonders what time it is when it's supposed to be buried in a book.

Many monks in Cassian's day blamed demons for their lapses.' These demons lurked all around them, shooting distracting thoughts at them that could cause serious harm if monks weren't quick to react. Cassian agreed that demons were part of the problem, but he was also sure that

distractedness was a human condition that could be mitigated by disciplining the mind, which involved examining and restructuring the conceptual, emotional, somatic, and social forces that were interlaced with monks' mental activities. A large portion of his Collationes— that is, Consultations, or Conversations, or (as it's usually translated)

The Conferences—is dedicated to helping monks take up that training. As the historian and monk Columba Stewart has noted, "The question of focus is the single most important practical problem Cassian addresses in his monastic theology."4 Although many elements of Cassian's late antique anthropology and cosmology are far from our own concepts of cognition, we share with him an interest in combatting distraction and focusing on the things that matter to us. And what Cassian can offer, as an expert who has both succeeded and failed to focus, is advice that is at once more sympathetic and more sophisticated than what we're used to.

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In its full form, the Collationes consists of twenty-four consultations and around 150,000 words. The excerpts here are drawn from seven consultations and represent less than io percent of the whole—so this translation conveys only a fraction of what Cassian shared with his read-ers.11 But it operates in an undeniably premodern mode: compiling excerpts of treasured texts into abridgements or anthologies was common practice in late antique and medieval book culture. It was a way of drawing on the knowledge and traditions of prior generations while shifting it, like the twist of a kaleidoscope, into something different. Through curation and recombination, the old became new, offering insights that spoke to the questions and preoccupations of different audiences. Cassian's work certainly received this treatment. Compilers set to abridging and excerpting the Collationes not long after Cassian had finished it, and even its enthusiastic monastic readers drew from it choosily. For instance, the abbot Eugippius of Castellum Lucullanum (outside of Naples) drew up a monastic rule in the sixth century that included two snippets of the Collationes, both of which emphasized the importance of keeping the mind attentive for the sake of screening sexual thoughts before they made a monk aroused. So although my selective use of Cassian speaks to contemporary interests, it's also an extension of textual practices that are well over a millennium old."

This translation counterbalances the modern and premodern in an even more basic way, in its effort to bridge fifth-century Latin and twenty-first-century American

English. Cassian and the Christian monks of late antique Egypt developed a cognitive culture that is both relatable and foreign to us today. I wanted this translation

to welcome readers into that world, to make it intelligible and to showcase its shrewd analyses of how minds work." That meant loosening up t he English in a way that highlights the earnestness and tenacity of Cassian's speakers, rather t Ilan replicating the sinuous and nested qualities of his very distinctive Latin and in the process making them sound stilted. At the same time, I also wanted to allow the monks to remain a bit strange—partly because they were quite self-consciously countercultural in their time, and also because their distinctly late antique attitudes can't be fully assimilated into ours."

Cassian himself knew that translations were both insufficient and illuminating. In his consultations with Abba Moses and Abba Isaac, he notes subtle differences between biblical passages as they're rendered in Greek versus Latin: the comparison results in a sharper understanding of issues that the Latin on its own does not quite convey." But this doesn't lead Cassian to conclude that translation is too misleading to be worth the undertaking. After all, the entire project of his Collationes relies on translation. The Egyptian elders whom Germanus and Cassian consulted mostly spoke in Coptic, through a Greek translator for the benefit of their guests; and then Cassian sculpted these sessions into Latin, the native language of his audiences in southern Gaul.

A final point about my translation. When it comes to certain key terms in Cassian's work, I've veered away from lexical choices that are common in English translations but which tend to distort our sense of the late antique text. The usual rendering for vitium, for example, is "vice" — a word that has acquired centuries of doctrinal associations that weren't in play when Cassian was writing. He meant something more like "weakness" or "vulnerability." Likewise virtus is flattened by the English "virtue," because Cassian uses the term to convey the mix of masculinity, strength, and fitness that could help monks stay fixed on their goals. Passio is often

translated as "passion," but the word has its own dogmatic pedigree that effectively downplays the roiling reactions that Cassian was trying to understand and control.

Discretio was not so much "discretion" (in our sense of tact) as it was a technical term for the detective work that monks were supposed to perform on their own thoughts—to determine which ones were good and which ones were dangerous distractions. And puritas cordis, usually expressed in English as "purity of heart," is rendered here as "clarity" or "tranquility of heart" to underscore the psychological slant of Cassian's spirituality. The term was his spin on the concept of apatheia, or freedom from emotional investments and reactionism: this was originally a Stoic ethic that Cassian's teacher Evagrius had made central to monastic practice. But apatheia had become controversial by the time Cassian was writing, and some critics contended that to promote it was to imply that it was possible to control the self without any help from God. So Cassian proposed the heart as a kind of passageway: when the heart was clear and calm and stable, it amounted to an act of complete commitment or love that enabled the mind to stretch out to the divine." These are just a few of the most obvious examples where traditional translations tame the force of the original. The Collationes is an exploratory and experimental text, and I've tried to capture its sense of inquiry here. <>

John Cassian and the Creation of Monastic Subjectivity by Joshua Daniel Schachterle [Studies in Ancient Religion and Culture, Equinox Publishing, ISBN 9781800501485]

John Cassian (360-435 CE) started his monastic career in Bethlehem. He later traveled to the Egyptian desert, living there as a monk, meeting the venerated Desert Fathers, and learning from them for about fifteen years. Much later, he would go to the region of Gaul to help establish a monastery there by writing monastic manuals, the Institutes and the Conferences. These seminal writings represent the first known attempt to bring the idealized monastic traditions from Egypt, long understood to be the cradle of monasticism, to the West.
In his Institutes, Cassian comments that "a monk ought by all means to flee from women and bishops" (Inst. 11.18). This is indeed an odd comment from a monk, apparently casting bishops

as adversaries rather than models for the Christian life. This book argues that Cassian, in both the Institutes and the Conferences, is advocating for a distinct separation between monastics and the institutional Church.

In Cassian's writings and the larger corpus of monastic writings from his era, monks never referred to early Church fathers such as Irenaeus or Tertullian as authorities; instead, they cited quotes and stories exclusively from earlier, venerated monks. In that sense, monastic discourse such as Cassian's formed a closed discursive system, consciously excluding the hierarchical institutional Church. Furthermore, Cassian argues for a separate monastic authority based not on apostolic succession but rather on apostolic praxis, the notion that monastic practices such as prayer and asceticism can be traced back to the primitive church. This study of Cassian's writings is supplemented with Michel Foucault's analysis of the creation of subjects in order to examine Cassian's formation of a specifically Egyptian form of monastic subjectivity for his audience, the monks of Gaul. Foucault's concepts of disciplinary power and pastoral power are also employed to demonstrate the effect Cassian's rhetoric would have upon his direct audience, as well as many other monks throughout history.

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While this is hardly an exhaustive study, I believe my research, as presented in this book, fills a gap in Cassian studies, one that addresses power dynamics in Cassian's writings while also confronting Cassian's history and his antipathy toward the place of bishops and clergy in authority over monastics.

Cassian was a man haunted by a ghost. Since the Alexandrian bishop Theophilus had expelled the more meditative sect of monks like Cassian from the Egyptian desert, he would likely have viewed that form of contemplative, ascetic monasticism—the correct type of monastic practice, in his opinion—as dead, a murdered corpse to which he could not help but cling mournfully. After Cassian's sojourn in Constantinople with John Chrysostom and subsequent travels to Rome and elsewhere, his journey ended in Gaul, a place where according to him, monasticism and its accompanying asceticism were being practiced atrociously.27 It is at this point, when Bishop Castor asked Cassian to write practice manuals for the region's monks, that Cassian saw the opportunity to resurrect, to reincarnate his beloved Egyptian monasticism.28 He would start by embodying this form himself as an example to Gallican monks, showing them correct practice as fulfilled in his own aging, ascetic body. From there, with Cassian's knowledgeable instruction in writing, this embodiment could only spread through the bodies of other monks. Through this training, a stronghold of what Cassian clearly believed to be the proper form of monastic life could proliferate, apart from any meddlesome and destructive influence by priests and bishops who had never been monks or ascetics. Many of these hierarchs did not understand the ins and outs of reforming one's self, of breaking the old self down until nothing remained and then recreating that self according to divine sources only. This book is the story of Cassian's attempt, through his writings, to recreate the heaven on earth he believed he had experienced in the Egyptian desert with his monastic mentors, to reinvigorate the way of life that would truly lead monks to salvation. To make my case, this book will proceed in the following order.

Outline of Chapters

Chapter two establishes the context in which Cassian is writing. I begin with his Egyptian context, the place and time in which he learned how to be a monk from the men he considered masters of the monastic vocation. This includes the backgrounds for Cassian's seminal monastic writings and their sources.

I then skip ahead to the context in which Cassian wrote both the Institutes and the Conferences. This is relevant because while I argue that Cassian is trying to separate the

institution of monasticism from that of the church, it is necessary to formulate a picture of what the institutional church of Gaul was in the early fifth century. This picture includes the turbulent politics of the time in which Rome had lost the province to Germanic invaders and had only reconquered the region a few years before Cassian's arrival. This instability in turn had thrown the elite of Gaul into confusion, making it difficult to know whether it was most beneficial for them to support the various usurpers to the throne or to continue to advocate for Roman control in the region. Such turmoil among the wealthy had, strangely, convinced many wealthy men of Gaul to become monks, believing that if they "stored up treasure in heaven," then heaven would preserve their social rank in the world to come. Finally, we must look at the ways in which Gallican monasticism (and asceticism) differed greatly from that of Egypt, causing Cassian to accuse the Gallican monks of grave errors in their practice and eliciting suggestions, not to say commands, from him in order to right the listing ship of their monastic practice.

Chapter three aims to establish how Cassian's creation of monastic subjectivity creates monks for whom monastic identity is necessarily separate from other parts/roles within the institutional Church. Thus in chapter three, I use Michel Foucault's notion of the creation of subjects to analyze Cassian's formation of a specifically Egyptian form of monastic subjectivity for the Gallican monks. In discussing Foucault, I detail his three modes of subjectification: First, modes of investigation create subjects as objects of knowledge; second, practices and procedures divide subjects both from within, and from other subjects according to standards of norm and deviance; and third, practices and procedures of self-management encourage subjects to transform themselves as subjects in order to meet an ideal. After establishing examples of these three modes from Cassian's own writings, I discuss how Cassian's use of subjectification is geared toward the creation of self-governing monks who, even in total solitude, police themselves. In addition, I argue that Cassian's rhetorical shaping of monastic subjectivity uses three of Foucault's principal modalities of power: disciplinary power, achieved through surveillance and the creation of particular forms of knowledge around monastic and ascetic practice; pastoral power, in which Cassian himself plays

the role of shepherd to the monasteries' flock; and biopower, in which power is exercised through the gathering of data about a population. The interplay and overlap of these three forms of power will then inform my analysis of Cassian's rhetorical aims and methods.

In chapter four I establish that conflicts between the Church and monasteries or individual monks were not simply figments of Cassian's (or my) imagination but rather matters of historical, or at least rhetorical, record which I argue could have easily induced a type of monastic separatism in Cassian's writings. These conflicts include the Origenist Controversy, one manifestation of which resulted in Cassian and his faction being ousted from the monastic community of Scetis in Egypt, frequent attempts by the Church to ordain monks forcefully, due to the monks' overwhelming popularity and authority among laypeople, the extraordinary lengths to which some monks would go to avoid ordination (running away, self-mutilation, purposely ruining their own reputations, etc.), and the Life of Antony, written by a prominent and outspoken bishop, which portrayed Antony as a heresy fighter on the side of bishops versus Antony's own letters which show him to be a contemplative focused on right practice over against right belief. This last analysis will establish that many bishops, aware of the popularity as well as the reputation for holiness and wisdom the monks had among laypeople, attempted in myriad ways to co-opt the lives of these monks, including forcing them to become part of the institutional church and rewriting their histories with a bias toward church hierarchies.

Chapter five will verify that Cassian is advocating for a clear separation between monasticism and the Church. In this chapter, I appeal to evidence from Cassian's writings where he envisions an increasing distance between the spheres of monasticism and the Church. Cassian writes, for example, that monks should "flee from women and bishops;"29 both are a temptation and distraction to the ascetic monk. Lest one think that Cassian has invented this phrase himself and is thus something of a rogue in the monastic world, he prefaces the phrase by noting that it is "an old maxim of the Fathers that is still current." In other words, such sentiments acknowledging the dangers of both women and bishops for monks are both deeply rooted in monastic

tradition and contemporary with Cassian's fifth-century context. Theophilus, bishop of the church of Alexandria, expelled Cassian and his fellow monks from their monastic paradise ostensibly because of particular theological differences, specifically those around the bishop's official decree that God was embodied. However, this also highlighted the comparison between bases of authority, with monastic authority based largely on proper ascetic practice and ecclesial authority based on title and claims of apostolic succession. Cassian also encourages total dependence on the traditions and practices of his monastic predecessors, implicitly excluding other Church fathers and theologians. In addition, he writes that monks should treat their ascetic way of life as the Christian norm—only ascetics are truly living the ideal Christian life. Finally, Cassian and other monastic writings quote only two authoritative sources: Scripture and the sayings/stories of other monks.

To conclude, chapter six will sum up the case I have made, arguing that indeed Cassian's intention was not simply to correct a well-intentioned but ill-informed Gallican monastic practice, but rather to gather the monks of Gaul together to create a correct and separate institution, uncorrupted by the church's whims, both political and theological. I then discuss the implications of such a conclusion (the "so what," if you will). First, had this been executed as Cassian may have intended, it very well may have created a very early "reformation," in which the church would have been split between monastics and clergy. In this scenario, the popularity of monks among lay people might easily have caused the decline of clergy-centered Christianity, causing a complete turnabout in church orthodoxy. Had this occurred, with monasticism's emphasis on ascetic practice, it is safe to say that the wealth of the church might never have accrued in the way it did, quite possibly lessening church political power and influence. <>

Iacopone da Todi: The Power of Mysticism and the Originality of Franciscan Poetry Edited by Matteo Leonardi and Alessandro Vettori [Series: The Medieval Franciscans, Brill Academic Publishing, ISBN 9789004512313]

The first ever collection of essays in English on Iacopone da Todi by a diverse group of international scholars, this book offers a contemporary critical assessment on this medieval Franciscan poet of the thirteenth century.

Combining philological analyses with thematic studies and philosophical and theological interpretations of the original contents and style of Iacopone's poetry, the collection considers a wide range of topics, from music to prayer and performance, mysticism, asceticism, ineffability, Mariology, art, poverty, and the challenges of translation. It is a major contribution to the understanding of Iacopone's laude in the 21st century.

Contributors are Erminia Ardissino, Alvaro Cacciotti, Nicolò Crisafi, Anne-Gaëlle Cuif, Federica Franzè, Alexander J.B. Hampton, Magdalena Maria Kubas, Matteo Leonardi, Brian K. Reynolds, Oana Sălișteanu, Samia Tawwab, Alessandro Vettori, Carlo Zacchetti, and Estelle Zunino.

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Introduction: Inside the Hood of the Mendicant: Iacopone’s Hidden Face by Matteo Leonardi and Alessandro Vettori

A Franciscan friar of the third generation of the Order, Iacopone da Todi (1230–1306) has been and continues to be a controversial figure among scholars of Franciscanism as well as literary critics. The originality of his

religious poetic compositions in the style of laude in his native Umbrian dialect has inspired reactions varying from extremely unfavorable appraisals to enthusiastic acclaim. Although the attribution of some poems has been widely disputed, including the Stabat Mater Dolorosa, one of his most famous hymns, Iaco-pone has gone down in literary history for his genuine style, unembellished language, and the originality of his tones. His contribution to the Italian literary canon was generally antagonized because his production was considered esthetically unappealing. However, some of his most famous laude have been regarded as an original milestone in spiritual writing for their fiery language, their uncompromising mysticism, and their unbridled honesty in the pursuit of salvation as the sole Christian goal. They are now considered seminal for the subsequent development of religious poetry.

The profound spiritual fervor of the 12th century, combined with unprecedented social changes, inspired large groups of lay people from the nascent middle class to reclaim political and cultural power. In the religious sphere this meant the beginning of sacred literature no longer in Latin but in the vernacular, with its most popular expression in paraliturgical contexts such as the laude, later collected in laudesi, or collections of religious poems. This new genre found its most exclusive representative in Iacopone, who made this type of poetry his own, left an indelible mark on it, and gave it a vital impulse for future developments. Iacopone's very original poetic texts will influence the lauda for style, subject matter, vocabulary, and meter, but also for the integration of courtly rhetoric into its sacred semantics, which will have an impact for all future compositions of laude.

It was only in very recent times, however, that Iacopone was finally canonized as one of the main poets of the 13th century. His texts surprise

and astonish readers, they invariably cause passionate discussions, invite radical interpretations, and escape any attempt to be placed into well-defined categories. Despite the two critical editions, one by Franca Brambilla and one by Franco Mancini, numerous philological and interpretive controversies remain open, starting from the ecdotic question and the issue of textual reconstruction that Lino Leonardi has highlighted. Another controversial issue concerns the genre of the poems, which tradition has handed down to us as "laude," but whose definition may be too restrictive, since the poet's complex, ambiguous, and dialectic relation to the secular and sacred lyric of his times needs further clarification and more careful investigation. The poet's unique spiritual sensitivity relates to European mysticism in the Franciscan novel variety and creates an unsolved tension between a popular, seemingly anti-intellectual vocation and the imprint of his profound theological meditation, which is rich in sophisticated allusions.

For centuries Iacopone's poems were never given consideration for their great literary importance. They were relegated to a lesser role as sheer testimonies of popular devotion destined to meditative purposes; they were appreciated only for their religious value within Franciscan circles, particularly in the Observant section of the Order or among preachers such as Bernardino da Siena and subsequently the Oratorians of Saint Phillip Neri. It is not surprising, therefore, that the myth of the poet as "jongleur of God" survived until recently and has not totally disappeared to this day. Iacopone was gradually rehabilitated and rescued from the Romantic label of buffoon during the first half of the 20th century thanks to the new interpretations of Francesco Novati, Ernesto Giacomo Parodi, Mario Casella, Evelyn Underhill, and Agide Gottardi, who reconstructed the dialogue between Iacopone's laude and the literary, philosophical, and theological

traditions of his time, delivering the poet from legend back to history. On the poetic side, the emphasis placed on Iacopone's technical dexterity, although very different from the sublime accomplishments of Dante's very controlled poetry, revisited and reversed the idea of Iacopone as a purely instinctive writer of interesting rhymes. On the theological side, the re-evaluation of Iacopone's sophisticated knowledge of the Christian tradition transformed his image of a purely affective and pragmatic mystic into a writer who conveys important theological concepts in poetic form. The new assessment also dispelled the legend of Iacopone's "proud and tragic isolation" and of his "individuality that is almost identical to his name," if we use definitions and expressions by Natalino Sapegno and Ovidio Capitani, respectively. Recent analyses have painted a new picture of Iacopone as a profoundly engagé poet who deliberately takes a stand in the socio-political, spiritual, and cultural tensions of his time. His laude show a complex and dynamic personality, full of internal contradictions and in constant dialogue with the voices and echoes of the secular world, for the most part in order to gain distance from it.

The last twenty years of critical work on Iacopone confirm the need to open his work wide to the world in order to appreciate the variety of its implications, such as its role in the history of Franciscanism, popular religiosity, and the nascent vernacular lauda. The seventh anniversary of Iacopone's death inspired the organization of conferences, as for example those in Stroncone (2005) and Todi (2006), that enriched the interpretation of Iacopone's life and work by addressing the most varied issues, from biographical reconstruction to the historical and political contextualization, formal analysis of the poet's rhetoric and research on his sources. The collected essays edited by Massi-miliano Bassetti and Enrico Menestò in 2020 summarize the latest critical contributions of almost exclusively Italian

scholars. The amalgamation of the poet's sacred and secular culture, his poetic technique, and his spiritual doctrine, which is often hidden and dissimulated in humble language, challenge contemporary readers to acknowledge the greatness of this author and not repress one aspect while concentrating on another.

Iacopone as Umbrian, Italian, and European Poet

As the critical opinion on Iacopone gradually gained complexity and became more objective, his highly cultural profile also started to emerge and the poet was inserted into the history of local, national, and international culture. The realization was that this was the identity of an exquisitely Umbrian, uniquely Italian, and profoundly European intellectual. Many have embraced the challenge of penetrating Iacopone's mystery; they are Italian and non-Italian readers, a very diverse group of scholars coming from different countries but also approaching Iacopone's work from different perspectives and analyzing his poetry with different critical skills, cultural background, and intellectual sensibility. A crucial contribution to the understanding of the laude was offered in the 20th century by some critical works in the English language. There are two very illuminating monographs, one by Evelyn Underhill (1919) and one by George Peck (1980), while other scholarly analyses have focused on specific aspects of Iacopone's poetry, as for example the works of Vincent Moleta (in the 1970s and 1980s), Bradley B. Dick (1994), and Louise V. Katainen (1996). Other important critical works originated in French, such as André Pézard's essays in the 1950s and 1960s, those by Marie-Hélène Battail in the 1990s, by Jean Lacroix and Veronique Abbruzzetti in the early 2000s, and Estelle Zunino's critical production in the last fifteen years. The new interest in Iacopone outside of Italy has also produced translations of his complete poems in English by Elizabeth and Serge Hughes (1982), in Dutch in the journal Franciscus van Assisi (1986–

1988), and more recently in French by Maxime Castro (2013) and in Rumanian by Oana Salisteanu (2018). Translations of selected poems also appeared in German by Herta Federmann (1924), in Catalan by Xavier d'Olot and Nolasc d'El Molar (1930), and in Polish by Salezy Kafel (1986). Translating Iacopone's poems into a different language engages the translator in the very difficult task of transferring the fullness of meaning in the grammar of another language; switching both signifier and signified of the original text was an opportunity to highlight the density of thought and the force of expression of his poetry.

Infinite Exegesis

Iacopone's poems have been explored and investigated by multiple perspectives and diverse sensibilities; those who studied his works are critics with a plurality of opinions that are sometimes very distant from one another. The various points of view integrate each other, contributing to the unveiling of Iacopone's "mystery," the hidden meaning of his sometimes obscure and puzzling texts. The multiplicity of opinions that is necessary to unfold the complexity of his thought and the intricate dynamic of his poetry generates the provocative hypothesis that perhaps it is exactly thanks to this plurality of exegetical analyses in disagreement with one another that criticism can do justice to the poet's spirit which is—it too—in constant tension and conflict with itself. The discovery in the last century was that Iacopone's poetry is much more refined and constructed than previously believed. Readers can appreciate all its various elements and allusive implications only when they are confronted with diverse analyses perceiving them from many different angles and when they are offered multidisciplinary and "global" readings.

This collection of essays constitutes an additional step forward in the history of the polyphonic exegesis of Iacopone's laude. Fourteen scholars from Canada, France, Italy, Rumania, Taiwan, the United Kingdom, and the United States have embraced the challenge of offering new and original interpretations of Iacopone's poetic work from a wide variety of points of view.

Some articles look at formal, rhetorical, and musical aspects of the poems as well as possible sources. Erminia Ardissino analyzes the many laude that can be considered rhyming prayers; she conceives of prayer as a dialogue with God as well as a dialogue with oneself about one's relationship with God, while highlighting the formal richness of prayers and not just in the genre of tenzo. Nicolò Crisafi investigates the rhetorical strategies with which Iacopone constructs his powerful poetic personality in relation to the Franciscan project of theatrical preaching and in constant comparison with the similar and yet very different model that Dante designed. Federica Franzè focuses her attention on the complex relationship of Iacopone's poetry with music; she supports the poet's familiarity with musical language, while emphasizing a sharp detachment from the rigid setup and unchanging repetitiveness of religious hymns, which Iacopone eschews in favor of original and refreshing poetic solutions. Estelle Zunino identifies in Iacopone the profile of an intellectual who is perfectly aware of the challenges facing the author when he is attempting to blend together his literary vocation and his love for God, while formulating in his laude a spiritual pedagogy of action in the world.

Two of the essays consider translations of the laude in other languages. Magdalena Maria Kubas looks at the Polish rendition of the laude by Salezy Kalef while also referring to French and English translations as she makes

important reflections on a contemporary rereading of the medieval debate on ineffability. Oana Salisteanu offers a fascinating account of the challenges she faced while translating Iacopone's poems into Rumanian and of the necessity to preserve the creative expressiveness of the Umbrian dialect in the very different sounds of another language.

The language of mysticism and asceticism is the focus of the largest group of essays. Alexander Hampton recognizes the revelation of mystical experience in the tensions characterizing the language of ecstasy; it is this quality that shows closeness to a transcendental divinity. Ineffable language, according to Hampton, bears the quality of a binary rhythm oscillating between two opposite extremes (humanity and divinity, absence and presence, silence and speech) and shapes the poems in the form of tenzo. Anne-Gaëlle Cuif amalgamates mysticism and rhetoric in a study that promotes the centrality of dulcedo and suavitas. These are considered both as poetic categories and as spiritual motifs, overlapping not with superficial enjoyment but with the fullness of ecstasy that may even lead to the annihilation of the ego to become lost in the greatness of God. Matteo Leonardi explains how the senses are stigmatized in the conflict against material temptations and are transformed into spiritual senses that feed the relationship with God, reborn in the mystical perception of creation as image of God and love of Love. Brian K. Reynolds investigates the figure of Mary and links the Franciscan affective devotion for the Mother of God to the praise of Mary as mediator between God and mankind; he inserts his research in the tradition of Marian hymns while connecting it also to the debate between supporters and deniers of the Immaculate Conception of Mary. Carlo Zacchetti's essay deals with the adaptation of Victorine theology in the laude; it revisits and enriches the scholarship on the influence of the Victorines in Iacopone's spirituality, identifying in Lauda 78 (89 in Ageno's numbering) the link

between Victorine theology and Iacopone's own poetic itinerary toward God.

Other articles turn their attention to the poet's rendition of Franciscan spirituality. Alvaro Cacciotti analyzes the laude that are dedicated to Francis of Assisi and captures the heart itself of Iacopone's mysticism in a celebration of a loving God that turns the impossible into a possibility, uniting God's perfection with mankind's imperfection. Samia Abdel Tawwab illustrates the dialogue between Iacopone's laude and some images that may have portrayed the contents of his poems, in particular Lauda 78 (89 in Ageno); in this lauda the interaction between characters is particularly important because it highlights the performative value of Iacopone's poetry that may also have served as a preaching tool. Alessandro Vettori analyzes the profound (but as yet unexplored) connections between Franciscan poverty and malady as privation of health, departing from Lauda 81 (48 in Ageno) and enlarging the scope to include suffering and physical death as synonyms for Christian salvation in Iacopone's theology of the cross.

We are writing this Introduction at a time when the world is at once much smaller but equally divided by war, disease, and inequality as the one Iacopone lived and wrote in, a world that needs to give more space to original and previously silenced voices from the margins. The present volume aims at reevaluating an author who was much-neglected and marginalized because, in his own way, he was a voice of diversity that openly criticized and denounced injustices, abuses, and corruption—and was jailed and risked his life for his integrity and openness. As collaboration among scholars at different stages of their career, with diverse expertise, and originating from the most various linguistic, geographic, and intellectual backgrounds, this collection of essays gives testimony to the poet's

wideranging attraction and offers a glimpse into the complexity of his creativity and originality. As for all great works of literature, Iacopone's laude open up to the challenge of an endless exegesis, which finds new depths and explores new dimensions the more it deepens its research. This never-ending exposition reproduces the experience of sacredness as connected to poetry and love, which are two of the main ingredients of Iacopone's texts—or in the poet's own words, "Amore, Amore, tanto si prefondo, / chi plu t'abraccia, sempre plu t'abrama!," "Love, Love, you are so deep,/ that whoever embraces you desires you all the more" (Lauda 89, 90 in Ageno, our translation).

We asked all contributors to use the Mancini edition of the Laude, so the numbering throughout the volume follows the one adopted in his edition. The English translation of Iacopone's laude is by Elizabeth and Serge Hughes, The Lauds (New York-Ramsey-Toronto: Paulist Press, 1982) and we point out all instances in which this particular translation is not used. We have preferred to adopt the spelling "Iacopone" for the poet's name instead of the one used in Italian "Jacopone," in order to make it phonetically closer to its Italian pronunciation, since the initial "J" is actually pronounced like an Italian "I" and not like an English "J." <>

Decolonial Theory and Biblical Unreading: Delinking Biblical Criticism from Coloniality by Stephen D. Moore [Brill, ISBN: 9789004695498]

Postcolonial theory in the mode of Edward Said, Gayatri Spivak, and, above all, Homi Bhabha has long been a resource for biblical scholars concerned with empire and imperialism, colonialism and neocolonialism. Outside biblical studies, however, postcolonial theory is increasingly eclipsed by

decolonial theory with its key concepts of the coloniality of power, decoloniality, and epistemic delinking. Decolonial theory begs a radical reconception of the origins of critical biblical scholarship; invites a delinking of biblical interpretation from the colonial matrix of power; and provides resources for doing so, as this book demonstrates through a decolonial (un)reading of the Gospel of Mark.

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Is Decolonial Biblical Reading a "Method"?

Theory travels. The writings of Aníbal Quijano, Walter Mignolo, María Lugones, Sylvia Wynter, Nelson Maldonado-Torres, Ramón Grosfoguel and other cognate thinkers may properly be considered decolonial *theory* because of their transnational and transcultural applicability, their capacity to intervene in academic disciplines and local contexts distant from those out of which they emerged. Theory travels, but so does praxis, and decolonial theory travels *with* praxis and even *as* praxis. For decoloniality *is* a praxis, decolonial thinkers contend, and it is within such praxis that theory finds its place, since decolonial praxis is, simultaneously, "a walking, asking, reflecting, analyzing, theorizing, and actioning" (Mignolo and Walsh 2018: 19). Decoloniality thoroughly muddies any distinction between theory and praxis, because decoloniality is an actioning *and* a thinking "from and with standpoints, struggles, and practices, from and with praxical theorizings, conceptual theorizings, theoretical conceptualizings, and theory-building actionings. It is to think from and with struggles that think and thought that struggles" (20).

And the concept of a traveling, theorizing, always metamorphizing praxis, moving across national borders and regional cultures to effect thinking-actioning transformations in local communities—such a praxis, moving like a wildfire, might merit the *decolonial* and *decolonizing* monikers more than any esoteric body of writing could. Would such a decolonial praxis necessarily be a purely utopian concept? Not entirely—or, just possibly, not at all—as suggested by the traveling, theorizing, biblical-actioning phenomenon that is Contextual Bible Study in the Ujamaa Centre mode—a hermeneutical praxis that, in the principled rigor of its "reading with" process, which we pondered above, seems to verge on the utopian, yet refuses to remain impracticable.

How does all or any of this—Contextual Bible Study, or decolonial biblical (un)reading informed by decolonial theory, or decolonial theory itself—relate to the hallowed question of "method"? Method has been foundational for critical biblical scholarship since the latter's inception, as noted earlier (1.7). Traditionally, the professional biblical scholar is an expert interpreter who has internalized a formidable repertoire of guild-accredited techniques for unlocking biblical meaning—who has been initiated into Method, in other words. Method, in this esoteric-exclusive sense—and not only in the biblical studies discipline—has its roots in high-colonial Europe, as we also saw, and as such

tends to arouse deep suspicion in decolonial theorists. Sabelo Ndlovu-Gatsheni, for instance, states: "In decoloniality, research methods and research methodologies are never accepted as neutral but are unmasked as technologies of subjectivation if not surveillance tools that prevent the emergence of another-thinking, another-logic, and another-world view. Research methodologies are tools of gate-keeping" (2019: 215–16).

Whom does biblical-scholarly method keep outside the gate? Ordinary readers, needless to say. Method, in the technical, laboriously learned, biblical-scholarly sense is primarily what nonscholarly Bible readers lack. Not surprisingly, then, the Ujamaa Centre does not genuflect before Method— certainly not method in the guild-accredited sense. Of Contextual Bible Study, West writes, "It is not a methodological technique, it is an emancipatory process" (2013:45). It is not a mono-epistemological technique because it is an epistemic collaboration, one that facilitates the fusion of "another-thinking, another-logic, and another-world view" (to borrow Ndlovu-Gatsheni's terms) with the thinking, the logic, and the world view embedded in inherited models of critical Bible-reading, and in that fusion the latter becomes more and other than it was.

Walter Mignolo brings a comparable sensibility to the issue of method. In an interview he muses, "If somebody asks me what is my method, I fail. I don't know what my method is" (2021a: n.p.). It is not that Mignolo is clueless, utterly stumped, when confronted by, say, a literary narrative that demands his attention. His strategy when faced with such a narrative is at once simple and complex: "I ask what [this narrative] tell[s] me about the colonial matrix of power and what the colonial matrix of power helps me to understand about this narrative" (n.p.). In essence, this it also what I attempted to do when confronted earlier in this book with the challenge of rereading the Gospel of Mark with the conceptual and analytic resources of decolonial theory. I asked, first, what the contemporary coloniality of power might reveal about the ancient coloniality of power, and then I attempted to trace, think through, and think with Mark's convoluted relations to colonialities, both ancient and modern: the colonialities of race, of gender, and of knowledge.

> But method, however unmethodological, is not the most important question, Mignolo insists. The question itself is more important than the method. Even if you have a method, "the question is what is your problem, what is your question? The problem and the question for us emerge from coloniality which then … generates decolonial thinking" (2021a: n.p.).

What, then, for the form of decolonial thinking I have been calling decolonial biblical (un)reading should the question be? We already know the answer. It is not Who are you reading? but Who are you reading *with*?

THE OXFORD HANDBOOK OF THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS edited by Stephen P. Ahearne-Kroll [Oxford Handbooks Series, Oxford University Press, ISBN 9780190887452]

THE OXFORD HANDBOOK OF THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS presents essays that push the field beyond the Synoptic Problem and theological themes that ignore the particularities of each Gospel. The first section, "The Problem and Nature of the Synoptics," explores some of the traditional approaches of literary dependence, but primarily engages with alternative ways to understand Synoptic relations and the nature of each Gospel. Interesting questions are raised in these essays regarding the tools used to evaluate literary dependence beyond those of traditional source criticism and redaction criticism (such as performance, orality, rhetoric, ancient publication, literary structures, manuscript variety, and use by non-canonical literature).

The second section, "Particular Features in Comparison," treats a variety of historical, literary, and cultural phenomena important to the study of these Gospels (such as gender, violence, power, body, history, sacred space,

healing, food, gospel, suffering, sectarianism, itineracy, women, wealth). These essays indirectly reshape traditional theological themes like salvation, Christology, and discipleship, grounding them in the cultural dynamics of the period. The two main sections simultaneously express the current state of the field and push the field forward in unexplored directions.

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The field of Synoptic studies traditionally has had two basic foci. The question of how Matthew, Mark, and Luke are related to each other, what their sources are, and how the Gospels use their sources constitutes the first focus. Collectively, scholarship on the Synoptic Problem has tried to address these issues, and recent years have seen renewed interest and rigorous debate about some of the traditional approaches to the Synoptic Problem and how these approaches might inform the understanding of the origins of the early Jesus movement. The second focus involves thematic studies across the three Gospels. These are usually, but not exclusively, performed for theological purposes to tease out the early Jesus movement's thinking about the nature of Jesus, the motivations for his actions, the meaning of his death and resurrection, and his relationship to God. These studies pay less attention to the particular voices of the three individual Synoptic Gospels because they are trying to get to the overall theological character of Jesus. This book takes a different approach to the study of the Synoptics. Instead of the two traditional foci just described, its two parts are titled "The Problem and Nature of the Synoptics" and "Particular Features in Comparison." A few of the essays in Part I include discussion of the sources for the Synoptics, literary dependence, and the development of the written forms of these Gospels (Kloppenborg, Foster, and Barker [to a certain ex-tent], chapters 1–3 here). At the most basic level, the Synoptic Problem assumes a stable text tradition, usually starting with the Gospel of Mark, although there have been and remain some challenges to Mark's temporal primacy. The work of

theorizing dependence happens at the level of individual words, phrases, and pericopae, with the arguments for certain use of one text by another being quite detailed and intricate. Teasing out solutions to the Synoptic problem usually dominates this area of research, and in recent years, there has been an uptick in debate about the Synoptic problem and its solutions. While some form of the two-source hypothesis still holds sway with most scholars, there has been an effort to revisit earlier theories that question the existence of Q and/or the independence of Matthew and Luke. Other interesting questions have arisen regarding the tools used to evaluate literary dependence beyond that of traditional source criticism and redaction criticism, while maintaining the value of these methods. Creative studies have been performed on the way that sources were used by other ancient authors to contextualize how the Synoptic authors might be using their sources (Barker, chapter 3 here). In addition, ancient rhetoric has been studied as a model for how the gospels present their stories in relation to each other as a way of detecting or confirming dependence (Damm, chapter 4). Therefore, the study of ancient composition practices holds a great deal of potential for providing a deeper understanding of the relationships among Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and so several essays address these issues. The oral nature of the Synoptics also raises questions about the arguments for literary dependence, and the interrelation of orality and writing is precisely the topic of Kirk's essay (chapter 6), while Johnson explores the oral performance of the Synoptics as an integral part of their nature (chapter 7). Two essays take up the analysis of the literary design of the Synoptics and its ramifications for their nature. Ferguson (chapter 5) develops a distinct way of understanding Paul's possible influence on the Gospel of Mark, which in turn affects Matthew's and Luke's appropriation of the Pauline tradition, assuming traditional Synoptic relations along the lines of the two-

source hypothesis. And Dinkler (chapter 8) addresses the literary design of the Synoptics through the tools of New Formalism, which focuses its attention on narrative form and structure, while addressing critiques of formalism's earlier iterations. One also can recognize that the plurality of manuscript traditions has to come into play when thinking about literary dependence and the Synoptic Problem. There has been some creative new work about how to think about the end of the publication process of the Gospels, which Larsen (chapter 10) addresses, and the work of text criticism in this question, which Nongbri (chapter 9) explores. With the plurality of "final" versions a clear phenomenon, what can be said about literary dependence must be raised as a fundamental question regarding Synoptic relationships and the Synoptic Problem. Larsen's and Nongbri's work poses the most fundamental challenges to the Synoptic Problem, along with Kirk's and Johnson's, because all these essays either directly challenge the stability of the early versions of the text or rightly recognize the fluidity of orality as a characteristic of the tradition. Finally, taking the Synoptics a generation or two into the future, Spittler's and Sellew's essays discuss the noncanonical Gospels in relation to the Synoptics to see what light they might shed on the compositional processes (Spittler, chapter 11) and the content of both (in comparison to the Gospel of Thomas; Sellew, chapter 12). While the essays in Part I recognize the importance of the history of scholarship on Synoptic relations, the various ways of understanding the nature of the Synoptics demonstrated in these essays show the complexity of these traditions about Jesus that needs to be grappled with in order to understand more fully the nature of their relationship. This complexity shows that scholars cannot rely on the traditional assumptions that ground the theories of literary dependence in trying to solve the Synoptic Problem. The studies in Part II fall under the general rubric of thematic studies of the Synoptic

Gospels. Traditionally, topics like Jesus, discipleship, justice, love, parables, miracles, and so on are treated thematically across the Synoptics without much attention to the ways that each Synoptic author expresses his own voice through the use of these topics.

In addition, there is usually little attention paid to the greater context of the Synoptics in Judaism and Greek and Roman culture. This gives the impression that the Synoptics were written in a vacuum or that they were major literary works of the ancient world. Neither of these impressions is close to reality, of course, because the Synoptics were minority writings within a minority sect of Judaism, which itself was a diverse minority culture within the dominant Roman culture of the time. Part II takes a different approach to the way topics are handled in Synoptic studies. Most of the essays in Part II are comparative in two ways—among each Gospel and between the Gospels and other expressions of the topic in Jewish, Greek, and Roman contexts. But the essays that keep the discussion mostly on the Synoptics also give voice to each individual Gospel to convey the diversity of expression and preserve the author's perspective as much as possible. Overall, the idea is to capture the similarities and differences in the presentation of the topics in each Gospel, and to situate the Gospels in a wider frame of reference. The topics reflect a combination of some traditional categories and some less traditional categories. Early on a decision was made not to cover many of the traditional categories often found in books on the Synoptics (e.g., parables, discipleship, Christology, etc.). These traditional topics are important to understand, but it was felt that there was already so much written on them that is easily accessible in other books that this book would risk redundancy by including them. Where the essays in Part II do cover more traditional topics (kingdom, suffering, healing, resurrection and afterlife, etc.), the authors have worked to come at

the topics in a comparative way that sheds new light on how these features of the Synoptics are not monoliths inserted into the literature but particular expressions of these general topics (e.g., Henning, Whitaker, Somov, chapters 19, 22, 23). And this particularity grounds all of the essays in Part II. Instead of mining the Synoptics for evidence to build abstracted notions of the themes, there is a real and consistent effort in these essays to describe the evidence in the Synoptics in its own context. Each essay topic performs an interesting analysis that brings out the dis-tinct voices of each Gospel, alongside the similarities that exist across the Gospels. There is a richness to Part II that shows the power of the approach the authors have taken in exploring the Synoptics from a number of different perspectives. They raise important questions of power (Rollens, Peppard, chapters 14 and 15) and the social consequences of it (Moss, Blanton, Luckritz Marquis, and Al-Suadi, chapters 13, 16, 17, and 18). They address the social nature of these traditions (Kampen, Zetterholm, and Reno and Ahearne-Kroll, chapters 25, 26, and 29) and the literary expression of these social realities (Rollens, Myers, Reno and Ahearne-Kroll, and Moore, chapters 14, 28, 29, and 30). And they explore in depth how the traditions of Israel have shaped the concerns of the Synoptic authors (Whitaker, Garroway, Kampen, Zetterholm, and Docherty, chapters 22, 24, 25, 26, and 27). As a whole, the essays in Part II beg the question whether or not "Synoptic" is the best way to describe these three Gospels. The book as a whole provides thirty studies that substantially contribute to the field of Synoptic studies, moving it forward in interesting ways and providing the groundwork for a new generation of scholars to pursue the directions initiated by the book's contributors.

Many of the essays in this book were written and edited during the deadly global pandemic originating in late 2019 and continuing on up through the final stages of the production of the book. The difficulties the pandemic

presented for finishing this book in a timely manner were substantial, and I am deeply thankful to the contributors for their excellent scholarship, prompt responses, and patient endurance as we completed this book. I am also very grateful to Kristofer Coffman and Kristi Lee, who helped a great deal in the formatting and editing of the manuscript. Their futures are bright in Synoptic studies and in the study of religion within the broad landscape of ancient culture. While Kristofer, Kristi, and all the contributors persevered in their excellent work throughout the pandemic, our efforts do not compare to those of the millions who have suffered and endured real hardship across the globe since late 2019, from the frontline workers of all statuses, who have helped care for, feed, and clothe victims and develop therapies and vaccines, to those who have contracted the virus and struggled for their lives and health. Their work far outshines any scholarship, no matter the level of excellence.

And so this book is dedicated to all those affected by this modern plague, especially the millions who have lost their lives and millions more of their family members who keep their memories alive. <>

Paul within Judaism: Perspectives on Paul and Jewish Identity edited by Michael Bird, Ruben A. Bühner, Jörg Frey, and Brian Rosner [Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen Zum Neuen Testament, Mohr Siebrek, ISBN 9783161623257]

This conference volume features cutting edge research from an international cohort of scholars on the still-controversial debates regarding Paul's relationship with Judaism. Taken together, the contributions represent a sympathetic but critical assessment of the Paul within Judaism approach to Pauline interpretation. They take up many of the key questions germane to the debate, including different perspectives on Jewish identity, ethnicity, Torah-

observance, halakha, the relationship between Jewish and non-Jewish followers of Christ, and the contested character of Jewish identity in antiquity. By combining a broad swath of both German- and English-language scholarship, the volume attempts to bring different perspectives into conversation with each other.

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The Paul within Judaism Debate: The Persistence of Pauline Scholarship

I have spent a large part of my scholarly career as a Neutestamentler wrestling with the apostle Paul, his life, his letters, and his legacy. The reason for that is quite simple. The study of Paul is inescapable for anyone concerned with the New Testament, the origins of early Christianity, Greco-Roman religion, ancient Judaism, the development of Christian thought, or even the history of western civilization. Paul was unknown to the rich and powerful of his time, he was a divisive figure among those who did know him, and I doubt very much that anybody thought he was destined to become the towering figure of religious and intellectual history that he became. Yet here we are with another scholarly symposium about Paul, another collection of essays about him, and another set of debates and disagreements over him. This volume and the conference it was based on, is but another example of the continuing fascination with Paul in minds of scholars, people of all faiths and none, from different quarters of the globe, representing diverse streams of human experience, who are yet united by their abiding interest in Paul. The scholarship that examines Paul is both deep in its history and now relatively wide in the breadth of people who are drawn to the topic. Paul continues to have much significance for the academy, for those who specialize in the study of religion, and for living communities of faith.

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

First, studying Paul is like brushing dust off a mosaic in an ancient Ephesian villa. The mosaic contains the face of a human figure and yet the mosaic contains gaps, a few cracked tiles, distortions of colour, and even some tiles that have been secondarily added to mosaic. We cannot and therefore do not see Paul as he really was, only as he was presented by the artist, and even that presentation is fragmentary. That is not to say we cannot see, understand, or know anything about Paul, but our knowledge of Paul is mediated as it is imperfect. The quest for the historical Paul is the quest for the

Paul who is the most recoverable and plausible portrait of a historical figure of antiquity. Alas, we shall never find the holy grail that is Paul as his pure self, only Paul as apostle, author, and artwork, Paul as martyr and memory, Paul as a diaspora Jew and a symbol of Christian faith.

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

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

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

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

Thus, it makes an immense difference if one tries to situate Paul in the context of the Qumran scrolls, intra-Jewish sectarianism, itinerant philosophers, Greco-Roman associations, imperial cults, Plutarch's account of Hellenistic religion, Iranian Manicheanism, Jewish hekhalot traditions, new religious movements, millenarianism,

or ancient accounts of gender and ethnicity. Similarly, it matters much if one studies Paul from the context of fifth century North African Christianity, a twelfth century Parisian monastery, intra-Protestant debates of the sixteenth century, among Indian civil rights lawyers in nineteenth century Delhi, in African-American churches in Atlanta in the 1960s, or in a Critical Theory class at Stanford University in the first quarter of the twenty-first century. Context shapes the purpose of study, the language of enquiry, and the results of research.

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

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

Contributions to this Volume

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

Karl-Wilhelm Niebuhr opens the volume with a comparison of the Pauline letters and the letter of James as texts that can be both safely located within Ju daism. In fact, Niebuhr wonders if Paul and James might even comprise an example of "mutual perception," whereby they illuminate each other as texts which belong to Hellenistic

Jewish literature of the common era. Paul and James are to be valued as two distinct Jewish voices that both speak about the salvific agency of God executed in Jesus Christ. Niebuhr compares Jas 1:13–18 and 2 Cor 4:1–6 as texts that share a common creational monotheism, an eschatological divine act wrought in Jesus, and a possibility of salvation by placing faith in God and Christ. In Jacobean language, salvation is a direct divine act by God's efficacious word, that brings new birth, and makes them children of the Father of lights. Paul's discourse in 2 Cor 4:1–6 also refers to God's direct agency to enlightenment the minds of believers to perceive and believe the gospel about the glory of Christ, a glory which is veiled by a darkness caused by the "god of this age," but God can pierce through that darkness of unbelief. What is more, Niebuhr shows that both texts, with their cosmology and theology, fit comfortably into the world of Hellenistic Judaism as comparisons with Philo, Life of Adam Eve, and the Wisdom of Solomon demonstrate. For Niebuhr, James and Paul reflect a meta-level agreement on the divine agency of grace, particularly in the scriptural language about "light," that is part and parcel of conceptions of divine agency in Hellenistic Judaism. Thus, James and Paul in their respective arguments about perceiving the Christ event, prove to be analogous with reflections in Hellenistic Jewish literary works about the agency of God towards his creation and towards humankind.

Jörg Frey addresses the apparent relativization of ethnicity and circumcision in Paul and his communities. Frey affirms the notion that Paul is to be located "within" Judaism and he explicitly identifies Paul as a Jew. In this sense, he is clearly aligned with PwJ practitioners. However, one aspect that Frey finds contestable is the proclivity of some PwJ exemplars such as Nanos and Fredriksen to insist that the ethnic difference between Israel and the nations are a fundamental and permanent chasm which remain in effect even in an eschatological state. Added to that are the premises that Paul himself remained Torah observant and his deflection of the normativity of certain aspects of Torah only applies to Gentile Christ-believers who themselves still "judaize" in some limited sense. In other words, what is contestable is the perspective Gentile Christ-believers do not in any sense become Jews or join Israel, they do however judaize, only not to the point of circumcision. The problem is that this requires

(dis)regarding much of Paul's own remarks about Torah as rhetorical word play (Rom 2:25–29; Gal 3:13; 1 Cor 9:19–23). According to Frey, the PwJ consortium do not properly grasp how Jewish ethnicity was something fluid, permeable, and transferable. In any case, Paul himself rarely uses ethnic terms to describe his congregations, preferring civic terms like "assembly" and "citizens" or cosmological language like "new creation." Paul from his time in Antioch, argues Frey, Paul was deeply involved in fraternizing and fellowshipping with Gentiles in shared meals which tells against a compartmentalization of Jewish and Gentile Christ-believers. Paul's remarks about circumcision relativize its ability to serve as a marker of Christ's people, whether Jewish or Gentile, a position deeply offensive to many Jews contemporary with Paul. Yet, Paul adopted such a position, not as an enlightened "universalist" but as a self-identifying Jew. According to Frey, Paul construed of Christ-believers as possessing an identity that was neither nested in nor transcending a Jewish ethnic identity, but was rather a participation in the eschatological community of God.

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

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

Chris Porter's contribution begins by observing that Paul's status as someone inside or outside of "Judaism" has become a much-contested interpretive rubric for modern exegetes. All too often the social categories that contribute to these heuristics are highly essentialised and treated in an exclusivist fashion. Accordingly, Porter attempts to revisit the complexity of this topic through the socio-cognitive lens of social identity theory. Porter, by treating some of Paul's self-descriptions in relation to Judaism, shows how ancient identity spaces yielded a complex set of overlapping identity concerns that can be juggled and leveraged for argumentative purpose, without abrogating an internally coherent identity. As such, Porter argues that Paul considered himself to be affirmatively and authentically lou8cîog. But this was only one part of his identity in a complex world. If pressed into a certain direction, such as Pharisaic zeal, Paul could also consider himself to be no longer lou8cdag6, and yet still claimed heritage as a "Pharisee." Consequently, Paul's lou8cîog identity in the ancient world – like other

socio-ethnic identities – resisted easy classification as it incorporated a vast range of sub-groups.

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

J. Brian Tucker and Wally V. Cirafesi heed the call to account for both the particular socioreligious location and the theological texture of Paul's letters and those whom he recruited to join the early Christ-movement. Their response addresses three specific issues: (1) The way in which Jewish covenantal identity continues by deployment of the segmentary grammar of identity; (2) the socio-religious location of the Pauline Christ-movement within the institutional context of synagogue communities; and (3) the importance of the eschatological pilgrimage tradition for maintaining distinct identities for Israel and the nations. In turn, they offer a discussion of the grammars of identity, first, since the presuppositions in regard to the nature of identity being formed are determinative for much of the readings given of Paul's letters, especially Romans.

They then offer their understanding of ancient synagogues – particularly those organizationally akin to Greco-Roman associations – and of Paul's Christ-groups as part of such synagogue communities. Finally, in light of this socioreligious context, they argue that an approach that sees Paul's in-Christ gentiles as members of nations closely associated with Israel, who participate in the eschatological drama as a member of the nations, rather than as Israel – sometimes described as the commonwealth or prophetic approach – has the most going for it, both so-ciohistorically and exegetically.

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

Kathy Ehrensperger examines how Paul tries to clarify for his addressees from the nations how the Christ-event impinges on their identity, in referring to them as seed of Abraham, that is, to Abraham as their ancestor. Ehrensperger argues that Paul places them on the map or into the lineage of Abraham, by arguing that through Christ a genealogical link has been established which institutes them as co-heirs to the promises. Genealogical narratives served a variety of purposes in cultures of antiquity. Evidently the inclusion into the lineage of an emperor via adoption aimed at controlling the succession to imperial power. On a collective level narrative maps of kinship relations were a widely shared means to structure and depict relationships between peoples near and far. Thus, Josephus knows of Jewish narratives which integrate Heracles into their family tree and thus claim a relation to Greek tradition.

Christ-followers from the nations found themselves in a liminal space since their place of belonging, individually and collectively was unclear when considered in light of the maps of belonging prevalent at the time. Ehrensperger contends that Paul, via genealogical reasoning, tries to place Gentiles into the lineage of belonging to the God of Israel, not in place of but alongside the people Israel.

Janelle Peters examines the role of synagogues as formative socio-religious spheres for the Pauline churches. Peters notes how synagogue culture was very important to the Judaism of both Judea and the Diaspora. Synagogues were gathering places for communal matters and communal worship by Jewish/Ju-dean inhabitants of a city. Synagogues featured furniture and paraphernalia that were non-cultic but symbolized cultic items in the temple. The synagogues had their own extra-temple system of worship shaped by Torah reading, prayers, hymnody, and had their own system for resolving halakhic and legal disputes. Accordingly, synagogue practices and precedents perhaps influenced the Pauline house churches in terms of ethos, structure, and regulation. By submitting himself to corporal punishment of thirty-nine lashes, Paul was in fact submitting to the discipline of synagogue leaders. Peters also points out that the ability of the Pauline churches to gather for meals and to take up a collection makes sense on the premise that they were a type of a synagogue since only Jewish synagogues had imperial permission to do such things. Paul too in 1 Corinthians 6 urges the believers not to solve legal disputes between members in a civic court, but to resolve the disputes among themselves internally as a self-sufficient and legally binding community, in other words, like a synagogue. The conclusion Peters reaches is that Paul's remarks about how to lead and regulate a house-church seems closer to the Jewish milieu of the synagogue, diverse though it was, than to Greco-Roman assemblies.

Ruben A. Bühner refers to sources from diaspora Judaism, where he shows the extent to which Jews in Second Temple Judaism found different and at the same time flexible ways to negotiate between typically Jewish customs, such as dietary restrictions, and the need to manage one's life as part of a mostly non-Jewish environment. By doing so, Bühner takes up some insights from the Paul within Judaism perspective and brings

these insights in dialogue with more traditional exegesis of the Pauline letters. Thus, the flexibility of Paul's behavior described in 1 Cor 9:19–23 remained within the framework of what was accepted as "Jewish" at least by some Jews even before the Jesus movement. Paul does not "invent" a new way to live among non-Jews, but he gives a new Christological basis for a long-established way of Jewish life.

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

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

epiphanies, or Christophanies, but as Christo-theophanies – appearances of the risen Christ as God.

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

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

from the heresiological reports about them and to examine their opinions about the "apostle to the Gentiles." <>

Richard Rolle: On Lamentations: A Critical Edition with Translation and Commentary by Michael Van Dussen [Exeter Medieval Texts and Studies LUP, Liverpool University Press, 9781789621549]

This volume presents the first study, critical edition, and translation of one of the earliest works by Richard Rolle (c. 1300-1349), a hermit and mystic whose works were widely read in England and on the European continent into the early modern period. Rolle's explication of the Old Testament Book of Lamentations gives us a glimpse of how the biblical commentary tradition informed what would become his signature mystical, doctrinal, and reformist preoccupations throughout his career. Rolle's English and explicitly mystical writings have been widely accessible for decades. Recent attention has turned again to his Latin commentaries, many of which have never been critically edited or thoroughly studied. This attention promises to give us a fuller sense of Rolle's intellectual, devotional, and reformist development, and of the interplay between his Latin and English writings.

Richard Rolle: On Lamentations places Rolle's early commentary within a tradition of explication of the Lamentations of Jeremiah and in the context of his own career. The edition collates all known witnesses to the text, from Dublin, Oxford, Prague, and Cologne. A source apparatus as well as textual and explanatory notes accompany the edition.

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This study and edition of Richard Rolle's commentary on Lamentations, Super Threnos Jeremiae, is intended to facilitate further examination of Rolle's Latin works, particularly his biblical commentaries, and of Rolle's place in the tradition of Lamentations commentary in the Latin west in particular, from its beginnings to c. 1500.1 Editions of Rolle's Latin writings have appeared sporadically since the late nineteenth century, though only a small number of these meet modern standards of critical editing.' Not all were intended to be critical editions, nor does each attempt to represent all manuscript witnesses. Some have presented editions from one or a select number of extant copies; one claims to be 'the basis for, and beginnings of a critical edition; some exist as unpublished and largely inaccessible dissertations;' others have presented only partial editions;6 and a few translations (without Latin text), produced for a variety of audiences, have also joined the mix.' After all of these are considered, there remain a number of Rolle's Latin texts that have never been brought to print, and several others, including Super Threnos, that were last printed in the sixteenth century under very different standards and circumstances.' The result is a textual field that is highly uneven, frequently unreliable, and in need of attention if we are fully to

understand a substantial portion - well over half - of Richard Rolle's oeuvre and its cultural contexts.

A single critical edition could not alleviate the situation I have described on its own. Fortunately, a number of scholars in the past few years have turned to serious study of Rolle's Latin writings, and major studies that hold the Latin works as their focus have recently appeared, or soon will appear, at the time of this book's publication.' This volume contributes to that larger project by providing not only the first critical edition and translation of Rolle's Lamentations commentary, probably one of his earliest works, but also a study of the circulation of Rolle's Latin writings on the European continent, with an emphasis on the Central European transmission, where the greatest concentration of continental manuscripts, including one copy of Super Threnos, can be found. A handlist of Lamentations commentaries produced in the Latin tradition to c. 1500 is provided in the Appendix. <>

A History of Catholic Theological Ethics by James F. Keenan SJ [Paulist Press, 9780809155446]

An introduction to Catholic theological ethics through the lens of its historical development from the beginning of the church until today. Starting with the Scriptures, and in particular the New Testament, the author looks at the inspiration and foundational values and virtues that emerge from its moral instruction.

This is a comprehensive study of every period in the history of the tradition, from the early Patristic period to the history of the Penitentials and Confessionals, to the founding of religious orders and universities, the emergence of scholasticism, the birth of modern casuistry, the Council of Trent and the subsequent moral manuals, to contemporary Reformers within the Global Church.

Reviews

“The task of writing a history of moral theology is daunting. James Keenan has written a superb history. The breadth and depth of this work are stunning. The narrative is clear,

logically developed, and convincing. We are all in his debt."
—Charles Curran. author, Sixty Years of Moral Theology (Paulist Press, 2021)

"James F. Keenan, SJ, is among the most important Catholics in the world today writing on theological ethics. In this book, he displays his dazzling knowledge of the breadth of the Catholic tradition as it stretches from the New Testament to the present, and he combines that knowledge with compelling insights into its relevance for our times. Indispensable for the professional, the book is, despite its great learning, accessible to the general reader. I congratulate James Keenan on the landmark achievement of *A History of Catholic Theological Ethics*."
—John W. O'Malley, SJ, University Professor Emeritus, Georgetown University

"The inimitable James Keenan has provided us with another moral-theological tour de force—surfacing twenty centuries of theological innovation in a tradition better known for its attachments to the past. Carried by Keenan's signature themes of mercy, conscience, spirituality, and virtue, this history moves ever forward into the diversity of perspectives, emergence of women, and reverse of direction from the local to the universal, that characterize this century's global church. This far-reaching and learned work will educate, stimulate, and provoke, all in a highly readable style with existential power."
—Lisa Sowle Cahill, Donald Monan, SJ, Professor of Theology, Boston College

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True story.

In late March 1981, a year before I would be ordained a priest, I was living in Cambridge, Massachusetts, studying theology at what was then called Weston Jesuit School of Theology. The phone in the hallway rang and I answered it. The caller asked, "Can I speak to Jim Keenan?" "Speaking." "Jim, it's Al. I'd like to see you." "Al? Al, who?" "Al Bartlett, your vice provincial for formation." "Oh, hi, Al. You want to see me? When?" "Today or tomorrow if necessary." "But I'm in Cambridge and you are in New York." "No, I'm in Cambridge." "Why?" "To see you." "But, Al, everybody else from the province is away" "No matter, I only came to see you."

In the history of religious life, unannounced visits by religious superiors are rarely a cause for joy.

"Where are you?" "Across the street, at the superior's office." My anxiety surged. "I will be right there."

When I met with Al Bartlett, he told me he had come because the previous day the provincial consultors met and, during the meeting, the provincial made the decision I was to do doctoral studies. "Since we made the decision yesterday, we thought you should be the first to know"

In 1981 I had been a Jesuit for eleven years, facing one more year before ordination. This was the first time I had ever considered doctoral studies. "In what?" I asked. "We thought maybe urban studies, maybe political science. Does not matter. We want you to a get doctorate and you and I are meeting tomorrow right here at the same time, and you are going to tell me what you will study."

Ignatian discernment for Jesuits is a lot more rushed than when it is offered to our lay colleagues.

I decided I would wait until dinner to ask my community members what they thought. I need to mention that among the dozen community members were two superb theologians: Brian Daley and John O'Malley. In my years at Weston Jesuit, I effectively became John's disciple. I took several courses with him, but it was by living with him that I learned what living scholarship was like. His influence on my way of articulating and pursuing both pedagogical and research goals, as a theologian, is without parallel.

When told my community about my day, to my astonishment, there was an immediate consensus on two points: thank God somebody told me to do a doctorate (O'Malley was the loudest on this point), and that I should study moral theology. Why? According to them, whenever I spoke up in class on any matter related to moral theology, I was insightful and interesting.

I never had such validation in one day.

The next day, I went to see Al. Moral theology, I told him.

"Where?" he asked. I said, "Probably the Gregorian University in Rome, I want to study the tradition and I want to study with Josef Fuchs."

And so I did.

I went to study in Rome because I believed that the Catholic moral tradition was richer and more complex and less repressive and more responsive than most thought it was. In 1981, in the United States, I believed progressives were not much interested in the tradition, while conservatives were very interested in keeping it tethered to the past. I believed only by going to Rome could I learn the tradition well.

In hindsight, I do not know if the Gregorian University was the best place to learn the tradition, but I got what I wanted. I studied especially with two exceptional moralists, Klaus Demmer, MSC (1931-2014)1 and Josef Fuchs, SJ (1912-2005).2 I did my licentiate with Demmer and my doctorate with Fuchs, being the last student who enrolled with him. Besides their direction, I studied several courses with wonderful teachers like Louis Vereecke, CSsR (1920-2012), Edouard Hamel, SJ (1920-2008), Wilhelm Ernst (1927-2001), Francis A. Sullivan, SJ (1922-2019), Jared Wicks, SJ (1929—), and Jean Zizioulas (1931—). Every one of these faculty members was interested in an understanding of theology as rooted in a living and ongoing tradition.

In my years of teaching since starting in 1987, I have been trying to share with my students an appreciation for the humane complexity and giftedness of the tradition. Therein along the way I have been trying to put together a narrative of that tradition.

To fashion that narrative, I have developed over the past thirty-three years a repertoire of graduate courses that might give you an idea of how I have worked to write these pages that you have now in your hand. One was a reading of the Pars Secunda of Thomas Aquinas's Summa Theologiae. This course covers the entire middle part of the Summa, which singularly focuses on moral theology: the 114 questions of the first section, which provides the foundations, and 189 questions of the second section, which covers the specifics of morals according to the seven virtues. I enjoy watching

graduate students eventually engage scholastic language as they grow in familiarity with it and then begin to appreciate the development of Aquinas's theology, to say nothing of the breadth, depth, and nuance of it.

I have also developed a course entitled "Catholic Theological Ethics: 1300-1900." Here I taught basically a major text each class: Peter Abelard's Ethics, Peter Lombard's Fourth Book of the Sentences, major questions from Thomas's Summa, disputation texts of Duns Scotus and William of Ockham, Erasmus's Enchiridion and The Complaint of Peace, Francisco de Vitoria's Political Writings, Bartolomé de las Casas's In Defense of the Indians, The Catechism of the Council of Trent, Francisco Suarez's A Treatise on Laws and God the Lawgiver, a number of texts on Jesuit casuistry such as Friederich Spee's Cautio Criminalis, and Alphonsus Liguori's On Conscience.

I have also taught a history of the twentieth century, studying how a century that so definitively began with little inclination for any kind of change became a century not unlike the sixteenth century, a time of enormous challenge and accompanying innovation. This allowed me to get a sense of what it was like to slow down the narrative and descend into the particular.

My favorite graduate course has remained the same for these thirty-three years, "An Introduction to Fundamental Morals," in which I take fundamental concepts like sin, conscience, intentionality, and virtue and try to show the historical/traditional claims they have on us. This book is born out of that course.

In the middle of offering these courses, around 1994, DanielHarrington invited me to team-teach a course on the New Testament and ethics. Dan and I taught together for more than twenty years, first teaching the Synoptic Gospels, then Paul, and finally the Gospel of John. That experience with Dan convinced me that this history needed to start with the New Testament.

Now, at this point, I offer you a brief history of Catholic theological ethics and I need to conclude with three points of explanation. First, let me say a word about the difference between moral theology and theological ethics. Until the end of the last century, moral

theology was about the formation of judgment for one's personal and interpersonal conduct. As such, basic courses on moral theology have been taught from the time seminaries were designed, that is, in the wake of the Council of Trent. At the start, this area was quite comprehensive. In time, other separate fields of investigation arose, notably sexual ethics, in part because the hierarchy dedicated so much time to this topic, and then in the late nineteenth century, social ethics, which effectively developed when Pope Leo XIII (1810-1903) promulgated the first social encyclical, Rerum Novarum (1891). Later, another field developed in the 1950s known as medical ethics. Later, after Vatican II, questions were raised about how moral theology taught its foundational anthropology or vision about the person. Rather than emphasizing the person's uniqueness, a significant turn developed about the person as constitutively relational or social. In time, moral theology needed to be integrated not only with sexual and medical ethics but also with social ethics. This more comprehensive, inclusive view, which in fact is how the field started in the beginning of the seventeenth century, is what we now call theological ethics.

Second, though this work is called a history, I am not a historian and in fact most of those who have already tried to offer a history were, like me, theological ethicists. Here I think of John Mahoney's The Making of Moral Theology: A Study of the Roman Catholic Tradition,' John Gallagher's Time Past, Time Future: An Historical Study of Catholic Moral Theology,4 and Renzo Gerardi's Storia della Morale: Interpretazioni teologiche dell'esperienza Cristiana.' My attempt is different from theirs. Gallagher was very much focused on the proprium of moral theology. As we will see in the fifth chapter, moral theology does not become an actual field of inquiry until the Council of Trent and its subsequent formation of seminary education. Gallagher superblytook us through the accomplishment of Trent and its legacy from the so-called moral manuals, or textbooks. Rather than Gallagher's explication of these texts, Mahoney's interests were to name and study some of the sources of the moral tradition that may have compromised a more Spirit-based moral theology that could more faithfully serve the people of God. His was a work aiming at reform. Gerardi framed a variety of theological

interpretations of Christian experience and presented them in a historico-encyclopedic fashion. His was a foundational resource for teachers in the field.

I take from Mahoney and Gerardi the belief that moral theology is more than the moral manuals, but unlike Mahoney I believe that the tradition was founded on the pursuit of holiness and not, as he believed, on the confession of sin. Unlike Gerardi's more episodic focus, I attempt more of a narrative.

Moreover, in crafting a narrative, I am less interested in the historical development of particular moral concepts like sin, conscience, authority, or the virtues, nor in particular teachings on divorce, marriage, abortion, and the like. These later topics have been done already by, among others, John T. Noonan Jr. I am trying, instead, to make sense out of why at different times particular ways of thinking about the moral life arose, crested, and ebbed, and why other topics, stances, and methods subsequently replaced them.

I develop this narrative aware of you the reader. I am welcoming you into my classroom. Here as a teacher, I am not only presenting why these historical cultures happened, but I am giving my particular read on them. In a word, I am trying to teach you the moral tradition as I understand it, and I believe that you the reader come to this text with a set of presuppositions that I very much am interested in engaging. Hopefully what I offer takes you beyond your present understanding of the tradition. Still, the narrative that I offer is neither seamless nor complete. Rather it's fragmentary, as Mahoney's and Gerardi's were as well.

While studying at Weston Jesuit, I learned that the work of theology is to bring the tradition forward so that the people of God have the resources to respond and to anticipate the challenges that they encounter. There, I learned that bringing the tradition forward made sense; the very word tradition comes from the Latin tradere, "to deliver, hand over, or bring forth." In a word, the tradition is something that you pass on, but as you do, it has to be adaptable, able to address what it will encounter in the future. There I learned that the tradition has to develop and adjust if it is going to help us live out our connection not only to the past but to the future.

When I studied theology in Rome, I learned that working with the tradition was fundamentally a progressive work; progress is constitutive of the tradition. From Demmer and Fuchs I learned that while history narrates the development of the tradition, theological ethics must occasion such a development.

This book is about those who occasioned such developments; it is about those responsible for the progress of theological ethics. That is how I teach theological ethics, as an enterprise that literally responds ethically to the emerging signs of the times.

Many histories about the development of thought highlight the masterpieces within a tradition. We will do that, certainly by looking at Augustine and Thomas Aquinas, but more than the-magnificent achievements within the tradition, I want to introduce you to the innovators. I want you to meet those who took the long view of the future, proposing a new approach, method, insight, or strategy to go forward.

I want to introduce you to those who have been long overlooked because they did not do a masterpiece like the Confessions or the Summa Theologiae. Yet until you understand the innovators, you will not understand how theological ethicists really think, and if you do not know how they think, you will not learn the history of moral theology.

I believe, as you will see, that history was formed not by the grand achievers but more by the innovators: they took the first step; the achievers perfected those steps.

Take, for instance, Abelard's Sic et Non. Probably most of you do not yet know it, but once you understand what Abelard did there, you will realize how Aquinas and others conceptualized a Summa.

Abelard's text was the first blueprint for Aquinas's. Similarly, the casuistry of the mid-sixteenth century was ignited when John Mair, years before anyone else, argued through the case method in his Commentary on the Fourth Book of the Sentences. And, although everyone knows the achievement of Jesuit Francisco Suarez, the canvas on international law was well developed by Francisco de Vitoria, seventy years earlier.

In the last chapter that leads us to the incredible transitional period of the twentieth century, we will see one innovator after the other. We start with Alphonsus Liguori who brought advocacy, pastoral care, and moral theology together in a way that no one in theological ethics did before and conclude the book with two other innovators, William Spohn and Yiu Sing Lucas Chan, who chartered the field of biblical ethics, which, thanks to them, is just now emerging.

My narrative is then a corrective, by finally recognizing the oft-overlooked innovators who had the imagination, vision, diligence, and fortitude to carry the tradition forward. I am interested in you learning about these innovators; learning from innovators, we learn too to anticipate tomorrow by reading the indicators today.

Finally, forty years after Al's surprise visit, I am ready to share this first attempt of my understanding of the tradition that I have been so interested in knowing. It is very much a first attempt. I hope that it generates others to try to do similar projects, that by offering my reflections, others will subsequently want to develop theirs, by correcting, negating, ing, or critiquing what I have done here. I hope that this project empowers others who want to give a more global approach or a less Eurocentric one than what I provided here, though I hope they find in this offering a worthy cornerstone, or better, a foundational slab.

Indeed, hopefully this will yield other histories of theological ethics that highlight more effectively the voices and arguments of women or the thoughts and practices of particularly inspired movements. These are all much needed.

I close noting that a colleague and friend of mine in Vienna, Sigrid Muller, is working now on a similar history that likewise begins with the Bible and ends with Pope Francis. Hers, I suspect, will be more "academic" than mine. Still, we both believe that such works are needed now, believing that we can be assisted in living the moral life as Roman Catholics by appreciating the developments of the tradition. And therein hopefully by understanding the rich and complex ways that our predecessors pursued and lived the moral life, we might also, like them, understand the call to "Go and do likewise." <>

Genesis and Cosmos: Basil and Origen on Genesis 1 and Cosmology by Adam Rasmussen [Bible in Ancient Christianity, Brill, ISBN 9789004396920]

In Genesis and Cosmos Adam Rasmussen examines how Basil and Origen addressed scientific problems in their interpretations of Genesis 1. For the first time, he offers an in-depth analysis of Basil's thinking on three problems in Scripture-and-science: the nature of matter, the super-heavenly water, and astrology. Both theologians worked from the same fundamental perspective that science is the "servant" of Christianity, useful yet subordinate. Rasmussen convincingly shows how Basil used Origen's writings to construct his own solutions. Only on the question of the water does Basil break with Origen, who allegorized the water. Rasmussen demonstrates how they sought to integrate science and Scripture and thus remain instructive for those engaged in the dialogue between religion and science today.

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Scripture and Science

The question of the relationship between the Bible and science is current but not new. There are many aspects to the question, but then as now Genesis 1, which describes the origin and nature of the cosmos, plays an outsized role. The earliest interpreters of Scripture, such as Philo, grappled with the problem of cosmology. Two of these interpreters were Origen of Alexandria and Basil of Ceasarea (also known as St. Basil the Great), Greek theologians of the third and fourth centuries, respectively. They are a natural pair: each received a secular education, studying the writings of the Greek philosophers and scholars, but eventually left their secular studies behind in order to pursue a life dedicated to theological controversy and preaching. Both experienced the problem of the relationship between the Bible and secular knowledge personally, not just theoretically. This personal aspect of the question makes them excellent subjects for study, as they engaged questions of cosmology with interest and knowledge. Basil’s writings show clear signs that he took inspiration from Origen, whom he studied and admired. It is my belief, which has motivated this study, that their approach to the problem of Scripture and science has something to teach those of us today who still try to answer it.

The horns of the Bible–science dilemma are well known and well worn: one gives way to the other. Christian fundamentalists reject science, while atheistic scientists (and scientistic atheists) reject the Bible. A saying of the third-century Latin theologian Tertullian has become, rightly or wrongly, the textbook slogan for the fundamentalist

rejection of secular knowledge: “What has Athens to do with Jerusalem?” The rejection of religion on the basis of science has seen something of a resurgence this century, as illustrated by the massive success of The God Delusion by Oxford biologist Richard Dawkins.3 Although the masses gravitate toward either of these two extremes (science vs. Scripture), it is possible to find a middle ground. Many Christians today seek a mediation or conciliation between science and their faith. The same was true of Christians of the past. Some scholars of early Christianity have already examined the question of how some notable early Christian theologians dealt with the problem of the Bible and cosmology. It is within this field of inquiry that this book belongs.

For Basil’s thoughts on cosmology, one must especially study his nine sermons called the Hexaemeron, which means “six days,” i.e., Genesis 1. They are a fertile field for cosmology and theology because Basil sprinkled them with numerous references to the physics, cosmology, and biology of his day. In them, Basil drew upon his own education in Greek philosophy and science, discussing a number of different theories and hypotheses, usually weighing in with his own opinion. Although a bishop, he was well versed in secular studies. He also used, without saying so, writings of Origen. The vast majority of Origen’s works, unfortunately, have been lost. Thankfully, some crucial excerpts of his commentary on the book of Genesis have survived, as well as a sermon on Genesis 1. In these and other works of his he, no less than Basil, displayed his profound erudition, both secular and scriptural.

In the hexaemeral sermons Basil encountered three specific cosmological problems that Origen also encountered, namely, the nature of matter (Gen 1:2), the water above the sky (Gen 1:6–7), and astrology (Gen 1:14). These three problems are the focus of this book, and make up its third, fourth, and fifth chapters. They do not, of course, exhaust every statement Origen and Basil ever made about cosmology, let alone ancient science generally.6 In addressing these three problems, Basil drew upon his knowledge of Origen, though he did not always agree with him. The method of this study is to specify how Basil’s responses to the questions compare and contrast with the ones Origen gave to the same questions.

In the first chapter, I will look at Origen and Basil's upbringings and early career decisions. They had much in common: both received a classical, secular education while also being instructed in the Bible by their Christian families. Basil even had a familial connection to Origen. He says that his religious formation came primarily from his grandmother, Macrina. She, in turn, was converted to Christianity during the evangelization of Pontus by St. Gregory the Wonderworker. Basil believed (and many still do) that this Gregory was the same Gregory who wrote a panegyric to Origen, and to whom Origen wrote a letter advising him to pursue theology rather than law. This connection helps explain why Basil drew so heavily upon Origen's theology, even while maintaining a guarded distance due to the brewing controversies over "Origenism." The life trajectories of the two theologians were similar. Upon attaining adulthood, each embarked upon a secular career: Origen as a "grammarian" (literature teacher) and Basil as a rhetor, who for a time pursued advanced studies in Athens. Later, they abandoned their secular careers in favor of theology, and both men were ordained presbyters (and in Basil's case bishop).

Their shared attitude toward the secular education they received was ambivalent. It is best expressed through a metaphor coined by Origen: secular studies (especially philosophy) are the "servants" of Christianity. As a servant, education helps the interpreter to discover the correct interpretation of Scripture. Nevertheless, also as a servant, it always remains subject to its mistress, Christianity. Each theologian worked out the details from this common, theoretical starting point. Basil, a bishop and polemicist, had a more conservative mindset than Origen. He placed the accent on the subordination of secular knowledge to divine revelation. In his rhetoric, Basil often excoriated philosophers for their convoluted and mutually exclusive opinions, which fell short of simple biblical truth. Despite this rhetoric, he often used secular knowledge in his sermons and treatises. Origen, a speculative thinker, placed the accent upon the usefulness of secular knowledge. He was freer and bolder than Basil, though by no means captured by philosophy (as has sometimes been claimed about him). In fact, he was just as willing as Basil to reject a philosophical idea if it contradicted Christian doctrine.

The second chapter is an examination of both authors' scriptural hermeneutics: how do they interpret the Bible? This is a necessary prelude to looking at the particular interpretations they give of Genesis 1. We cannot understand specific biblical exegeses without first understanding an exegete's methodology. Basil adopted the same system that Origen developed. Origen drew upon the thought of Philo, a Jewish contemporary of St. Paul whose views were rejected by rabbinic Judaism at the same time they were being taken up by some Christian theologians. Origen divided the Bible into three parts, which he likened to the three components of humanity: body, soul, and spirit.

The "body" is the plain, literal meaning of a passage. This meaning is expressed to the general, "simple" reader. Origen adds a major caveat, which has led to much controversy: according to him, some passages do not have a "body." That is, they should not be taken literally. For example, Gen 3:21 says that God made garments of skin for Adam and Eve. Origen thought this and similar passages to be absurd or impossible if taken literally. God put such absurdities and falsehoods into the Bible in order to alert the discerning, spiritual reader to search for a higher meaning. This kind of allegorical approach had precedent in some interpreters of Homer, who also struggled with difficult and offensive passages.

The "soul" of Scripture, according to Origen, is a nonliteral (figurative, allegorical) interpretation that speaks about virtue and vice. It is a way of reading the Bible designed to provide moral instruction. Rather than being just history lessons and ancient Israelite legislation, the stories and laws in the Bible tell us how to live, if only we can decode them properly. Origen's classic example of this kind of "psychic" exegesis is Paul's interpretation of Deut 25:4 in 1 Cor 9:9–10. Paul took a statute about not muzzling oxen and turned it into a moral instruction about paying missionaries for their labor. According to Origen, every passage of the Bible contains such a hidden, psychic meaning, though these meanings can only be discovered by readers who have begun to progress in the spiritual (ascetic) lifestyle.

Finally, the highest (or deepest) level of Scripture is its "spirit." This is a second, distinct allegorical interpretation, concerned not with morality but with theology. Deep truths

about God and Christ are hidden beneath every biblical passage. Such spiritual messages can be puzzled out only by the "perfect," that is, those (like Origen) fully practicing the ascetic lifestyle. Although this sounds very esoteric, in reality Origen often delivered these spiritual interpretations in his sermons preached in church, right alongside literal and moral interpretations. Since his congregations must have been made up of ordinary, married people, they at least had access to the spiritual meaning of the Bible through him.

In his various sermons, particularly those on the Psalms, Basil uses Origen's threefold system. His friend St. Gregory Nazianzen also confirms that this was Basil's hermeneutic. Yet in Basil's nine sermons on Genesis 1, Basil eschewed allegorical readings in favor of a literal approach. In the final homily, he responds to criticism by deriding allegorical exegesis, likening it to the interpretation of dreams! Did he turn his back on Origenian exegesis after so many years? No. Although his rhetoric does give that misleading impression, the issue is one of biblical genre. In his struggle against dualistic theologies and cosmologies (associated with Gnosticism), Basil insisted that Genesis 1 should be taken literally. The reason was that dualists supported their worldview by appealing to allegorical readings of the "darkness" and "abyss" of Genesis 1, which they interpreted to be the cosmic principle of Evil, locked in an eternal struggle with Good (God). Against this, Basil maintained that Genesis 1 means what it says: everything God made, including the darkness, the abyss, and the sea creatures that live in it, is intrinsically good. There is no cosmic Evil. The scriptural cosmogony is not a cryptic myth in need of allegorical deciphering. It is a straightforward, true account of the origin of the universe. Basil's insistence upon a literal reading brings him into conflict with Origen, for whom the first three chapters of Genesis were quintessential examples of texts not meant to be taken literally.

In chapter 3, I will look at the first issue Origen and Basil encountered in reading Genesis 1, which is the "unformed earth" of v. 2. The word unformed (^^^^^^^^^^^^^^) suggested to Christians as early as St. Justin the Platonic-Aristotelian concept of "formless matter." The idea was that everything in the universe is constituted from some undifferentiated, shapeless stuff. This "prime matter" was the

passive principle that, when it encountered the active principle (God), became everything we see—the physical cosmos. This matter became perceptible only when it took particular "forms," like a rock, a tree, or an animal. (This theory is called "hylomorphism.") Interpreting Gen 1:1–2 in the light of this scientific theory made for a neat harmony of science and Scripture.

The danger of this neat idea, first perceived by Theophilus of Antioch in the late second century, was that such a view of matter, if not carefully qualified, would make matter equal to God. The universe would draw its beginning, not from one eternal principle, but two: God and matter. Indeed, Plato compared God to a father and the "receptacle" (which ancient philosophers assimilated to Aristotle's "matter") to a mother. It was necessary for Christians to state, as Theophilus did, that prime matter itself must first have been made by God out of nothing (ex nihilo). By the standards of philosophy, this qualification seemed absurd, since nothing can come from nothing.

We know from Origen that some educated Christians took this objection seriously. In order to get around the problem of having nothing come from nothing (it can't come from God, since God is one and uncompounded), they rejected the theory of hylomorphism. According to them, only the "forms" exist: there is no such thing as "matter." This allowed them to postulate a single principle of being (God) without having to argue that nothing could come from nothing. Origen acknowledged the cleverness of this point of view but rejected it. Hylomorphism was just too useful a theory to be thrust aside. Without it, how can we understand how one thing becomes another (for example, sand becoming glass)? It is the matter that remains constant throughout all changes of "form." (Hylomorphism is the ancient equivalent to the law of conservation of energy.) Hylomorphism was a useful "servant." Nevertheless, the "apostolic preaching" (Christian dogma) was clear that God made the universe from nothing—there are not two first principles of existence.

Origen's solution was to argue that prime matter was not eternal and really did come from nothing. His argument essentially depended upon two concepts: God's power and God's providence. If prime matter could exist without God having made it, then, he

argues, the "forms," too, should be able to come into existence without God—in which case God is not Creator! Furthermore, it is rather lucky that God happened to find all this prime matter just lying around, ready to be made into a good universe. Had he not, he would have been powerless to make it, if matter is uncreated. If we entertain this hypothesis, then God's providence is meaningless. God did not provide the matter needed, but simply got lucky. Either that, Origen says, or there is a providence higher than God that made the matter available to him—which is ridiculous blasphemy. The bottom-line for Origen was that philosophers failed to grasp the scope of God's unlimited power. God can do what seems impossible: to make matter out of nothing.

Basil tackles this same problem in his second homily on Genesis. Unlike Origen, he divorces the scriptural text from the theory of hylomorphism. It's not a question of explaining how God made prime matter but of showing that the text is not talking about that at all. "Unformed" means that God first made the earth in an incomplete state, because it was not yet furnished with all the plants and animals that would later make it complete. Only after clearing that up could Basil refute the idea that matter is eternal. Here he clearly shows his dependence upon Origen. He uses the same arguments, although in a more compact and rhetorical form. His goal was not to write a philosophical argument as Origen did, but to inform and entertain his hearers. By focusing on the false analogy people make between God and human craftsmen, who must make from a pre-existing material (an analogy Origen mentions), Basil effectively derides the view of the philosophers as foolish. They should have listened to the plain teaching of Scripture instead of trying to reason about God based on human analogies.

In his exuberance to refute the idea of uncreated, eternal matter, Basil nevertheless maintained the theory of hylomorphism. Like Origen, he had no interest in attacking philosophical theories as such. In fact, he at one point even uses hylomorphism to help explain what we can and cannot know of God. Just as we cannot in any way perceive prime matter itself, but only the particular "forms" it takes, neither can we know God is—his essence. We can perceive only God's attributes as revealed through his works, which are thus analogous to the "forms" that matter takes. Not only does Basil not

reject the philosophical theory of hylomorphism, he uses it, like a servant, to help in theological disputation.

In chapter 4, I will examine Gen 1:6–7 and the perennial problem of the water above the sky. The Hebrew cosmology imagined water above the sky, from which comes rain. The standard Aristotelian cosmology of the Greeks was incompatible with this. According to it, each of the four elements had a natural position, and thus they settle into four concentric spheres, which taken together constitute the cosmos. At the bottom, the "heaviest" element is the earth, which naturally forms a sphere (a point Basil makes). Just above that is the sphere of water (the oceans). Next is the sphere of the air (the atmosphere), above which is the sphere of fire. According to most (including Basil himself), the sphere of fire is heaven. Within this physical system, it makes no sense for there to be water above the air, let alone above heaven.

Origen was aware of this problem, and it helped guide his entire interpretation of the opening verses of Genesis 1. On this matter, he closely followed Philo. According to Philo, there were actually two creations: first a spiritual, eternal creation, and then a physical, temporal creation. The first five verses of Genesis refer to this spiritual creation: the "heaven" of verse 1 is the spiritual realm where God and the angels live. The "earth" of verse 2 is the spiritual archetype (Platonic "idea") of the physical earth God will make later in vv. 9–10. The "abyss" of verse 3 is hell. The "waters" of v. 3 are spiritual powers (angels and demons). Since Origen's system included room for two distinct allegorical readings, he adds a psychic interpretation of these "waters": the spiritual person, who spends their time contemplating heaven, partakes of these waters, as Jesus himself says (John 4:14; 7:38). The wicked person, in contrast, partakes of the waters of the abyss: they are plagued by demons. The light of vv. 4–5 is the divine light, perceptible to the mind alone, not the eyes. Naturally, Origen connects the divine light to Jesus Christ (John 1:4–5,8–9; 8:12; 9:5). The "day one" of v. 5 refers to eternity. Everything changes with v. 6. Now God makes a physical earth and sky—the cosmos. These are patterned after the aforementioned spiritual heaven and earth. Because the physical sky is the boundary (^^^^) between the worlds, it is also given the name "heaven" (^^^^^^^), even though it is only a copy.

If we possessed Origen's commentary on Genesis, we would be able to say more about how Origen took all this. But it is clear from what we do possess that he accepted Philo's general framework. When the physical sky was created, the spiritual "water" (the angels) remained above. For Origen, the lower "water" here does not refer to physical water at all, but to the "water" of the underworld (the demons). Those are the two "waters" kept separate by the physical cosmos made in vv. 6–7. Actual, physical water is not mentioned until v. 9, when it is gathered into the seas, right where it belongs above the earth.

In a major departure from Origen, Basil rejected the whole idea of a twofold creation in Genesis 1. Consistent with his view that it should be taken literally, he defended the scriptural cosmology and cosmogony at face-value. Basil did not interpret the opening verses of Genesis as being about spiritual things. There is, however, one exception: he refers to a traditional interpretation of "day one" as meaning eternity. This is the only instance in all nine homilies of him allowing for a more-than-literal interpretation of Genesis 1. He permitted it only because it was traditional. It stood alongside his own literal interpretation of "day one," which was that it was simply the first day. One day, by itself, is a symbol of eternity, Basil concedes.

Basil distinguishes the heaven of v. 1 from the later "firmament" that God makes in vv. 6–7, but in a different way than Philo and Origen. The former heaven is the actual, physical sky, which Basil says has a smoke-like substance. The second "heaven" is called the "firmament" only because it is firm compared to the proper heaven. Rejecting the Philonian-Origenian etymology that derived heaven (^^^^^^^) from boundary (^^^^), Basil says it came from see (^^^^). This "firmament" or "heaven" is nothing more than the clouds that we see when we look up! The water above this "heaven" is not liquid but gaseous ("aerial water"), which explains how it stays aloft. Since water on the Greek view was inherently cold, this massive body of "aerial" water keeps the earth from being burned up by the sun. This global cooling system will eventually run out of water, which is when the earth will be dissolved by fire, just as Scripture says. Basil's solution to the problem is ingenious. It is unclear how he thought it fit with ancient physics: if the water were actually air, all would be well, but air was defined as hot, not cold like

water. As water, it is out of place above air. In any case, Basil did not reject the standard physics and tried to make the scriptural account work with it. If he had been a fundamentalist, he would have rejected physics.

Basil was aware of Origen's view: he says that he has a bone to pick with "some from the Church" who allegorize the waters of Genesis. He means either Origen himself or perhaps fourth-century Origenists, who in any case only built upon what he already had written. Here Basil mentions that they connect the physical oceans to the demons by saying that the turbulent waves of the ocean are an image of the chaotic madness of the demons. It is probable, though uncertain, that Origen made this connection in his lost commentary. Even though Basil criticizes Origen here, he omits his name—a sign of respect for his master. Basil distinguishes Origen's interpretation, which he personally rejects, from the heretical interpretations of the Gnostics. This is an inter-Church dispute in which Basil's literal exegesis conflicted with the Philonian-Origenian tradition. By no means did Basil associate Origen with heretics. Nevertheless, Basil's peculiar view of Genesis 1 as a literal cosmology required him to reject Origen's view on principle.

In chapter 5, I will examine the third and final scientific problem that Origen and Basil confronted in their exegeses of Genesis 1: the role of the stars—astrology. Verse 14 says that they were made "for signs." To Origen (again following Philo), this suggested astrology: the regular but complex movements of the stars and planets contain information about the future. In the ancient world, astrology was considered a legitimate science, indistinguishable from what in modernity has come to be called "astronomy." As one of the four basic sciences, it, too, was a servant of Christianity. Consequently, Origen accepted astrology on a basic level. However, he radically qualified its nature in the light of Christianity, to make the servant submit to its mistress.

For Origen, there were two problems with astrology: fatalism and genethlial-ogy (the casting of nativities, today called "horoscopes"). Fatalism is incompatible with free will, which Origen considered part of the "apostolic preaching." After all, if people do not

have free will, there is no possibility for moral responsibility and divine judgment. And yet do not biblical prophecies prove that the future is pre-determined? Origen argues that, paradoxical as it may seem, God's foreknowledge does not cause the future, but rather the event (future to us) is the cause of God's foreknowledge. The fact that information about the future may occasionally be revealed to some people changes nothing. It is the same way with the stars: the information they contain about the future does not cause that future, but only signifies it.

The second problem is the casting of nativities, which Christians rejected as a forbidden form of divination. Rather than just condemning it as taboo magic, as a fundamentalist would do, Origen disproved its practicability by drawing upon arguments made by philosophers, notably Sextus Empiricus. The bottom-line of the refutation is that the sky rotates much too quickly to be measured accurately. Origen makes several points, all of which he had read in philosophers before him. For example, how does an astrologer explain cultural customs, such as circumcision, that occur to all people of a given race, regardless of when each individual is born? Or, on the other hand, why of all the people born at a certain time does one become a king and another a pauper? Upon intellectual scrutiny, the practice of genethlialogy is shown to be impossible.

Nevertheless, Origen accepted the idea that the stars contain information about the future. This is proof of the high esteem that he accorded secular studies. The idea that the two worlds—heavenly and earthly—were interconnected was an intellectual commonplace prior to modern science. Even though astrologers were incapable of making accurate horoscopes, Origen believed that the angels were able to read the stars in order to learn about God's plans. In addition, God gave this angelic power to certain extraordinary spiritual individuals, such as the patriarch Jacob. This example Origen took from a lost apocryphal work called the "Prayer of Jacob." In this way, he maintained the theory of astrology in an intellectualized, spiritualized form that bore no resemblance to the popular practices Christians condemned and that eschewed fatalistic implications.

Basil launches into a polemic against astrology when he encounters Gen 1:14 in his hexaemeral sermons. First, though, he deconstructs the connection between the biblical verse and astrology. The "signs" that the Bible refers to have nothing to do with astrology and future events, but only with the weather. People experienced with the sky, like sailors and farmers, make predictions about the weather based on its appearance as well as that of the sun and moon. The way he separates the biblical text from the problem of astrology is exactly the same thing he did when he dealt with the "unformed earth," which he believed had nothing to do with prime matter. As for astrology itself, he recycles Origen's arguments, much as he did when refuting the eternity of prime matter. In explaining how the sky moves too quickly to be measured accurately, Basil reproduces two sentences from Origen's commentary almost verbatim, a clear sign of dependence upon his Genesis commentary fragment preserved in the Philocalia. Since he also makes some points not found in Origen, we know that he had other sources of information as well, similar to Sextus Empiricus. Basil had no new arguments but deployed the standard ones he learned from his studies with his usual rhetorical skill.

On the basic theory of astrology—the correspondence between heaven and earth—Basil is conspicuously silent. We cannot infer from his separation of Gen 1:14 from astrology, nor from his rejection of genethlialogy and fatalism, that he rejected it. In fact, Basil mentions astrological questions specifically when giving examples of the legitimacy of secular studies. This, combined with his general esteem for Origen, make it likely that he accepted the view that the movements of the stars have significance for life on earth. Furthermore, he says nothing of Origen's theory of angelic astrology. If he rejected it, he never says so. Admittedly, this is an argument from silence.

There is, however, one astrological idea of Origen's that Basil explicitly rejected: that the stars are alive. Like other aspects of astrology, this was a notion widely accepted by ancient thinkers (though not Aristotle). For Philo, Origen, and many others, the beauty of the stars and their perfectly-regular movements indicated that they, too, possessed spirit like us: they are alive. The cosmic fall caused all spirits to become embodied: the better ones became the heavenly bodies, superior to human, earthly bodies. This was

not a punishment, but a form of service, since the rest of the physical cosmos needed their light, as well as their movements to mark time. To Origen, it was "beyond all stupidity" to doubt that these astral bodies are alive. Basil rejected this notion. In fact, he seems to turn Origen's own words against him: to imagine that the stars are alive, Basil says, is "more than madness." (Since Origen's words here are today preserved only in Latin translation, we do not know if this was an exact quotation.) Basil was not alone among Christians in rejecting this concept. It was one of several points of "Origenism," already becoming controversial in the 370's, that were eventually condemned by the authorities of the fifth century. That Basil chose to speak out against this view (albeit in passing) shows again that he was aware of and agreed with the growing criticism of Origen on this point. That he, at the same time, chose not to name Origen shows he still admired the great theologian.

My study of these three problems proves that the theory of secular education as "servant" held true for both Origen and Basil in practice. In each case, both accepted secular theories and even used them to promote their theology: hylomorphism, elemental physics and cosmology, and astrology. The limits to which they both held were imposed by Christianity. Prime matter, while real, was made by God and not eternal. Astrological fatalism is contrary to free will, moral responsibility, and divine judgment. Casting horoscopes was shown to be impossible (rather than simply condemned as a form of demonic magic).

Where the two really disagreed was on the super-heavenly water and, more broadly, the nature of Genesis 1 as a text. Here we see Basil's more conservative bent: for him, Genesis 1 had to be taken literally, which meant there really must be a body of water in the sky. Even here, though, Basil labored to make sense of such a notion through an explanation that, while still literal, strayed far from what seems to be the text's plain meaning. Basil ruled out Origen's allegorical solution to the problem, but not as though it were heretical. Basil's reason is not so much that it lacked plausibility but that he was determined to maintain the literal validity of Genesis over against dualisms. The best way to do that was to insist on the literal reasonableness of Genesis 1. That the two disagreed on this point is a salutary reminder that the "servant" metaphor is not a

system that provides ready-made answers to difficult questions. It is a way of thinking intended to integrate two different spheres of knowledge: scientific and divine. How one actually squares them in particular cases can vary widely.

I conclude this introduction by stating that, like all historical theologians, I undertake my study in the belief that what we can learn from the Fathers of the Church has something useful to say to Christians today. This is not a work of purely antiquarian interest (as if any work of history ever were). Richard Norris has noted the profound impact modern science and technology have made on Christians and turned to the Fathers for answers. He writes:

> The question of the Christian appropriation of secular scientific and philosophical ideas [has] been canvassed before, most notably perhaps in the early centuries of the Church's existence, and not without constructive result. It may be, therefore, that some light can be shed on the modern problem by study of its ancient analogue.

Likewise, Peter Bouteneff, referring to the perennial debate about whether Genesis 1 should be taken literally, writes: "The evolution of the early Christian interpretation of Genesis 1–3 is of more than antiquarian interest: like all good history, it has the potential to illuminate the present." Their sentiments are my own. <>

Origen: An Introduction to His Life and Thought by Ronald E. Heine [Cascade Companions, Cascade Books, ISBN 9781498288958]

The late second and early third century was a turbulent time in the Roman Empire and in the relationship between the empire and the church. Origen was the son of a Christian martyr and was himself imprisoned and tortured in his late life in a persecution that targeted leaders of the church. Deeply pious and a gifted scholar, Origen stands as one of the most influential Christian teachers in church history, and also one of the most controversial.

This introduction to Origen begins by looking at some of the circumstances that were formative influences on his life. It then turns to some key elements in his thought. The approach here differs from that taken by most earlier studies by working from the central

position that Scripture had for Origen. Heine argues that Origen's thought, in his later life especially, reflects his continual interaction with the Bible.

Review

"Heine's book provides an excellent entree into Origen, the towering scholar and churchman who flourished in the early third century. For those who wish to learn about Origen's life, how he engaged Scripture, or key themes in his thinking, Heine offers a clear, concise, and accessible orientation. I especially recommend it for readers who are beginning their study of the church fathers." --Peter W. Martens, Professor of Early Christianity, Saint Louis University

"Origen rightly remains ever fascinating and ever controversial. There is no better guide to the great Alexandrian than Ron Heine, and this book displays on every page the deep erudition and skills of precise observation that we have come to expect. There simply is no better short introduction." --Lewis Ayres, Professor of Catholic and Historical Theology, Durham University

"The overflowing biblical treasures of Origen, for so long misunderstood, forgotten, and even suppressed, are slowly being rediscovered. This book offers a master class conducted by one of the world's foremost Origen interpreters, who here condenses a lifetime of closely reading Origen's texts into an attractively accessible introduction. A gift to students and teachers, Ron Heine's Origen is a model of crystalline clarity and evocative insight."" --Michael Cameron, Professor of Historical Theology, University of Portland

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One can only wish or dream that her or his own intellectual work on understanding Scripture or setting forth its theological meaning will endure so long or reach so far as that of Origen of Alexandria. While he was dead by the middle of the third century, Origen's work has continued to stir deep admiration and animosity down to the present time, although much of the animosity has abated since the work of some significant scholars in the twentieth century. His influence has crossed all boundaries in the church from the ancient Greek and Latin speaking East-West boundaries to the modern ones of Orthodox, Catholic, and Protestant. Much of his extensive work was lost or destroyed soon after his lifetime, but a large corpus has continued to exist, either in its original Greek or in later Latin translations. In more recent times additional texts have been recovered through fortuitous discoveries, first that of the Tura papyri in Egypt in the mid-twentieth century, which yielded two previously unknown texts: the Dialogue with Heraclides and the Treatise on the Passover, along with portions of texts already possessed, and more recently, in 2012, the discovery of twenty-nine Greek homilies on the Psalms in a twelfth-century codex in the Bayerischen Staatsbiblio-thek

in Munich. New editions and translations of Origen's works continue to be produced in numerous countries and languages. They can be found in series and in individual translations in German, French, Italian, Spanish, and English, and probably in others of which I am unaware.

In the last decade of the twentieth century I was director of a small research institute called the Institute for the Study of Christian Origins sponsored by the Disciples of Christ in Tübingen, Germany. I recently revisited Tübingen to participate in a symposium. In a conversation with one of the participants at the symposium I was asked who was teaching theological subjects at the University when I was working in Tübingen. When I began to list a few of the theologians who were at the University at that time—Martin Hengel, Jürgen Moltmann, Hans Küng—my conversation partner interrupted me and said, "O, you were here when the giants were here!" I had not thought of them in that particular way when I was living and working in Tübingen, but that is a good descriptive term for the collection of notable theological scholars who were clustered at the Eberhard Karls University in Tübingen at that time. And that is a good descriptive term for Origen.

Origen was a giant in the early church. When one thinks beyond the first century and the apostles, there was no one comparable to him until one gets to Augustine in the late fourth century. Origen moved like a colossus over the intellectual life of the early church, whether one thinks of biblical interpretation, theological insight, doctrinal development, or influence on subsequent leaders of the church. He had a lasting influence on how the church read Scripture, especially the Old Testament, and on how it thought about and formulated its doctrines. His pervasive influence spread through his immediate contact with students and the publication of his numerous writings.

Origen was greatly admired and intensely disliked during his lifetime and afterwards. Both of those reactions were often elicited by the fact that his thought was frequently "outside the box," so to speak. At a time when the majority in the church, including its bishops and presbyters, believed that Scripture must be read and understood in the simple, literal meaning of the words, Origen deftly practiced a non-literal way of

understanding Scripture's words that rankled the feelings of many of his readers or listeners. This can often be detected by remarks he makes in his homilies and commentaries. His teachings about the basic Christian doctrines of the creation of the universe, the incarnation of Christ, and the consummation of history also diverged, significantly in many cases, from views held by multitudes in his time. Aspects of these same views, nevertheless, would later become incorporated into the general faith of the church in the West as well as the East. Many of the most important leaders of the western church in the fourth century were strongly influenced by Origen's way of interpreting Scripture and by his theological insights, including Augustine of Hippo, Ambrose of Milan, and Jerome of Bethlehem.

Origen did not develop his thought in an academic context nor did he envision his many treatises serving such an audience. He developed his thought in the context of the church and he produced his treatises to serve the church— to protect it from straying from what he considered to be the truth of the message of Christ and to enable it to understand this message in its diverse Scriptural expressions. In one of his earlier works, written while he was still living in Alexandria, Origen notes that he has undertaken to write books interpreting the Scriptures because numerous such books were being produced by heterodox Christians that threatened to confuse or mislead those faithful to the common understanding of the church. Origen was always concerned about the faith of the church, both in protecting it and in interpreting it to help others grasp its obvious and less obvious meanings. He was a practicing Christian all his life. He commented in one of his homilies that he wanted to be and be called a Christian in his action as well as his thought. In modern jargon one could say that he did not just talk the talk; he walked the walk. He was a man of deep faith and prayer. He often requested the prayers of his listeners to help him in his preaching, and he considered prayer to be the most important element in interpreting Scripture.

This book begins by sketching the more important influences on the formation of Origen's thought, including the circumstances of his life, so far as that is knowable. The sources for depicting Origen's life are scarce. While a large number of his writings have been preserved, he says very little about himself in them. His letters, which would be an

important source of information, have largely perished. Eusebius refers to more than a hundred letters that he had seen—letters to an emperor and his wife, to bishops, and to various other persons—and arranged in separate "roll-cases" to preserve them, but they seem to have perished in antiquity. Only two have been preserved in the Greek language in which Origen wrote them; one to a former student named Gregory, and another to a scholar named Africanus. There is also a letter to some friends in Alexandria preserved in a Latin translation of the fourth century by Rufinus of Aquileia. Besides these three letters, we have only occasional sentences from letters quoted in Eusebius' Church History. The Apology for Origen written by Pamphilus—an early fourth-century priest, martyr, and devotee of Origen—would also have been a good source for information about Origen. Pamphilus wrote the Apology in Caesarea, where Origen spent the latter part of his life. Origen's library was there, which would have contained his own works as well as others he had gathered for his work. Pamphilus had a passion for collecting books. He had copied many of Origen's works with his own hand. He was later imprisoned and while in prison he wrote the five books of his Apology with the help of Eusebius. After Pam-philus' martyrdom, Eusebius added a sixth book. These books too, with the exception of the first, have perished.

There are only a few sources from which we derive our biographical information about Origen, all from the fourth century. Jerome and Rufinus, Latin authors of the Western church, both translated numerous works of Ori-gen from Greek into Latin and in the process provided some information about his life. The first book of the Apology for Origen by Pamphilus is another source of information. The Apology, however, is primarily a defense of Origen's thought and says very little about his life in general. This, too, has been preserved only in a Latin translation by Ru-finus in the fourth century. The two main sources from antiquity that provide biographical information about Origen's life are both from the Eastern Greek-speaking church: works of Eusebius of Caesarea and Epiphanius of Salamis. The sixth book of the Church History of Eusebius, bishop of Caesarea in Palestine, is the most important source. Origen was a kind of hero of the faith in Eusebius' eyes. The other source is section sixty-four of the

Panarion (Medicine Chest) of Epiphanius, bishop of Salamis in Cyprus, for whom Origen was a heretic.

Eusebius, as bishop in Caesarea, had ready access to important resources about Origen's life. Origen had spent the last portion of his life in Caesarea, and Pamphilus, who had studied Origen's works thoroughly, was presbyter there before Eusebius. Furthermore, it is generally recognized that a unique feature of Eusebius' historical works is his wide use and careful quotation of written sources. We do not know, on the other hand, where Epiphanius got his biographical information about Origen. For some of the views he presents he seems to be dependent on impressions he has drawn about Origen from a group of monks who claimed to be Origen's followers. Epiphanius considered these monks to be an heretical sect. He has very little to say about Origen's life in his account. Most of the rather lengthy section on Origen in the Panarion is devoted to refuting some controversial doctrines Epiphanius attributed to Origen. So, while Eusebius may give a rosy tint to his account of Origen's life, on the whole it is better to trust a person's friend for accurate information about him, especially if he has had access to reliable information, than trust an avowed enemy who wants to cast him in the worst possible light. The general approach to Origen's life in this book is structured by the information given by Eusebius.

This book is not an attempt to say everything that can be said about Origen, especially in the chapter on his thought. It is an introduction and as such hopes, beyond simply making him known to those who are unfamiliar with his life and thought, to elicit an interest in reading some of Origen's texts and wrestling with their complexities. I have also tried to allow Origen to speak for himself as much as possible, and in this way to give the reader access to Origen's own words (in English translation, of course). As I indicated at the beginning of this introduction, Origen was one of the most important and influential thinkers in the early church. Throughout his life he worked diligently at the interpretation of Scripture in his commentaries that covered most of the books of the Bible and in the application of Scripture to life in these commentaries as well as in his homilies. The extent of his influence on the church's faith makes an acquaintance

with his life and thought essential to anyone who wants to understand the roots of Christian faith. <>

The Sayings and Stories of the Desert Fathers and Mothers: Volume 1; A–H (Êta) translated and introduced by Tim Vivian [Cistercian Studies Series, Liturgical Press, 9780879071097]

The Sayings and Stories of the Desert Fathers and Mothers: Volume 2: Th–O (Theta–Oméga) translated and introduced by Tim Vivian [Cistercian Studies Series, Liturgical Press, 9780879072926]

2022 Catholic Media Association second place award in theology: history of theology, church fathers and mothers

The Sayings and Stories of the Desert Fathers and Mothers offers a new translation of the Greek alphabetical Apophthegmata Patrum, The Sayings of the Desert Fathers. For the first time in an English translation, this volume provides:

- extensive background and contextual notes
- significant variant readings in the alphabetical manuscripts and textual differences vis-à-vis the systematic and anonymous *Apophthegmata*
- reference notes to both quotations from Scriptures and the many allusions to Scripture in the sayings and stories.

In addition, there is an extensive glossary that offers information and further resources on people, places, and significant monastic vocabulary. Perfect for students and enthusiasts of the desert tradition.

Review

"A wonderful book. The introduction on its own ought to be required reading in all theological schools and for those interested in literature generally. This collection of *The Sayings and Stories of the Desert Fathers and Mothers* (Vol. 1) is an edition that is destined to become a classic standard. To situate his material, Tim Vivian offers a generous and reflective introduction to the desert tradition that is both scintillating in its intellectual brilliance and moving in its spiritual profundity. The scholarly translations are accompanied at every step by commentary and insight that demonstrate Vivian's fluent mastery and his status as one of the world's preeminent leaders in the field. It is a book that scholar and student alike will treasure."

V. Revd. Prof. John A. McGuckin, Faculty of Theology, Oxford University

"The flow and precision of Tim Vivian's translation allows for the personalities, messages, and worldview of the *Sayings* to resonate poignantly today. Moreover, his masterful notes reveal the complex linguistic and spiritual layers of these texts, as well as the degree to which scriptural language and imagery permeated monastic thought. Whether read for academic or spiritual purposes, one will encounter fresh insights and the distilled results of decades of research and reflection on every page of this remarkable volume."

Maged S. A. Mikhail, Professor of History, California State University, Fullerton

"To understand the parabolic and paradigmatic nature of the *apophthegmata* (wise sayings) of the desert ammas and abbas, it is best to have a guide as gifted in the ancient languages of the sayings as Vivian, but also to enter into these stories with the contemplative framework of *lectio divina*, as Vivian recommends in his introduction. In the process, the hidden depths of these elders open up layers in one's own search for the Holy One and the blessings and pitfalls of the spiritual life."

Mary Forman, OSB, Prioress, Monastery of St. Gertrude, Idaho

"A consummate scholar, deft translator, and skilled wordsmith, Tim Vivian links ancient insights to contemporary spirituality and the work for justice. In this collection of sayings and stories, he offers a wealth of detail to feed the mind of any scholar and an abundance of wisdom to fill the soul of every seeker."

The Rev. Gary Commins, DD

"Bringing a depth of experience as a translator of early monastic texts, Tim Vivian offers not only a new, vivid translation of the *Apopthegmata Patrum*, but also a rare window into the process, and challenge, of translation itself. With an introduction that not only orients the reader to this complex literature but also draws our attention to its contemporary spiritual significance, and a set of tools to decode the language of the desert fathers and mothers, this two-volume work offers rich resources for lovers of the desert monastic tradition and for those encountering for the first time."
Revd. Dr. Jane Foulcher, Associate Head of School and Senior Lecturer in Theology, School of Theology, Charles Sturt University, Australia

"Professor Tim Vivian has dedicated much of his academic career to bringing out the jewels of Coptic Monasticism that provided the inspirational and functional foundation for monasticism worldwide. His latest work brings the writings of the Mothers and Fathers in a model that serves both the benefit of their teachings as well as collectively the personality of those that said them. Bringing this systematic grouping from its original Greek to the English-speaking world is not only a blessing but a guide for those that seek holiness in their lives whether in the world or in seclusion away from it. The additional distinctive reflections of the author add that much value for the work. We pray that the complete collection will soon be in the hands of so many of us that waited for it for untold years."
Hany N. Takla, President. St. Shenouda the Archimandrite Coptic Society

"The desert fathers and mothers are still popular today, fifteen or sixteen centuries after their deeds and words were recorded. People are inspired by these pithy sayings, and perhaps at times amused by them. But in either case, the context in which they lived and worked and prayed is vague and general, usually limited to a brief introduction to the sayings themselves. Tim Vivian's book supplies this context and more. His introductions to each of the monks and nuns give what historical information is available, and he allows us to appreciate their individuality. He takes the time for personal reflection on the sayings of each one as a whole, rather than as separate quotes, and relates these ancient sayings to our world, brings them into our time, with wise lessons to teach us. In his notes, he gives more background, scriptural echoes and sources, and his exploration of the Greek behind the translation illuminates

aspects of the sayings which would otherwise be lost in translation. This is a book which general readers will thoroughly enjoy, and scholars will appreciate. I look forward to the next volume in this series."
Fr. Lawrence Morey, OCSO
"We should be grateful for this beautiful new translation of real treasures of the spiritual life that still speak to, yes convict, us."
Cistercian Studies Quarterly
"When the publication of this translation is complete it will certainly be the most comprehensive and thorough resource for encountering and appreciating this fundamental compendium of early monastic teaching."
Catholic Books Review

"What Vivian does here is invite the reader to take up and read the sayings. He also shows the ongoing relevance of monastic desert spirituality by pairing the teachings of the *apophthegmata* nicely with the contemporary spiritual teachings of Gregory Boyle (of Homeboy Industries) and the always-relevant Thomas Merton. It is clear that Vivian has not only translated the sayings but internalized their spiritual message, and he is eager to see the same transformation occur in his readers."
Greg Peters, Biola University, *American Benedictine Review*

"This volume explores a little known source of Christian spirituality. It offers an excellent excavation of the desert mystics and those regarded as early Christian parents of monastic type spirituality."
Catholic Media Association

"The Introduction is a masterpiece. Church historians will appreciate the new translation, which gives an authentic flavor to the sayings and stories that are fundamentally part of the oral tradition.
The Downside Review

"Speaking to us over a distance of some 1700 years, Tim Vivian continues to bring to life the profound but truly human stories and personalities of the Desert Fathers and Mothers. With his fresh translation and extensive footnotes and commentary, this volume, like the first, provides nourishment for the mind and spirit and transports us to an exciting new place that

is strangely compelling! 'For those who are capable of understanding these words and keeping them, there is joy and great profit' (Barsanuphius of Gaza)."
Lisa Agaiby, St. Athanasius College, University of Divinity
Published On: 2023-02-24

"In our time of division, fear, and constant moving, the desert mothers and fathers tell us otherwise. Sit in your place/cell. Don't run here and there. Tim Vivian's lucid translations and discerning commentary brings us the life-giving wisdom of these early monastics, a tremendous gift. We are in their debt, and his!"
The Rev. Michael Plekon, PhD, Professor Emeritus, The City University of New York - Baruch College

"The early ascetics spoke of direction and signposts along the spiritual way. I could think of no better guide in the 'sayings and stories' of the desert fathers and mothers than Tim Vivian. With meticulous veneration and observation, Vivian helps put together fundamental pieces of that distinctive, albeit intriguing puzzle of the fourth- and fifth-century *Apophthegmata* in a way that brings them to life for our admiration, education, and emulation in the twenty-first century."
John Chryssavgis, author of *In the Heart of the Desert* and *Desert Wisdom for Everyday Life* Published On: 2023-03-27

"First-rate scholarship paired with a contemporary idiom. These enigmatic, provocative, and deeply perceptive 'sayings' of the Desert Christians come to life in Tim Vivian's work. Like reading graffiti on a subway wall and pondering the wisdom of the ages at the same time. The desert weaves through these pages with characteristic ferocity and unexpected compassion. I love it."
Belden C. Lane, author of *The Solace of Fierce Landscapes: Exploring Desert and Mountain Spirituality*

Published On: 2023-03-30

“Tim Vivian has accomplished something extraordinary: a technical translation that is also user-friendly for those studying the early Christian movement. He has enriched this resource with his discussions around important early monastic/desert themes; footnotes that often provide more than technical information; and his excursuses. This is a great resource. I highly recommend it.”
Laura Swan, OSB, author of *The Forgotten Desert Mothers*
Published On: 2023-04-11

“A wonderful book. The introduction on its own ought to be required reading in all theological schools and for those interested in literature generally. This collection of *The Sayings and Stories of the Desert Fathers and Mothers* is an edition that is destined to become a classic standard. To situate his material, Tim Vivian offers a generous and reflective introduction to the desert tradition that is both scintillating in its intellectual brilliance and moving in its spiritual profundity. The scholarly translations are accompanied at every step by commentary and insight that demonstrate Vivian’s fluent mastery and his status as one of the world’s preeminent leaders in the field. It is a book that scholar and student alike will treasure.”
V. Revd. Prof. John A. McGuckin, Faculty of Theology, Oxford University Published On: 2023-04-11

"Tim Vivian’s translation of *The Sayings and Stories of the Desert Fathers and Mothers* offers both scholarly and pastoral insights using contemporary language. The annotations provide valuable revelations into the abstruse aphorisms, rendering it an essential resource for scholars and seekers alike. Vivian emphasizes the practical application of the sagacious wisdom of the desert fathers and mothers in everyday life, making it an indispensable volume for spiritual leaders seeking a profound understanding of early Christian spirituality."
Father Macarius Refela, Presbyter, Coptic Orthodox Diocese of Los Angeles and Hawaii
Published On: 2023-04-12

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Prologue with Stories

It is impossible to separate the teller from the telling: that whatever I say . . . is a way of saying something about myself.

Given that this present volume contains numerous early monastic stories, I want to begin here with one. Once upon a time I received an invitation to go to Egypt. Since as a scholar I was publishing on the early Christian monks of that country (4th-7th

centuries) and had not yet been there, this was, to say the least, an exciting offer.' A group was going to the Wadi Natrun north from Cairo, about halfway between that city and Alexandria, on the Mediterranean, "Scetis" in the sayings and stories in this volume. The Wadi Natrun today has four active ancient monasteries.' This journey was to be a combined archeological-teaching (ad)venture; I was going to teach the course on early monasticism to students from Evangelical Christian colleges.

We met for the first class in a room spare but replete with beautiful Coptic icons. The texts we were studying was The Sayings of the Desert Fathers, the translation of the alphabetical Apophthegmata Patrum by Benedicta Ward. I opened the first meeting with a question: "When you hear the word monk or monks, what first comes to mind?" One young woman responded, "They're agents of Satan." This, I thought, was going to be a tough audience.

As I studied early monasticism more, I came to see that some scholars, to varying degrees, shared that student's reservations, even alarm. The great eighteenth-century historian Edward Gibbon is scurrilous: "the monastic saints, who excite only the contempt and pity of a philosopher," and "The Ascetics [sic], who obeyed and abused the rigid precepts of the Gospel, were inspired by the savage enthusiasm which represents man as a criminal, and God as a tyrant." Protestant scholars are conflicted:

- C. Wilfred Griggs is in general positive towards monasticism; he states that monasticism, "adopted as a way of life for devotional purposes, is a gift of the Egyptian church to the Christian world." But immediately before this, in discussing pre-monastic asceticism, especially with regard to Clement* and Origen,* he calls monasticism "an extreme form of asceticism."
- Kenneth Scott Latourette is first positive: "Monasticism has displayed many variations and has been one of the chief ways in which the vitality of the Christian faith has found expression." But, two sentences later, he declares, "To a certain degree monasticism represented the triumph of ideas which the Catholic Church had denounced as heretical. Into it crept something of the legalism, the belief that salvation can be earned and deserved, which is opposed to grace."

- To his credit, Justo L. Gonzalez devotes chapter 15 of volume 1 of The Story of Christianity, "The Monastic Reaction," to early monasticism, but he places that discussion in "Part II: The Imperial Church" and, as the chapter makes clear, sees monasticism incompletely and too simply as primarily a reaction against the Constantinian Church. He correctly states that "Monasticism was not the invention of an individual," but adds that it was "rather a mass exodus," which is uncertain. But then he calls this "mass exodus" a "contagion," and later says that stylites (pillar saints) used "ostentatious acts."

The above sources, which I read later, helped me understand that student, at least partially, though fortunately Satan does not make an appearance in these scholarly assessments. I don't remember anything else about our first discussion that morning in Egypt, but I clearly remember the decision I made later that day: I decided to abandon traditional classroom pedagogy. Instead, I was going to teach, or try to teach, the students about lectio, lectio divina, which the late Terrence Kardong discusses in his Foreword to this volume: attentive silent reading of a text—not so much for information but for transformation. The next day we met in the same room, under the benevolent watch of those sacred icons. We sat on the floor in a circle, with teacher as one of the students (student: Greek mathetes, "disciple," is cognate with mathánomai, "to learn" [English math]). Their assignment, and mine, had been to read some of the sayings from Ward's book, so I now asked them to take five to ten minutes, sitting in silence (squirming allowed), to look again at that day's sayings. I asked them to go back to a saying, or even a line or a word, that particularly said something to them—whatever that something was, and then we would share with one another.

It worked. I don't recall any details of the working, but I remember assuredly that it was a great class, that day and thereafter, that we shared with one another, and that, by the end of the course, all of us, even the young woman on the lookout for Satan, had a deeper understanding of the early monastic impulse, its desires and efforts, its hopes and dreams and goals. And, dare one say, its continuing relevance, even necessity? My hope is that you reading this volume will, at least metaphorically, sit within a circle of silence and read both for information and for inspiration, even transformation.

As Kathleen Norris writes in her Preface to this volume, she once had the same experience as I, and the same results. When she was teaching an honors course at Providence College, all of her students, unlike mine, "had attended Catholic elementary and high schools, and had read many Christian classics, such as the Confessions of St. Augustine. . . . Not one of them had heard of the desert fathers and mothers, and they were not excited about studying them." That is, "until they began to read the stories." Those students intuited something deeply human: "people learn by story," a Native American elder tells Kent Nerburn, "because stories lodge deep in the heart." In talking with Native elders, Nerburn says, apropos of the early Christian monastics, that "what struck me most deeply was the almost sacred value the elders placed on the importance of stories. . . . Stories were not mere entertainment to them, nor were they simple reminiscences; they were the traditional way of handing down the values and the memories of their culture—the way they had been taught by their elders—and they approached the task with something close to reverence."

As we've seen, story matters. With regard both to the stories in the gospels and those in the first centuries of Christianity, including early-monastic tellings and tales, scholars once placed too much emphasis on the Ur-text (the oldest, primal text) and ipsissima verba (the very words that Jesus or the early monks spoke), and not enough emphasis on what the stories are telling (present tense). Scholarship now more humbly acknowledges that we have very little access to Ur-texts or -speech. We have, metaphorically, a Big Bang (the origins of Christianity) and Smaller Bangs (the origins, say, of monasticism). The emphasis shifts, therefore, to what the speakers and writers are saying: What did they want their audiences to hear? What in fact might the audiences have heard?

Jacques van der Vliet has put this very well:

> these often colorful stories . . . offer far more and far better than history. . . . storytelling was a common device in late-antique literature in general and in monastic literature in particular. Such stories are not an inferior kind of literature, but an effective means of spiritual communication geared towards communion. . . . they were embedded in the social practices of the communities that selected, acquired, adapted and recited them in order to pass on the

> shared values of the group. In addition to reproducing these communities, they defined them socially, vis-à-vis other communities, but also teleologically, in a historical perspective, and theologically, in their relation to the supernatural. . . .
> Well-told stories allow us to empathize with the heroes of the story and to share a common experience, through an almost physical process designated as "embodiment" in the modern psychology of narrative. Drawing on a repertoire of shared topoi and formulas, such stories were a forceful means to forge community. Indeed, as we all know, communities, societies and nations live by stories, and the authors . . . were well aware of this fact, creating their own narrative universe."

Well-told stories. Sacred stories. Religious Studies can help us here: the discipline understands myth not as "falsehood," but as story, sacred stories that religious folk pass on because the stories still have meaning. (People and countries also have "secular" myths, which are often sacred to them.) Claudia Rapp, with many others, has made us more aware of the power(s) of story and stories' transformative abilities, "the impact the Holy Scriptures could have in bringing about immediate transformation of the reader." Rapp focuses on hagiography/ies, but her insights are appropriate here: we can say that the sayings and stories of the desert fathers and mothers are "little hagiographies," literally "sacred writings," or, more for our purposes here, stories with holy intent, the making of the sacred (or the transforming of the already sacred): "Hagiographical texts play a significant and very particular role in the process that joins the author and his [or her] audience in their participation in the sanctity of the holy man and woman. It is this process which I would like to call 'spiritual communication.' " The spiritual elder, the amma or abba, she observes, is both "beneficiary and proclaimer" of a story, a miracle, a parable, or counsel.

Rapp points to the noun diegesis and the much more common verb diegeomai, "to explain, interpret," and / or "to give a detailed account of something in words, tell, relate, describe." For the sayings and stories here, the noun diegema, "narrative, account," is apposite. In much of the Septuagint (LXX), the third-century BCE Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible, the verb means "to tell," but, as in Exodus 24:3, it carries deeper import—and impact: Moses came and told [tldiegeomai] the people all the words of the LORD and all the ordinances; and all the people answered with one voice, and said, "All the words that the LORD has spoken we will do." Perhaps "Moses

came and communicated to the people" is better. In the New Testament the verb, not surprisingly, occurs almost exclusively in Mark, Luke, and Acts, and almost always in connection with Jesus. In Acts 9:27, Barnabas takes Paul, brings him to the apostles, and describes [diegeomai] for them how on the road to Damascus Paul saw the Lord, who had spoken to him, and how in Damascus Paul spoke boldly in the name of Jesus. Diegeomai continues this narratival, relational partnership (as in to relate something in relationship) in the sayings and stories here and 106 times in the systematic Apophthegmata.'

Appropriately, Latin translates diegesis as narratio, "narrative," "a brief account." "But in the Christian literature of Late Antiquity," diegesis, Rapp emphasizes, "refers specifically to an anecdote or story that is of edifying character."' She cites Palladius's Lausiac History and the anonymous Historia Monachorum: "Accordingly," the author of the latter says, "since I have derived much benefit from these monks, I have undertaken this work to provide a paradigm and a testimony for the perfect and to edify and benefit those who are only beginners in the ascetic life." The Prologue to the alphabetical Apophthegmata (AlphAP) translated in this volume puts it this way: "Most of these who labored, therefore, at different times, have set out in detail [diegema] both the sayings and accomplishments of the holy elders, in simple and straightforward language, with only this one thing in view—to benefit as many as possible."

Rapp observes that other Classical and Late Antique genres, such as the panegyric, also sought "to edify and benefit," but she contrasts hagiography and apophthegm; the latter is storytelling, "characterized by two features in particular . . . : its simple and unadorned style and its intrinsic truth-value. The absence of stylistic embellishment enables the audience to focus on the content of the story without the distractions of a lofty style." "What is being communicated," she adds later, "is not simply a story"—and, this is very important—"but a way of life [politeia], and it ought to be perpetuated not in words, but in deeds."

Such understandings, ancient and modern, probably to our surprise, connect the early monastics with many modern writers: transformation through story. I don't remember

where I first heard or read the term "transformational reading." That is, reading that is not opposite to but includes and transcends informational reading. Because I was fortunate to have a small enrollment in my Native American Religion class the semester I began writing this Introduction, I asked the students to write twice-weekly brief reflections on the reading for each class. We were reading, studying, and discussing the revelatory, insightful, hilarious, moving, and heart-breaking stories about Nerburn, a white author, and his transformational journey with Dan, a Lakota Sioux elder.

This class, like the apophthegmata, illustrated for me Claudia Rapp's insights, what M. M. Bakhtin calls "the dialogic imagination." Four of Bakhtin's statements, I believe, can help us better understand the monastic sayings and stories in this volume:

> Every word is directed toward an answer . . . it provokes [that is, calls forth] an answer, anticipates it and structures itself in the answer's direction. . . . [Linguists] have taken into consideration only those aspects of style determined by demands for comprehensibility and clarity—that is, precisely those aspects that are deprived of any internal dialogism, that take the listener for a person who passively understands but not for one who actively answers and reacts. (280, emphasis his)
>
> The more intensive, differentiated and highly developed the social life of a speaking collective, the greater the importance attaching, among other possible subjects of talk, to another's word, another's utterance, since another's word will be the subject of passionate communication, an object of interpretation, discussion, and evaluation, rebuttal, support, further development and so on. (337)
>
> The tendency to assimilate others' discourse takes on an even deeper and more basic significance in an individual's ideological becoming, in the most fundamental sense. Another's discourse performs here no longer as information, directions, rules, models and so forth—but strives rather to determine the very bases of behavior; it performs here as authoritative discourse, and an internally persuasive discourse. (342, emphases his)
>
> The authoritative word demands that we acknowledge it, that we make it our own; it binds us, quite independent of any power it might have to persuade us internally; we encounter it with its authority already fused to it. (342)

I discovered Bakhtin after that Native American class had ended, but it's clear to me now that those students—and I—were discovering discourse that was both

authoritative and internally persuasive. At the beginning of the class one day I looked at each student and praised the group for its brave and insightful reflections on Dan and Nerburn—and themselves: they'd been inspired and given permission by the sacred stories of the Native Americans and the hallowing account of the growing relationship between Nerburn and Dan to tell their own stories vis-à-vis those in the books. By reflecting and writing, the students were informing themselves of their own journeys and transformations, and sharing them with the class. Their stories are sacred. As one student in that class, a young Latina, wrote about Nerburn, and herself: "It's as if somehow his heart has become his eyes to the world in front of him. I don't see the change only in Nerburn, I see it in myself. Ever since I began the first book, I started to see the world with my heart; it's as if a piece of my heart has become Indian, too."

My hope with this volume is that some of our hearts can become monastic, at least in spirituality. I've read and reread, reflected on, and written about the literature and politeia (way of life*) of the early monks over the last thirty years; like that young Latina, I've more and more come to see the ammas* (mothers) and abbas* (fathers) as transformational. Thus, this volume is a result of "contemplative scholarship," scholarship that has sat with others listening to the words in this volume and then reflecting on them within a discipline of silent translation. Without hesitation, even heartily, I can say that they have a great deal to say to us today. Of course, not everything about them is transferable, or even translatable, but if we go beyond the superficial and dive deep, we can see that much of what they lived and tried to live and worked hard at living still speaks to us today—to monastics, yes, but also, potentially, to many, many others.

In Thomas Merton: The Noonday Demon, Donald Grayston raises a point apropos here. A reader of the book in manuscript "took issue with the orientation of the book, with what kind of book it was to be. Was it to be a solid piece of scholarship, or, conversely, did it run the risk of being a work of excessive empathy, a work in which I might be perceived as claiming a closeness with Merton which I don't possess?" The reader's (false) assumption is that "solid scholarship" and empathy are dichotomous, even oppositional. When I read the above, I paused, and then substituted "the desert fathers

and mothers" for "Merton," and felt kindred with Grayston. His reader's either / or question assumes that scholarship and empathy can't wed and then bear, nurture, and raise a healthy family. As I hope to show below, scholarship and one's own life and spirituality intertwine.

The Sayings of the Desert Fathers and Mothers (Apophthegmata Patrum)

> In the desert
> dryness promotes the formation
> of flower buds. This is not aesthetics,
> but survival."

The alphabetical Apophthegmata Patrum, the Sayings of the Desert Fathers [and Mothers], is a misnomer—actually, three misnomers: (1) the sayings are not strictly in alphabetical order.29 Under "A," for example, Antony and Arsenius, probably as the most eminent worthies, are first; strictly alphabetically, a number of their brethren whose names begin with A and who follow them should come before them. The other chapters occasionally have similar ordering. (2) The sayings are not just sayings; they're both sayings and stories. In fact, aren't sayings compressed stories, inviting de compression? (3) In addition to the fathers (abbas), three desert mothers (ammas) have sayings in the alphabetical collection; one, Theodora, is in volume 2, forthcoming.' Hence the subtitle of the present volume is The Sayings of the Desert Fathers and Mothers.

The Sayings of the Desert Fathers and Mothers: the key word in this title may be "desert."* Greek eremos, "wilderness" or "desert," is where humans do not normally live and where demons* often do. As Susanna Elm says, "These charismatic Sayings were of fundamental importance and are the expression of one of the most vital aspects of desert asceticism." Asceticism.* A knotty word—and, as with many key monastic words in this Introduction and in the sayings and stories translated here—one on probably few lips and tongues today. The origins of ascesis from Greek are athletic: "exercise, practice, training," and by the time of Lucian in the second century CE could mean "mode of life, profession," which fits the way of life* of the ammas and abbas." Inbar Graiver makes a key observation: asceticism is indeed "a practical phenomenon,"

but, more important, it is "a method for promoting inner transformation" (discussed earlier, and often later; see IV.2, "Paths to Transformation"). Geoffrey Galt Harpham calls this "the ascetic imperative": "the broadest description of the project of asceticism is that it recognizes and manages drive or impulse, commonly called desire [for the early monks the "passions"*], by harnessing and directing resistance?"

Two modern writers make important observations about the desert. As Gail Fitzpatrick says, "It is the very nature of the desert to introduce the monk to its element of the wild. Those who seek its peace find instead a raw encounter with all that is untamed and unregenerate in their hearts."34 In conversation with her, I would suggest that "those who seek only its peace," in other words, spiritual short-time visitors, will be very disappointed. She is absolutely right about what's "untamed" in our hearts, but the monks in this volume would not say that some things in their hearts are "unregenerate." As we'll see, regeneration and transformation are key to early Christian monasticism. Teresa M. Shaw summarizes the matter very well:

> Although modern studies of early Christian asceticism have tended to emphasize self-denial of bodily pleasures and the battle between flesh and spirit, it should become clear that such a view does not do justice to the complex meaning of such terms as askesis and enkrateia." Rather, ancient in sights concerning the control of desires that lead to pleasure (and pain) and concerning the careful management and training of the body with the soul . . . give much of the shape and contours to early Christian understandings of the body, creation, and, indeed, salvation.

Within a comparative religion context, one can think of these ammas and abbas, as Shaw shows, going on a vision quest, as some Native Americans do as the passageway from childhood to maturity. For the early monastics, the quest is lifelong.

As with so much of the vocabulary of the Egyptian and Palestinian monks of the fourth and fifth centuries, terms such as áskesis and enkráteia, grams, "wilderness, desert," are biblical: this is where John the Baptist emerges from, the voice of one crying out in the wilderness [erernos] (Matt 3:3; Isa 40:3). Matthew Kelty expresses well the monastic understanding of John and desert: "John the Baptist has always been a favorite of those in monastic life. His feast comes at the time when the sun first begins its journey down [June 24]. We know this dying will lead to eventual life, and the monks see in the

plunge into night their own way into the darkness of God. The inward journey has all the dressings of death, a decrease, which like death hides the truth of growth in life. John was prelude to Jesus also in this: there is no greater road." The literal and spiritual wilderness is where Jesus goes out to a deserted place (eremos) to pray (Matt 14:13, 15). In the late-nineteenth century, indefatigable scholars published the monumental series The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Series 1 and 2, in twenty-eight volumes.) The desert fathers and mothers have no place in them, not even the Life of Antony, well-known among post-Nicene Christians. In 1960 Thomas Merton was prophetic, at least in English, when he published The Wisdom of the Desert. There are now in English hundreds of articles and dozens of books on early Christian monasticism, with as many more in French and German, both scholarly and for a wider audience outside the academy. <>

A Companion to Saint Therese of Lisieux: Her Life and Work & The People and Places In Her Story by Joseph P. Kochiss [Angelico Press, ISBN 9781621380689]

The product of twenty years of research and writing, this extraordinary new work is the most comprehensive portrait of Thérèse ever published, and the ultimate reference to her life and spirituality. A Companion to Saint Thérèse will appeal to all devotees of Thérèse, as well as those approaching her for the first time, who will find it a fascinating introduction. There is abundant material concerning her autobiography as well as her other literary and artistic works, and a treasury of information on all the people and places in her life story. Finally, the author revisits the steps leading to her beatification, canonization, and the proclamation of her as a Doctor of the Church, and provides a history of the Carmelites and the origin of the Lisieux Carmel. As a source of biographical detail and photographs it is unsurpassed in any language and will remain the most authoritative work on Thérèse for many years to come.

Reviews

"A remarkable book!"--**Fr. Benedict Groeschel**, C.F.R., Co-founder of Franciscan Friars of the Renewal

"Obviously a labor of love. If one were making a movie about the Little Flower, this would be the perfect book to provide the background material to help understand St. Thérèse and all the people who touched her life."--**Fr. Robert J. Boyd**, Ph.D., F.S.S.P., Third Order Carmelite

"An astounding achievement in the annals of Catholic hagiography. There has never been a work like this regarding the life and times of 'the Little Flower.' It will be an essential acquisition for every theological library, every Catholic school and homeschooling co-op, and every member of the lay faithful with a devotion to Saint Thérèse."--**Christopher A. Ferrara**, President, American Catholic Lawyers Association

"In *A Companion to Saint Thérèse of Lisieux* we are given the opportunity to study Thérèse in a novel way, through the optics of the people and places associated with her. I exhort all of you to come to appreciate she who identified her vocation as Love." --**Fr. Frank Pavone**, National Director, Priests for Life

"This is an encyclopedia of information on the life and spirituality of St. Thérèse of Lisieux. Here you will find information and photos concerning the Saint that have not been published anywhere else. The author is to be congratulated for his diligence and persistence in assembling all this material for the many Catholics devoted to the saint of the small and simple way to God."--**Fr. Kenneth. Baker**, S.J., Editor Emeritus, *Homiletic & Pastoral Review*

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> I love the reading of the lives of the saints very much, the account of their heroic deeds sets my courage on fire and attracts me to imitate them; but I admit that, at times, I happen to envy the blessed lot of their relatives who had the joy of living in their company and of enjoying their conversations. — Thérèse

People have often asked me why I like St. Thérèse and write about her. In a way my answer surprises even me: "I don't know." I guess I have a special affection for her because I have known about her since childhood, have found her story appealing and her philosophy simple but profound. Why I am writing about her is an enigma too because I do not like to write prose. For me doing so is a real chore, a burden, and frustrating. Most gifted writers of prose I presume have little difficulty in transferring their thoughts into words on paper with rapid facility. Practically every page in this book somehow required a great deal of revisions, corrections, struggles over elements of style, and choice of vocabulary, let alone involving an enormous amount of factual research, not only from English sources but also French—a language in which I am a neophyte. I must confess, though, that when I wrote three published plays for children (one with my own music), I did not face these problems. The style is different and my imagination flowed easily with no annoying restraints interfering or slowing me down. Furthermore, and this I can't quite fathom, there is the strong desire and persistence I have maintained for so many years to work at and finish this book.

My introduction to St. Thérèse originated when I was in "grammar" school where those kind, dedicated, and pedagogically eminent nuns in the order of School Sisters of Notre Dame taught. I can't remember actually when any of them specifically talked about Thérèse, but I believed that they, in their habits and holy demeanor, epitomized St. Thérèse. In fact, all of us thought our sixth grade teacher, Sister Mary Teresa, resembled St. Thérèse in her aspect and in her holiness.

As an altar boy, I spent much time in our parish church, St. John Nepomucene (c. 1350 – 1393, patron saint of Bohemia / Czechoslovakia). Here I really encountered her in the

form of a statue on a shelf next to the altar of St. Joseph. Above her another significant object struck me and also made a lasting impact: a large mural of Christ preaching from a boat just off shore by an artist who has become one of my favorite religious painters, Heinrich Hofmann (1824 – 1911). This painting ignited my abiding interest in art and its history. In addition, what intrigued me a great deal was, recessed in the wall of the left transept, a life-sized diorama of the Lourdes grotto with water gently trickling over a large stone from Lourdes below the feet of a statue of Our Lady, and kneeling figure of St. Bernadette nearby. Therese, Hofmann, and Lourdes remain to this day deeply engraved in my psyche.

The next vital step in my life-long fascination with Therese was reading about her. The first book I obtained, and I can't remember how, was Father Albert Dolan's The Living Sisters of the Little Flower in which he recounts his interviews with Therese's four sisters. His other books followed. They all completely enchanted me. The perfume of her sanctity seemed to emanate from the very pages I held in my hands as I read. After I devoured these books, I acquired her life story by Laveille and the one by Piat, followed finally by her own autobiography. From then on I was firmly entrenched in her mystique. My interest in her gradually accelerated to the point at which I decided to jot down names of people and places in her story I wanted to know more about. As a result, I delved deeper and searched wider because not one source contained all the information I craved. It slowly dawned on me that I should record this data methodically. This led me to believe that other people might also want to seek this knowledge contained in just one volume; thus I began to research for material with the aim of producing a book. Incidentally, I understand that of the hundreds of books about St. Therese there is not one that is similar to mine or covers the material in the manner I do.

One simple incident in my early adulthood brought to my consciousness the reality and actual nearness in time in which St. Therese is to us — at least to me. Despite countless visits to my dear grand mother's grave, one day I was startled when I noticed for the first time the significance of the year of her birth —1873, the same as Therese's!

Therese Martin was an actual person who appeared on earth in the last quarter of the 19th century and lived only twenty-four years. Yes, she was human in every sense of the word, but far above the ordinary in her spirituality. She experienced many of the illnesses, sorrows, and joys of young people her age: intestinal ailments, headaches, rashes, pimples, emotional upsets, extreme sensitivity, and even doubts.

Therese was the product of a family intensely concentrated on personal sanctity. Of the nine children born of Louis and Zelie Martin (who themselves have been beatified and are on the way to canonization), Therese was the youngest, most malleable, and willing clay her holy parents so easily molded into the embodiment of all their hopes and dreams, the apex of which was sainthood followed by the awesome honor of being designated a Doctor of the Universal Church.

I quote a massive amount of material from Therese's writings and others with the conviction that the original words, even though in translation, convey more accurately the essence and immediacy of the situations, and certainly the personality of the characters involved far better than I could possibly do with my own words. I have endeavored to find and copy all the quotations from Thérèse's writings as well as those of others that refer to or are pertinent to each subject on which I write. Some of the banalities of her life and the childish language of her early writings, so natural in little ones —even saints— may seem a bit trite or unnecessary, but they do, nonetheless, merit consideration and evaluation. They are not only imbued with charm but reflect the reality of her humanity. In a way, I consider everything she has written to be a kind of fourth class relic.

Finally, the purpose of this book is to provide facts and other information about Thérèse and the people and places connected with her that have never been collected and compiled into one book. I must emphasize that what I have produced is basically a reference, a source book, a companion, or an addendum, if you will, to the story of St. Thérèse. I do not in any way specifically delve into an analysis of her spirituality or her message to the world. This has all been thoroughly accomplished by expert theologians. At any rate, Thérèse's gems of spirituality permeate all of her writings and

conversations, and obviously all that I have included in my book. The illustrations therein further enhance in their own visual manner the understanding and knowledge of each entry. I have traveled to, and recorded on film, the places Thérèse and her family visited and, when possible, I have spoken to the people presently living in the very buildings where Thérèse or her family used to live.

My sincere hope is that this book will be of interest and value to anyone wishing to gain detailed information about the life of St. Thérèse of Lisieux, her works, the many people and places connected with her, and more, all contained in one volume. <>

THINKING THEOLOGICALLY ABOUT THE DIVINE IDEAS: REEXAMINING THE SUMMA OF THOMAS AQUINAS by Benjamin R. DeSpain [Series: Brill's Studies in Catholic Theology, Brill, ISBN: 97890045115O7]

THINKING THEOLOGICALLY traces Aquinas's subtle grammatical and thematic engagements with the doctrine of the divine ideas throughout the Summa Theologiae. This study offers new insights into the contributions of Aquinas's doctrine to debates about eschatology, christology, providence, natural law, virtue, and creation's participation in the trinitarian life of God. It argues that Aquinas adapts the doctrine to support his pedagogical goal of guiding readers from the confession of faith to the wisdom of sacra doctrina. In turn, this demonstrates that Aquinas's reading of the divine ideas reinforces his understanding of the dynamic exchange between philosophical reasoning and theological inquiry.

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> Stillness … means the soul's power, as real, of responding to the real – a co-respondence, eternally established in nature – has not yet descended into words. [Josef Pieper, Leisure: The Basis of Culture, trans. Gerald Malsbary (South Bend: St. Augustine's Press, 1998)]

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In his book on Thomas's ethics, John Bowlin shrewdly remarks that, "unless we have antiquarian motives," we largely read Thomas today "because we hope to uncover points of view that will challenge our settled habits of thought." The question at the beginning of this study, on how Thomas's doctrine of the divine ideas *should* be read today, implicitly reminds us that there are "settled habits" present in the various interpretations of the doctrine offered in contemporary scholarship. While these habits manifest along a spectrum of responses to the doctrine of the divine ideas, which include more positive engagements as well as the simple uneasiness many scholars express over the compatibility of the doctrine with theological inquiry, the contemporary reception of the divine ideas is indelibly marked by the severely critical readings of the doctrine that emerged in the post-Enlightenment theological tradition. For example, Wolfhart Pannenberg suggests that the doctrine presents "a static cosmos of ideas" that fails to address "the contingency and historicity of reality that results from God's creative action." Robert Jenson asserts that the doctrine of the divine ideas

"displaces Christ from his New Testament role in creation." Finally, Carl Braaten argues that this doctrine represents the intrusion of a "pantheistic way of thinking" into Christian theology. These readings represent a tradition on the divine ideas that has entered the identity of contemporary theology, but which clearly deviates from the premodern heritage Thomas received and transmitted.

Given that many contemporary theologians and philosophers consider the doctrine of the divine ideas to be more or less antiquated, it would perhaps have been less complicated to portray this study on Thomas's doctrine of the divine ideas as an exercise in historical conservation; however, the very assumption that the divine ideas are conceptually obsolete suggests that the doctrine may be examined, instead, for insights that will unsettle some of the fixed habits in contemporary theological discourse. While those that believe the doctrine's philosophical baggage in some way makes it theologically inoperable have attempted to purge the divine ideas from theological discourse, Thomas's peripheral engagements with the doctrine, in its broader grammatical locutions and subtle gestures, expose ways the grammar of the divine ideas can still unconsciously linger in reflections on topics such as creation, salvation, epistemology, and ethics. Now, one could, even in a quasi-Thomist sense, effectively replace the doctrine of the divine ideas in theological discourse, if an alternative grammar emerged that was *better* suited to communicate the truth of the world's createdness; however, this endeavor inevitably risks, as Pieper says, "the error of removing from the Christian consciousness the reality of creation itself."[6] Fortunately, there are better ways to answer the question of what to do with the divine ideas than claiming historical redundancy or arguing for contemporary elimination.

One solution is to continue Thomas's work of theologically expanding and reordering the doctrine's horizon by renewing our understanding of his pedagogical commitments to train his readers in the habit of thinking theologically, through which we can rediscover the nature of theological inquiry as a spiritual exercise in discerning the mysteries of faith. The *Summa*'s entire discourse is fundamentally a theological exposition rooted in a recursive pattern of faith seeking understanding, which imitates the soteriological journey, textually inverted but existentially advancing from the

revelation of Christ to the contemplative vision of God (Chapter 2). Thus, Thomas's doctrine of the divine ideas surfaces in the *Summa* not as a philosophical excursus but as an integral expression of his pedagogical commitments to provide his reader's with a theologically fitting (*conveniens*) exposition of God's self-disclosure in creation and salvation such that the doctrine's very intelligibility depends on approaching his formal discussion on the divine ideas in *ST* 1a.15 as an isomorphic reflection of his theological vision designed to instill in his readers the wisdom of *sacra doctrina* (Chapters 3 and 4). This formal treatment of the divine ideas also provides Thomas with a means to reconfigure pedagogically the peripheral gestures he makes with the doctrine through the network of grammatical and analogical themes he develops to represent the divine ideas in the *Summa*'s dialectic exchange between philosophy and theology (Chapters 5 and 6). Finally, Thomas completes the theological integration of the divine ideas into his theological vision when the gestures of the doctrine serve to clarify for his readers the metaphysical mechanics in the existential reality of the soteriological journey to the eschatological vision of God (Chapters 6 and 7).

In short, then, this study has taken steps, guided by Thomas, to improve the groundwork necessary for a theological rehabilitation of the doctrine of the divine ideas. Although we have not, necessarily, attempted to settle some of the more notorious questions related to the interpretation of the divine ideas, we have worked to outline a different approach to Thomas's doctrine of the divine ideas by following the development of his pedagogical vision in the *Summa*, which will hopefully provide future studies on the divine ideas with new angles of approach to the perennial questions about the doctrine. Throughout the chapters of this study, we have also attempted to identify areas in Thomas's thought where subtle references to the divine ideas create space for the readers, including contemporary theologians and scholars, to elaborate on the doctrine's relevance for theological discourse. There are, however, certain challenges we face in attempting to recover the doctrine of the divine ideas that we should be aware of prior to venturing out on the path of theological ressourcement. Thus, before bringing this study to a close with a final plea for the theological

importance of reclaiming the doctrine of the divine ideas, we will consider some of the positive and negative implications of inquiries into intellectual history.

Ressourcement's Double-Edged Sword

On the nature of received traditions, as Stephen Toulmin remarks, "[T]he existence of a consensus is one thing: the soundness of this view, the reliability of the historical assumptions on which it depends, are something else." He proceeds to argue that if the historical assumptions "are sufficiently open to doubt," then we must look "more closely at the actual credentials, and the historical basis, of the standard account." If we follow Toulmin's advice here and consider the history of the doctrine of the divine ideas, we find that it undergoes a significant transformation at some point during the Enlightenment. Herman Bavinck noted at the end of the nineteenth century that this once prominent, possibly even essential, doctrine all but vanishes, for some unknown reason, from theological discourse. The doctrine's perceived disappearance radically alters its received tradition as it passes into post-Enlightenment generations. What remains unclear, however, is precisely why or when in the Enlightenment era this transition actually occurs. This uncertainty in the historical development of the doctrine's modern tradition calls into question the basis for the critical readings of the divine ideas in contemporary thought, but it also exposes inherent tensions in the efforts of theological ressourcement.

The ressourcement movement was initiated by a group of Roman Catholic scholars and theologians. Interest, however, in theological ressourcement now extends well beyond ecclesial distinctions and has become a prominent fixture in contemporary theological discourse. Charles Péguy coined the term "ressourcement" in 1904, by which he meant, "[T]he appeal made by a less perfect tradition to one more perfect; the appeal made by a shallower tradition to one more profound; the withdrawal of tradition to reach a new depth, to carry out research at a deeper level; a return to the source, in the literal sense," but it was not until Jean Daniélou's 1946 essay on the state of theology in modernity that the outline for the movement, which came to be known as the *nouvelle théologie*, was first sketched. The movement represents a type of *ad fontes* renewal and advancement of theological discourse through a return to the original sources in

theological tradition. But this call for a return to the sources in theological ressourcement gives rise to a persistent tension present in the process itself. Denys Turner insightfully identifies the predicament that ressourcement faces because of what he calls its two-sided character. He writes, "On the one hand, the 'cleaning-up' operation can leave us with a more 'authentic' text resituated more transparently in its own culture and context: on the other, may it not also, for that very reason, distance that text from our own culture and context." What Turner has pinpointed here is that interpretive accuracy and constructive accessibility in the ressourcement movement do not always, as he says, "sit easily with one another."

In the case of the divine ideas, this tension is poignantly confronted in the efforts to reclaim the doctrine in contemporary theological discourse. The recent surge of interest in the doctrine of the divine ideas in the thought of ancient and medieval authors has exposed the doctrine's general ubiquity in premodern theology, but these studies have also tended to be restricted to atomistic readings of the doctrine's ontological and epistemological classifications. Following the insights gained from these studies, contemporary scholars have become more aware of the doctrine's meaning in its premodern historical contexts and cultures; however, the modern loss of a constructive view of the divine ideas conversely means that the clarity gained in these studies inversely imposes a conceptual remoteness on the use of the doctrine, which makes it appear even more irrelevant and obscure to many forms of contemporary thought. This is not to suggest that what ancient and medieval authors meant in their discussions on the doctrine is unimportant, since understanding any historically conditioned text must begin with what the authors actually say. Rather, because we no longer have a fully developed doctrine of the divine ideas, it is difficult to grasp the reach of the divine ideas into other doctrines and areas of thought that shaped the way ancient and medieval figures understood or communicated various aspects of their theological and philosophical commitments. Without this broader framework for the doctrine, scholars will continue to be haunted by the uncertainties around what the doctrine ever provided theology.

Another challenge to the contemporary recovery of divine ideas is our formation in the identity of contemporary theology. Hans Gadamer describes this issue when he observes:

> At the beginning of all historical hermeneutics, then, the abstract antithesis between tradition and historical research, between history and the knowledge of it, must be discarded. The effect of a living tradition and the effect of historical study must constitute a unity of effect, the analysis of which would reveal only a texture of reciprocal effects. Hence we would do well not to regard historical consciousness as something radically new – as it seems at first – but as a new element in what has always constituted the human relation to the past. In other words, we have to recognize the element of tradition in historical research and inquire into its hermeneutic productivity.

The particular difficulty our historical position poses in relation to our received tradition is expertly identified in a comment made by Turner in a reflection on the nature of personal identity. He writes, "Our identities are constituted as much by our forgetting as they are by our active remembering, by what we forbid entry to our recalling as by what we allow into it. Now every act of remembering changes the past it remembers. As I change necessarily my past changes, I necessarily rewrite my story."

Thus, the disappearance of the divine ideas in theological discourse constitutes an act of forgetting that redefines the theological identity that contemporary scholars have inherited, and it colors our understanding of the past. We have already seen the examples of this active forgetting in the critical tradition of the divine ideas. The doctrine's once positive contribution to theological discourse was rewritten during the formation of the contemporary theological identity that now governs, for better or worse, our reception of texts from epochs far removed from our own. Consequently, establishing the doctrine's constructive theological value will require rewriting, at least in part, the story that created this identity. This task, however, is not easy, since it requires us to challenge our own theological and intellectual commitments, and it can often lead to unsettling realizations. One way to engage actively in rewriting this narrative is by reconsidering theological discussions where the divine ideas once held a prominent place, but now appear to have all but vanished from the discourse. Another option is to search for places in the works of authors like Thomas where glimpses of the

doctrine are given in subtle or passing references, because these places may help us identify areas where the grammar of the divine ideas may be meaningfully recovered in rewriting the narrative of our theological identity.

The End is Silence: A Final Plea for Reclaiming the Doctrine of the Divine Ideas

In taking up the task of constructively reclaiming the doctrine of the divine ideas, the goal, it should be noted, is not simply to repeat what Thomas said, but to venture beyond his own extensions and applications of the doctrine, just as he intended in the pedagogical design of the *Summa* (§3.1), although this is certainly a case where it is easier said than done. While some may oppose the reading of the *Summa* offered in this study because it does not search for a definitive systematic account of Thomas's doctrine of the divine ideas, but instead follows a pattern in his application of the doctrine to instruct readers in the habit of thinking theologically, Pieper's observation that, "[E]very attempt to produce an absolutely tight system runs counter to the real life situation of the finite spirit, of man's creaturehood," reminds us that what the *Summa* offers is not a stable philosophical or even theological system but a path to the vision of God rooted in the revelation of humanity's createdness (§2.1.1). To this observation, we may add Turner's astute remark that, "[T]heological speech is at once incarnated and apophatic speech, speech rooted in our common material condition and yet revelatory of that utterly unknowable reality which sustains that condition as created."

Consequently, the pursuit of theological wisdom occurs in the space between the known and the unknown (*ST* 2a2ae.45.1 ad.2), and for that reason it must exhaust the full range of human knowledge in the articulation of *sacra doctrina*. As Matthew Levering notes, "In theological reflection, then, metaphysical knowledge gained by the intellectual virtue of wisdom is taken up into the *sacra doctrina* and illumined within it … This unity of *sacra doctrina* ensures that metaphysical and scriptural modes of divine naming are profoundly integrated by Aquinas." But in doing so theological inquiry stretches the limits of human language in order to expose the incomprehensible reality

of God. There is, then, a tension in all theological discourse, as noted in Turner's argument that, "it is in and through the very excess, the proliferation, of discourse about God that we discover its failure as a whole." Yet the breakdown of language before the face of God is precisely why constructively reclaiming the doctrine of the divine ideas is theologically important. Theologians today must continue the work of exhausting every avenue of speech about God, so that the last word of our journey is, as it was for Thomas, not one of speech but one of silence. <>

Divine Being and Its Relevance According to Thomas Aquinas By William J. Hoye [Studies in Systematic Theology, Brill, ISBN 9789004413986]

Aquinas' theology can be understood only if one comes to grips with his metaphysics of being. The relevance of this perspective is exhibited in his treatment of topics like creation, goodness, happiness, truth, freedom of the will, the unity of the human being, prayer and providence, God's personhood, divine love, God and violence, God's unknowablility, the Incarnation, the Trinity, God's existence, theological language and even laughter. This book endeavors to treat these questions in a clear and convincing language. Is there a better method for improving one's own theology than by grappling with the arguments of Thomas Aquinas?

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The uniqueness of divine being can be succinctly expressed by saying that divine being is the only being that is not possible, whereas every other being is the being of a possibility. Not only does God not have possibility; he also does not have being. As Thomas often puts it: God does not have his being; he is his being. In other words, saying that divine being exists is like saying that running runs. Seeing such sentences as paradoxical is a good preparation for appreciating divine being, as the following chapters will try to explicate.

Treating God under the aspect of his being may not be a customary approach, but it relies substantially on theological and philosophical traditions. Usually, God is thought of as a being, for example, the highest being. This is understandable, since we naturally see reality as consisting of beings and want to locate God somewhere within reality—or, in the case of an atheist, exclude him therefrom. But actually, this approach, whether affirmative or negative, entirely loses sight of God, for his reality does not fit into the categories of beings. Put shortly, God is more than simply a being: he is being itself—what Thomas Aquinas refers to as esse ipsum or ipsum esse per se subsistens (to express God's lack of possibility). Brian Davies has put it well: "We should not suppose that Aquinas thinks of esse as if it were an individual of some kind (as Mary is an individual woman, or Paul an individual man)." It makes all the difference that divine being is its being rather than having it.

Fundamentally, we know two kinds of being that have their being: the objective beings of the world and the thoughts of the being of consciousness. Divine being differs from both. The distinction between these three kinds of being is the explicit articulation of something which we are normally conscious of, albeit unintentionally. Whatever has being is a participation in being itself, which it presuppose in order to become, which is an essential characteristic of the realities in our world. This is neither abstract nor concrete, or better, both unified. It has no individual members, but rather is the ontological ground of everything. Beyond objective and subjective being, no more than a third kind, namely divine being, seems thinkable.

This presents problems not only for thought but also for language. The term 'being' may be accessible to most people, but the distinction between 'beings' and 'being,' that is, between individual beings and being itself, requires heightened concentration. This is an essential characteristic of Thomas' thought. Specific aspects of the relationship of beings to being will be taken up in the following chapters. Beforehand, a brief introduction to each may be helpful:

1. Calling God the creator appears at first sight to be easily understandable, but in fact it is a highly abstract idea. The teaching that everything is created by God and that he finds everything good puts demands on reason. Actually, divine being is itself the act of creation. The distinction between being as (mere) existence and being as fulness, encompassing the whole, is crucial. It is essential to appreciate that, in creation, there is no real succession, no development, no evolution. Especially difficult today is the realization that creatures exist in God. Being aware that divine being is the act of creation means, moreover, seeing that realities happen; they are not just present.

2. God's eternity is also an extremely abstract idea. It is dependent on our understanding of time, which is notoriously difficult to comprehend. To be exact, God is not eternal; he is eternity itself. Our experience of the present 'now' and the succession of 'nows' provide a point of departure from which to define eternity. It must be seen as an aspect of divine being.

3. God is not just good; he is the good, that is, goodness itself. Even hate is motivated by love for a particular good, the opposite of which is hated. Moral evil (sin) must also be seen as a certain constellation of the good: the preference of the lesser of two goods. The role of the good in morality must be clarified. The good itself defies definition, and the attempt to do this by identifying a certain moral ideal with the good can turn out to be itself immoral. This can be a temptation for idealists.

4. Fulfilled human happiness is, in its essence, and indeed in its entirety, union with divine being. God does not make us happy; he is our happiness. Though impossible to comprehend, this tells us the final meaning of our present life, which is nothing other than a preparation for happiness. As the fulfillment of all desires, happiness reveals that the essence of our present life consists in desires and strivings for being. Death, then, is a precondition for happiness.

5. What does it mean to call God truth itself? Seeing truth from the viewpoint of human reality reveals that truth is an ontological becoming of an object; consciousness becomes what it grasps. The objection to the truth claim of Christianity dissolves if one distinguishes, as Thomas does, between truth and the truth. The truth is abstract and cannot come into conflict with a specific truth. Understood in this sense—and this is the object of Christian faith—Christians do not possess truth; they believe in

truth. In light of this, there can be no conflict with a particular truth.

6. As being itself, God is the ground of freedom of the will. Freedom of choice is caused by a way in which reason thinks. The abstract makes the concrete free. If the will chooses a general good, then the will is free if a derivation takes place from the general good to the particular good by way of deliberation, so that alternatives can be considered. However, if the derivation is deductive, then the will is not free in choosing the particular good. The most general good is divine being; it is the ground for all free choices, while it itself, ironically, is not susceptible to being an object of free choice.

7. Explaining how a human person can comprise a unity despite the inherent discrepancies and outright contradictions in his or her nature seems to be possible only

by taking divine being into consideration. Otherwise, the soul, which is the uractuality (the primordial act of all human acts), would have no grounding for its possibility. Understood not just as life but also as being, the soul can subsume both the mind and body in a way that is the opposite of reductionism. In this way, something immaterial can be joined to matter.

8. What is prayer when it is directed to divine reality? According to Thomas Aquinas, prayer takes place in the practical reason, which relates immediate affairs to the meaning of life as a whole. Prayer must be harmonized with the eternal divine providence. If divine reality is unchangeable, what do prayers mean? As being itself, God cannot be the intelligent designer of the world. Prayer is the advocate of natural desires, including the desires of sensuality. Moreover, it is not inappropriate to pray for something against God's will. This can be applied to the paradox of suffering, which makes sense—or at least is not senseless—if viewed in the light of divine being.

9. Is God a person? Although, strictly speaking, God does not really fit into the category of a person, since he does not have individual personhood, it is nevertheless justifiable to regard him as a person if one takes the viewpoint of human reality. He lacks nothing positive that is characteristic of a person. But he should not be viewed as a visàvis of another person.

10. God loves, is loved, and is love. This highly paradoxical statement can be understood only if one appreciates what divine being implies. God is not an abstract notion. He unifies the subject, object, and verb in the statement that God is love. Love is, in its deepest essence, not a feeling or a doing, but a form of becoming of the other. As Thomas expresses it: love precedes desire, which is understandable only from the viewpoint of being. Love of human beings and love of God can be seen in their union, which permits no separation. Love of neighbor is love of God, and vice versa. Other human beings can be loved only in God. Due to its immanent transcendence, love in the present life remains ultimately disappointing and unfulfilled, thus pointing to eternal life. From the perspective of being itself, selflove and the love of enemies can be better appreciated.

11. How does violence relate to God, if God is being itself? The common accusation that Christianity, being a monotheistic religion, causes conflict, violence, and ultimately war becomes groundless if God is appreciated as absolute being. The Christian adherence to truth exists at a higher level than conflicts. The clear distinction between absolute truth and individual truths is essential in this context. The mode in which truth is given in scriptural revelation must be appreciated; it must be interpreted in accordance with reason, as medieval hermeneutics maintained and as is clearly the Thomistic position. The aggressive critique of the sociologist Ulrich Beck must be treated here in detail. The adherence to absolute truth makes true tolerance and peace possible. If peace is valued above truth, as Beck proclaims, then it loses its own basis.

12. The faith teaching of the Incarnation—that God has become human— presents reason with a distinct contradiction, demanding a solution. Moreover, dogma teaches that God is unchangeable. Actually, it seems to make no sense that divine being becomes a member of worldly reality. Is this a contradiction or a paradox? How can it at least be adequately formulated? What is the difference between creation and the Incarnation? What does 'becoming' mean ? In what sense can God become concrete? From the viewpoint of being, no articulation for these questions can be found.

13. God's unknowability proves to be absolute when he is seen as being itself. Moreover, its foundation lies in the ultimate unknowability of the universe. This insight is accessible to reason. Nevertheless, it justifies the simplest piety and mythological metaphors. The role of symbols in religion and religious language can thus be better understood, although theology is not merely language. According to Thomas, even divine revelation cannot tell us what God is. The ontological proof of God's existence mistakenly presumes that we know something, however little, about what God is.

14. The revelation of the Trinity does not alleviate God's incomprehensibility; rather, it accentuates it. The traditional dogmatic teaching presents exasperatingly abstruse problems. They are not perspicuous, and the intellectual confrontation with them cannot be facile. In any case, without ending in mythology, theology must show that the Trinity is an absolute mystery. Karl Rahner's programmatic solution, which

overlooks the relevance of divine being, although it appeals to Thomas Aquinas, must be precisely studied, but finally, I argue, it must be rejected. The old idea of relations to explain the three divine persons is revived in this chapter and critically thought through.

15. How does the ability to laugh arise? One has to wonder at the human ability to laugh at the humorous. Without the perspective of divine being, it would not be easy to see God as the ground of laughter. When one realizes that laughter in response to the humorous assumes that one stands above the situation and has an overview that embraces both the congruous and incongruous and is guided by benevolence, then the relevance of divine being becomes clearer. Laughter is a form of freedom from concrete reality.

16. The question on God's existence is extremely paradoxical. This must be appreciated if one is to pose the question in an adequate manner. According to negative theology, the statement that God does not exist must contain more truth than the statement that he does exist. The critical question in this context is how existence relates to being. In a legitimate sense, we can know God's existence but not his being. In the final analysis, all we can really know about God is that he exists. Wondering about the phenomenon of becoming and pondering what it means to be concrete present points of departure for such a conclusion.

17. Language is not made for speaking about God, since it develops out of worldly realities. It must be manipulated and, in a certain way, distorted. An adequate statement about God must be paradoxical if it is really to refer to God. It is also legitimate, if done deliberately, to use anthropomorphic predications, or even more rudimentary ones. God may be called, for example, our friend or light. In any case, univocal language is not possible, although one must also avoid purely mythological language. The norm is reason, even when one is dealing with divine revelation. Several fundamental rules for speaking about God can be established.

These apparently disparate themes reveal a simple and coherent unity when they are looked at from the viewpoint of divine being. <>

The Image of God: The Problem of Evil and the Problem of Mourning by Eleonore Stump [Oxford University Press, ISBN 9780192847836]

The problem of evil has generated varying attempts at theodicy. To show that suffering is defeated for a sufferer, a theodicy argues that there is an outweighing benefit which could not have been gotten without the suffering. Typically, this condition has the tacit presupposition given that this is a post-Fall world. Consequently, there is a sense in which human suffering would not be shown to be defeated even if there were a successful theodicy because a theodicy typically implies that the benefit in question could have been gotten without the suffering if there had not been a Fall. There is a part of the problem of evil that would remain, then, even if there were a successful theodicy. This is the problem of mourning: even defeated suffering of the post-Fall world merits mourning. How is this warranted mourning compatible with the existence of an omniscient, omnipotent, perfectly good God? The traditional response to this problem is the felix culpa view, which maintains that the original sin was fortunate because there is an outweighing benefit to sufferers that could not be gotten in a world without suffering. The felix culpa view presupposes an object of evaluation, namely, the true self of a human being, and a standard of evaluation for human lives. This book explores these topics and a variety of other topics in philosophical theology in order to explain and evaluate the role of suffering in human lives.

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For many years, I had it in mind to write a book on the problem of human suffering. When I was asked to give the Gifford lectures, I saw it as my chance finally to write that book. As it happened, in writing that book, Wandering in Darkness: Narrative and the Problem of Suffering, which was based on the Gifford lectures and the Wilde lectures I gave subsequently, I relied heavily on my previously published study Aquinas. That earlier book gave me the exposition and defense of the Thomistic worldview which I used in the Wandering book to sketch the possible world of a defense against the argument from evil.

The Wandering book grew so big that I found I could not put into it everything I had originally intended and still thought needed to be added. In particular, the Wandering book had to leave out entirely the Christian doctrine of the atonement of Christ, although that doctrine should (and does) make a difference to the discussion of the problem of suffering. And so I wrote a second book, Atonement, intending to include in it the remaining issues pertinent to the problem of suffering as well as those central to an interpretation of the doctrine of the atonement. It was somewhat tricky adding this book to the previous two because some things explained in one or the other of the previous books, even some things explained in a preface to a previous book, had to be repeated in Atonement. Clearly, it is unreasonable to expect the readers of one book to have to look back at two previous books for what they need to know in order to read the new book.

In the event, however, I found that I still could not stuff everything into the Atonement book that I had originally intended to put into the Wandering book. By the end of the Atonement book, I had not so much as touched on what is one of the toughest parts of the problem of suffering; and I had said little about the passion, death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ. I saw then that there needed to be one more book that dealt with the remaining part of the problem of suffering and with the biblical narratives

about Christ's passion. That part of the problem of evil and those narratives have become the focus of this book. With this book, I have now completed what I originally set out to do in writing a book on the problem of suffering. For sure and certain, this is the last book I will write on this topic.

As it has turned out, then, there are four books intimately interconnected in the presentation of one thought—a complicated thought—about human suffering. That one thought is like a white light that has to be sent through a prism to break it into varying colors in order to transmit it properly to others. If I were forced to try to convey that thought in a single sentence, I would say it is the whole Christian worldview in all its complexity, the view that at the ultimate, irreducible foundation of all reality is love in powerful, welcoming personal relationship. Very many topics of philosophy and theology are woven into that one thought which these books try to convey, so that the books can seem more like a magpie's nest than like the presentation of a focused white light of one thought.

I say these things by way of an apology not only for the complexity of the argument in this book but also for this book's harking back to the previous ones. Readers who are familiar with the previous material will think that the occasional repetition in this book of that earlier material is too much, and readers who are not familiar with it will feel that there should have been more. I have done my best to sail between Scylla and Charybdis on this score, and there are copious cross- references to the previous books in the footnotes.

To illustrate and also manifest the problem, in this Preface I need to explain one thing already re- explained in the preface to the Atonement book, namely, my practice of using 'Jerome' and 'Paula' as my version of 'Everyman'. I cannot now explain it better than I did in the previous book, and so I am here just repeating one paragraph from the preface to that book. Given the focus on personal relations in this book, I wanted to use as designations for Everyman not the faceless 'Smith' and 'Jones' common in philosophical prose, but rather the names of people for whom personal relationship was a most notable part of their lives. Paula was an accomplished, learned, highly

admirable woman, who was a lifelong companion of Jerome, that most erudite and productive Church Father, whose translation of the Bible into the Vulgate and much other work altered the course of the Western church. Jerome could be irascible, not to say venomous, but he loved and honored Paula as a companion in Christ; and she loved and humanized him. When she died, he fell to pieces; and he seems to have pulled himself together only when her daughter Eustochium began to fill her mother's place in his life. (And if it turns out that some skeptical historian finds part of this story non-veridical, then the mythology of Paula and Jerome is what counts for my purposes.) So the story of Paula and Jerome made their names seem like good ones to use in this book, instead of 'Smith' and 'Jones'. And, really, it is helpful to have some names like 'Everyman' otherwise, the prose tends to become awkward and ugly.

From very early Christian times, there has been a strand of Christian theology which takes the post- Fall world with all its lamentable consequences to be more glorious than the world would have been without a Fall. In this book, I have called that idea 'the felix culpa view' after an ancient liturgical text which claims that Adam's original sin was a blessing for the whole world. The felix culpa view was meant to be a response to a part of the problem of evil that remains even if there is a successful theodicy (or defense) and an acceptable interpretation of the doctrine of atonement. In spite of its antiquity, the felix culpa view has not been the subject of much sustained reflection either in the Christian tradition or in contemporary philosophical theology. In contemporary times, the view and the Latin phrase denominating it are common currency in communities familiar with Christian tradition. But because the view is as counter- intuitive as it is vaguely familiar, it is generally ignored. If it is thought about at all, the felix culpa view is unreflectively supposed to be a version of a greater good theodicy and dismissed as an inadequate response to the problem of evil. In fact, however, the felix culpa view is best understood not as an attempted theodicy, explaining what justifies God in allowing the suffering of post- Fall human beings, but rather as a response to a different problem, which I have called 'the problem of mourning'.

In this book, I attempt to explain the problem of mourning, and then with patience-trying care I build an apparatus for understanding the felix culpa view and for evaluating it as a response to the problem of mourning. With the tools provided by analytic philosophy, I have tried to elucidate what in this case the object of evaluation is and should be, namely, the true self of a human being. With the help of the sophisticated Christian theological tradition, I have presented a scale of value for determining comparative evaluations of the true self. And then, using results from discussions in analytic philosophy of disparate topics ranging from the epistemology of narratives to the use of models in science, and helping myself to my own construction of a composite meta- narrative of the passion of Christ, I have built a possible world for a defense with regard to the problem of mourning.

By saying these things, I am trying to point out that I have been as careful and responsible in argumentation as I know how to be, because here in the Preface to this book I want to say something else about the one thought that I have been trying to convey through all these books: to me, it seems that this one thought is beautiful. In the philosophical tradition in which I was trained, beauty is not a transcendental because it is just a mode of goodness. But goodness is a transcendental, correlated with the other transcendentals, which include not only being but also truth. In this philosophical tradition, a thought's being beautiful is one reason, a prima facie reason, for supposing that it is true.1 My hope is that through these books I have managed not only to present with careful argumentation the one thought I have had in my mind for so long, but also to aid others in seeing its beauty.

In this endeavor in this book, I have had less help from the rich tradition I counted on in the preceding books, though I have tried to learn from what there is; but I have had help from many generous people who worked their way through this manuscript at one stage or another of its completion, either in whole or in part...

A Largely Unremarked Part of the Problem of Evil: The Problem of Mourning and the Felix Culpa View

Philosophical theology is the attempt to use philosophical tools to investigate theological claims made by a particular religion, especially those claims put forward by that religion as revealed by the deity. Those claims are the starting points for philosophical theology. Philosophical theology tests the coherence of such doctrinal claims, attempts explanations of them, uncovers their logical connections with other doctrinal propositions, tries to describe possible worlds in which they could be true, and so on.

In this respect, philosophical theology is like philosophy of physics or philosophy of biology. The aim of philosophy of biology, for example, is not to do biology but to philosophize about the claims that biology takes to be true. For philosophy of biology, it does not matter if the biological claims taken as starting points for philosophy of biology are in fact true, provided that they are taken to be true in biology. Analogously, it does not matter for philosophical theology if the claims taken as starting points drawn from theology are true. Of course, it matters to me as a person, as it matters to believers and atheists alike, whether theological claims are true. (In the same sense, as the current pandemic shows, it matters to me as a person and to everybody whether claims taken to be true in the community of biologists really are true.) But, for purposes of philosophical theology, what matters is whether the theological claims being examined are orthodox, that is, whether they are accepted as true and mandatory for belief within a particular religious community.4

My project in this book falls within the general domain of philosophical theology. Because it is meant to be a work of philosophical theology, nothing about the project of this book requires that the theological claims accepted as orthodox, that is, as the starting points to be used as data in this book, are true or (in the case of stories purporting to describe history) historically accurate. On the other hand, of course, nothing about this project rules out supposing that they are true and historically

accurate either. A project in philosophy of biology does not require that the biological claims at issue be true, but it does not rule out their truth either.

My project centers on the problem of evil. The problem of evil is so perennial a topic in philosophy that it sometimes seems an icon for philosophical puzzles that cannot be solved. Only the most tendentious would deny that there is suffering in the world.5 How is this suffering to be explained? How could it possibly be compatible with the existence of the kind of God embraced by the Abrahamic religions? How could there be an omnipotent, omniscient, perfectly good God in the world given the vast panorama of human suffering? From the ancient story of Job to the most recent attempts at theodicy, there have been many varying attempts to come to grips with these questions. In other work, I myself have tried to delineate a successful defense against the argument from evil.6 But what is much less noticed in connection with the problem of evil7 is what would be left still unexplained even if any of the attempts at theodicy or defense were successful. I will call the remaining challenge 'the problem of mourning.'

Although the panoply of human suffering typically elicits complaints about the apparent incompatibility of the existence of this suffering with the existence of God, in fact this spectacle is also a mirror for us. It ought to evoke in us some insight into the depth of human evil. Certainly, it is undeniably true that human beings have a significant role in the destruction of the earth and the afflictions of beasts; and even if we confine our view just to the suffering of human beings, the great array of human suffering demonstrates abundantly the viciousness of human beings to one another. By far the largest part of the human suffering that is showcased in discussions of the problem of evil is directly or indirectly attributable to human evil. But according to the Abrahamic religions, human beings are God's idea. That is, it is God's doing that human beings exist at all. Why is this theological claim alone not enough to raise the problem of evil?

As the story is told in Judaism and Christianity, in the beginning God created everything that there is in the world; and when he had finished creating it, he saw and said that all of it was very good. In the beginning, in other words, there was only

innocence and harmony within all of creation, which was very good and beautiful. The point of this part of the common theological story is to make clear that God is not the creator of human beings as they are now. As God created them, in the beginning human beings were like God in being perfectly good. They hurt nothing, at least not willingly; and they were lovely in all that they did. According to the story, the fact that human beings are no longer what they were when God created them is their own fault.

The doctrine of original sin is the theological doctrine that is intended to explain this claim.10 The human beings God created broke their relationship with their Creator, fell from their original righteousness, and in consequence changed their own nature. From their original goodness, they turned themselves into something like gremlins, creatures born with a tendency to develop dispositions to will and to do what is harmful or unjust to others.11 Furthermore, the new gremlin- like nature of these fallen human beings was transmissible and so was reproduced in all their descendants. From this Fall, there arose all of the misery in the world as we now know it, everything from the lamentable tendency to evil lurking in every human being to the actual horrors perpetrated on anything that is vulnerable or otherwise open to oppression and depredation.

On the doctrine of original sin, then, the current condition of human beings is attributable to human beings, not to God. Nonetheless, on Christian doctrine, contrary to what one might suppose, God does well to allow this change in his original creation. That is because the Fall and its resultant suffering are not the end of the story of the creation or of human beings. In his goodness and love, God devises a way to save human beings from their evil and its consequences, including the liability to shame, guilt, and suffering. Through the life, passion, and death of Christ, God saves human beings from the post- Fall human condition and brings them to union with himself, so that the human part of creation is not irretrievably ruined. In fact, it is part of the same story that in the end, the final end of the whole story of creation, there will be a new heaven and a new earth, so that all creation will be restored to an even greater condition of beauty and goodness than was part of God's original plan for creation.

Now suppose, just for the sake of argument, that this entire theological story of creation, original sin, theodicy, atonement, and the restoration of a new heaven and earth is true. That is a lot to suppose, of course. But here is the point of the exercise. Even if this whole story is true, why does it not leave something that should be mourned? Why does it not simply raise the problem of evil in a new form, the problem of evil regrouped as the problem of mourning?

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The True Self: The Puzzle

A fundamental issue central to an explication of the felix culpa view and to a defense with regard to the problem of mourning is the nature of the true self of a human person. If, on Christian doctrine, you are made glorious through suffering, what exactly are you? I will argue that what is perfected when a human person is glorious is the true self of that person.

There is an imprecise use of the phrase "the true self" in common parlance. For example, most readers of George Orwell's novel 1984 think that the protagonist Winston has lost his true self by the end of the novel. In what follows, without losing the core of the idea behind the common use of the phrase, I want to give the phrase a more precise sense so that it becomes a technical term in this book.

The notion of the true self that I will argue for can be outlined by an otherwise perplexing claim made by the apostle Paul in Romans. There Paul says:

> what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. ...For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwells in me.

It would be possible but obtuse to read these words as Paul's trying to disclaim moral responsibility or even agency for his own moral wrongdoing. But clearly, the metaphysical entity that is Paul is the agent who does the evil that Paul "would not," and so it is also that entity who is morally responsible for that evil.

In these lines in Romans, Paul is evincing a global second- order will for a will that wills the good; and he is identifying himself with that second- order will. He identifies himself not as the metaphysical entity that he is, but rather as something characterized by that higher- order will. He concedes that his first- order will is divided against itself. Sometimes his first- order will is in harmony with his second- order will, and sometimes it is in opposition to it. Nonetheless, as Paul sees it, because his true self is characterized by the higher- order will for the good, Paul repudiates as alien to himself—that is, as alien to his true self—his own first-order volitions that are discordant with that second- order will. Insofar as the true self of Paul is characterized by his global second- order will for a will that wills the good, then in his view his true self wills the good. And that is the sense in which it seems correct to him to say, "it is not I who do [the evil that I would not]." As he sees it, then, even in his internally fragmented state, the self that wants to will what is good is his true self.

The notion of the true self is also delineated by what Harry Frankfurt has called "volitional necessities." There are, of course, many varieties of necessity; but, as Frankfurt explains it, a volitional necessity is one in which the source of the necessity is nothing external to the agent's will but is rather only the will itself. Perhaps the most famous example of someone expressing what Frankfurt thinks of as a volitional necessity is Martin Luther, when he said, "Here I stand. I can do no other." Luther had ample reason for doing otherwise than he did; nothing external to him compelled him to do as he did; and nothing internal to him outside his will constrained him either. The necessity in question for Luther arose just from within Luther's will itself, as Frankfurt's account of volitional necessity would have it.

But then notice that this volitional necessity is not expressed in terms of the will but is rather expressed in terms of the human person. That is, Luther does not say anything that indicates a constraint on his will, a frozenness or paralysis or immovability in the will itself. He does not say or imply that he perceives some lack of function in some part of himself, as one does when one says, "My brain is foggy; I just can't remember." Rather, although his words indicate inability, in the context of his words they manifest defiance, which is active and energetic. He was in the presence of the political and

church authorities of his time who had summoned him before them to recant his views. In their presence and to their faces, he said, “I can do no other.”

So whatever is being referred to with this first- person pronoun, it is something narrower than the whole human being Martin Luther. It is, after all, logically and metaphysically possible for that human being to do otherwise than he did on that occasion; no laws of logic, no metaphysical necessity, compelled Luther to oppose the Catholic powers of his day on that occasion. And neither did anything else external to Luther; it was physically possible, for example, for Luther to do otherwise. When Luther said, “I can do no other,” the subject of the inability—that which is being referred to with the first-person pronoun—is not Luther qua the metaphysical entity that he is but rather something else instead. That something else is what I mean to indicate with the phrase ‘the true self ’.

Finally, the notion of the true self can also be sketched by considering the theological claim that a person is perfected in heaven. This cannot be a claim about a human being’s metaphysically or psychologically specified self. That is because much of what makes up a human being metaphysically or psychologically described cannot or need not survive into heaven. For example, on Christian doctrine, no sinful thoughts, desires, or dispositions can survive the transition to heaven. As far as that goes, the very ability to sin is lost in heaven. So whatever survives death and is perfected in heaven is not simply the whole psychological self of a human person since, as commonly construed, that self invariably includes sinful dispositions and the ability to will what is sinful. A human person’s self in heaven is therefore not the same as that person’s self metaphysically or psychologically specified. Rather, it is what Luther is referring to by the first- person pronoun in his line “I can do no other” or what Paul is referring to in his claim that it is “not I that do it” when it comes to moral wrongdoing.

As I will argue in the next chapter, although there are various ways of identifying a human being’s self, none of them will map perfectly on to cases such as that of Luther in his moment of volitional necessity or Paul in his repudiation of the sinful parts of himself. The notion of the true self of a human being is narrower than the more familiar

concept of a human self. But what, then, is the true self? And how are we to understand its agency if the true self is manifest in volitional necessity and the inability to will evil?

More significantly for my purposes, what is it for the true self of a person to be perfected? If it is what is perfected in heaven, why are wounds and scars compatible with that perfection or even somehow part of it? Why suppose that wounds and scars could actually be part of the glorification of the true self of a person, as the story about Christ's resurrected body suggests, and as the felix culpa view seems to require? And, on Christian doctrine, what is the role of suffering in eliciting the true self in the process that brings a human person to the perfection of the afterlife in heaven? Is it possible for wounds and scars to add to the perfection of the true self of the person who has them?

The True Self and Its Perfection

There are multiple theories that could explain the notion of the true self of a human being; and in Chapter 2 I will examine some of those that might be thought to work. In the end, I will argue, none of the main contenders yields a satisfactory account. Instead, I will show that a better understanding of the notion of the true self can be found by highlighting the nature of suffering and, as it were, reverse- engineering the notion of the true self from the nature of suffering.

As for the perfection of the true self, it is important to recognize that, on Christian doctrine, what ultimately survives death is a resurrected human being, that is, a human being who is embodied. On Christian doctrine, in God's plan for creation, human beings are not like the angels, who are always only spirit; rather, in their created nature human beings are and were meant by God to be made out of matter. This theological claim has implications for the metaphysical composition of human beings and for the mechanisms of human cognition and other matters of this sort. But beyond such basic implications, which are not at issue in this book, the claim that human beings are and were intended by God to be made out of matter also has implications for what the true self of a human being is and what it is for the true self to be perfected.

To appreciate this point, consider, for example, that in virtue of being embodied a human being is a concrete particular. That is, a human being is an instance, an individual member, of a species; and whatever exactly a species is, it can be found in more than one individual. If, just for the sake of the example, we define a human being as the medievals generally did, as a rational animal, then Socrates and Plato are each equally rational animals. But they can be distinguished from one another at least in this, that Socrates is here now and Plato is there then. Something material must have a temporal and spatial location, and the difference association with some other place—or substitute for it no association with any particular place—and (on the story Plato gives us) something central to the true self of Socrates is lost. Since this is so, the perfection or glorification of the true self of a person must also be the perfection and the glorification of the self of a concrete particular human person.

These considerations are important because they are suggestive of reasons for supposing that even wounds and scars might be part of the perfection of the true self of a human being. Think again about the story that the resurrected body of Christ still had the wounds of the crucifixion. If (on Plato's story) the connection to Athens is somehow central to the identity of the true self of Socrates, then perhaps (on the story in the Gospels) the crucifixion is somehow central to the true self of Christ, too. And if it is central to Christ's true self, then there is some reason for supposing that the marks of the crucifixion remain in the perfection of that true self when the body of Christ is resurrected. Or so I will argue at length in what follows.

The True Self and the Image of God

Further explication of the notion of the true self stems from consideration of the theological claim that human beings are made in the image of God. On Christian doctrine, the image of God, who is perfectly good, is marred in human beings when they are sinful. What is it for that image to be marred? What is it for the image to be perfected? What exactly is the image of God in human beings?

If something X is an image of something else Y, then X must resemble Y in some respects or other. In virtue of being made in the image of God, then, a human being

must resemble God in some way. For this reason, to ask what the image of God in human beings is requires some theological reflection on the nature of God. On Christian doctrine, God is triune. That is, God is one and only one deity, and yet there are also three persons in that one God. For this reason, there is more than one way of thinking about the image of God in human beings. A human being can be considered to be made in the image of God in virtue of resembling the nature of the one Deity. Or, on the other hand, a human being can be supposed to resemble God in virtue of somehow resembling the three persons of the Trinity in their loving interaction. Both of these ways of thinking about the image of God in human beings are well represented in Christian theological thought. But there is yet one other way to think about the image of God in human beings.

On Christian doctrine, God is incarnate in Christ; and, on the Chalcedonian formula for the incarnate Christ, Christ is one person with two natures, one fully divine and one fully human. There is biblical warrant for the Christian claim that the incarnate Christ is most glorious in his crucifixion; on Christian doctrine, the nature of God is most manifest in the passion and death of Christ. The only divine attribute picked out in the New Testament as most expressive of God's nature is love: "God is love."80 And there is also biblical warrant for the claim that there is no greater love than the love of a person who lays down his life for the sake of another.81 On this way of thinking about the matter, then, the nature of God is most evident in Christ's crucifixion because love is most evident there. And the marks of that love are manifest in an exemplary way in the wounds of Christ's resurrected body.

Consequently, it is possible to see a third way of identifying the image of God in human beings. If it is the presence or the presence and magnification of the image of God in human beings that makes them glorious, and if the nature of the love that is God is most evident in the wounds of the resurrected Christ, then there may be some way in which the wounds of human suffering could make human beings resemble God too. In the Epistle to the Colossians, the apostle Paul says, "I rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is wanting in the afflictions of Christ."82 And in the Epistle to the Romans, he says, "we are the children of God; and if children, then heirs; heirs of God,

and heirs with Christ if we suffer with [Christ] that we may be glorified with [Christ]." On these suggestive lines, there is a way to understand the wounds of a person's suffering as intensifying for that person the image of God in him.

These considerations taken together give a clue about how to understand the notion of the true self of a person and with it the felix culpa view. If God's nature as love is most evident in the passion of the incarnate Christ and if the wounds of human suffering could be suitably connected to that love, then the wounds of a post- Fall human being Jerome might render him more in the image of God than he would have been had there been no suffering in the world. But if the image of God is intensified or fulfilled in Jerome, then to that extent Jerome is more what he was meant to be, on Christian doctrine. And for that reason, it seems that with his wounds Jerome is also more his true self, or so I will argue in the explication of the notion of the true self. On this way of thinking about the image of God in Jerome's true self, there is something more glorious about Jerome with wounds than there would have been had there been no Fall and no suffering. The image of love incarnate in Jerome's true self would have been less in a world without a Fall; but it is the image of love incarnate that makes Jerome more glorious in his true self than he would otherwise have been.

At any rate, these are the lineaments of the felix culpa view on one way of attempting to understand it and the notion of the true self of a person on which it relies.

Where Things Are

Although it has been largely unnoticed in contemporary discussion, there would be something leftover of the problem of evil even if there were a successful will eventually be restored to its intended goodness, I will leave these other parts of the problem aside. Those parts of the problem need a book of their own.

A Roadmap

In this chapter, I have presented the problem of mourning and then made a breathless dash through the lineaments of a solution to it. In what follows, I will try to examine the elements of the proposed solution at a more deliberate pace.

Each of the next four chapters is focused on a puzzle, and the solution to each puzzle contains one piece of the apparatus that will become an instrument for explicating and defending the felix culpa view.

Chapter 2, the first of these four puzzle chapters, centers on a perplexity prompted by the question of whether there is disability in heaven. I will begin that chapter by considering the Christian doctrine of life after death in heaven because, as I will argue, none of the currently most promising accounts of the self can explain what is supposed to survive death on that Christian doctrine. Using the test posed by the question whether there is disability in heaven, I propose an account of the true self and show what it implies about the perfection of the true self. On that account, the true self of a human being is the emergent condition of a human being who is thriving and has the fulfillment of her heart's desires when they converge with her thriving.

Then, to develop this account of the true self further, in Chapter 3 I turn to the nature of human thriving by taking up a puzzle generated by considerations of worship. Worship is typically characterized as based in an awed awareness of God's greatness and majesty. But this attitude includes a worshiper's sense of his distance from God. How is it then that the right relation to God is also supposed to be, at least ultimately, a union of love? To be united with something is to be as close to it as possible. Can one be both awed by one's great distance from God and also joyful in being united with God? The examination of this puzzle sheds light on the relational character of the true self. On Christian doctrine, the true self is ultimately the condition of a human being who is in a relationship of love with the deity. Chapter 3 also highlights the difference between surrender and submission as means to this relationship, and it shows that only surrender is successful in engendering it. This chapter therefore illuminates the nature of the thriving of a human being. Insofar as a relationship of love with the deity is central to human thriving, thriving requires the surrender but not the submission of a human being to the love of God.

Next, in Chapter 4, I try to illuminate the other element in the notion of the true self, namely, the fulfillment of the desires of the heart. I begin by focusing on a puzzle

introduced by the phenomenon of the transformative experience of conversion. On Christian doctrine, there has to be a conversion that transforms a post- Fall person into a person fully united with God. Through this transformation the true self of that person emerges and is perfected. This Christian view is well illustrated in the story of the conversion of John Newton, the eighteenth-century slave trader. But it is noteworthy that it is possible to see the life story of the protagonist Winston Smith in George Orwell's 1984 as an almost perfect parallel to Newton's story. And yet the virtually unanimous intuition is that Newton gains his true self through his transformative experience, while Winston loses his true self in consequence of his transformative experience. Disambiguating these two cases gives insight into the role played by the desires of the heart in the emergence of a human being's true self.

With this much exploration of the nature of the true self, in Chapter 5 I then turn to the perfection of the true self, on Christian doctrine. First, because the issues are complicated and because Aquinas is both a representative and an excellent Christian philosopher, I examine the whole notion of perfection on the metaphysics of Aquinas; and then I investigate Aquinas's account of the state of a human being in heaven, when on Christian doctrine the redeemed are perfected. I show that on the Thomistic account the perfection of the true self in heaven is a function of the intensification of the image of God in human beings. In fact, however, there seem to be two highly disparate interpretations of this Thomistic account of beatitude in heaven. I present the apparently conflicting interpretations, each of which seems to have textual support; and I argue that these interpretations can actually be melded into one consistent account which gives a philosophically powerful theory of the perfection of the image of God in human beings.

Chapter 5 explains the perfection of the true self in terms of the image of God in human beings, but it gives little detail about the love of God which is what the image in human beings is supposed to resemble. Because insight into the nature of the love of an entity with a mind and a will is given best by a narrative, it is helpful to consider a story about the love of God for the sake of insight into the nature of the image of God in human beings. But identifying a narrative as a story about the love of God turns out to raise

challenging philosophical problems. Chapter 6 turns to some of these problems in order to make a case for a particular story as representative of the love of God. In Chapter 7 I then present such a story and comment on it in order to elucidate the exemplar of divine love.

With all these elements in place, it is then possible to consider a defense of the felix culpa view. In Chapter 8, I explore in some detail what such a defense should attempt to do and what the conditions for its success are. With these preliminary points out of the way, in Chapter 9 I present the defense itself. I show the way in which the wounds of a human person's suffering can become for her an image of the incarnate Christ in his suffering. I argue that the perfection of this image in a attribute picked out in the New Testament as most expressive of God's nature is love: "God is love."80 And there is also biblical warrant for the claim that there is no greater love than the love of a person who lays down his life for the sake of another. On this way of thinking about the matter, then, the nature of God is most evident in Christ's crucifixion because love is most evident there. And the marks of that love are manifest in an exemplary way in the wounds of Christ's resurrected body.

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This is then the defense of the felix culpa view. With this defense, the final part of the problem of evil also has a resolution. <>

The Meaning of Mourning: Perspectives on Death, Loss, and Grief edited by Mikolaj Slawkowski-Rode [Lexington Books, ISBN 9781666908923]

Grief is a universal human response to death and loss. Mourning is an equally universally observable practice that enables the bereaved to express their grief and come to terms with the reality of loss. Yet, despite their prevalence, there is no unified understanding of the nature and meaning of grief and mourning. The Meaning of Mourning: Perspectives on Death, Loss, and Grief brings together fifteen essays from diverse disciplines addressing the topics of death, grief, and mourning. The collection moves from general questions concerning the putative badness of death and the meaning of loss through the phenomenology and

psychology of grief, to personal and cultural aspects of mourning. Contributors examine topics such as theodicy and grief, reproductive loss, mourning as a form of recognition of value, the roots of grief in early childhood, grief in COVID-times, hope, phenomenology of loss, public commemoration and mourning rituals, mourning for a devastated culture, the Necropolis of Glasgow, and the "art of outliving." Edited by Mikołaj Sławkowski-Rode, the volume provides a survey of the rich topography of methodologies, problems, approaches, and disciplines that are involved in the study of issues surrounding loss and our responses to it and guides the reader through a spectrum of perspectives, highlighting the connections and discontinuities between them.

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Grief is a universal human response to death and loss. Mourning is an equally universally observable practice in which grief is expressed and whereby the bereaved can come to terms with the reality of loss. Yet, despite their prevalence, there is no unified understanding of the nature and meaning of grief and mourning. There are

important ethnic differences in how grief is experienced and a variety of forms that mourning can take across cultures and religions. Likewise, there is a wide range of approaches to what the desired ends of mourning are, or what a resolution of grief might consist in. Across literary traditions, poetic responses to grief and death range from the elegiac to the defiant. Grief and mourning have been a subject of interest to thinkers representing all of the world's major intellectual traditions, from Platonism to Daoism. These perspectives have typically been critical, suggesting that too great a preoccupation with death and loss undermines human self-sufficiency and rational self-control. Conversely, in most religious traditions, the remembrance of and continued relationships with the dead constitute an important part of individual and community life.

In recent years, a number of disciplines have made important contributions to our understanding of mourning including experimental psychology, cognitive neuroscience, and social anthropology. These approaches explore aspects of the emotional and spiritual turbulence caused by loss, and the corresponding paths to the resolution of grief, that represent, on the one hand, our evolution as biological and social beings, where the disruption of bonds caused by death affects our chances of survival, and, on the other hand, our individual constitution as conscious subjects, where our sense of personal and collective identity may be disrupted by the loss of a close relationship. Recent scientific work on loss, grief, and mourning has also promoted renewed philosophical and theological interest.

The present volume brings together fifteen original contributions from diverse disciplines addressing the topics of death, grief, and mourning from a variety of angles. While the collection is not designed to serve as a comprehensive study or companion, it assumes a holistic, interdisciplinary approach to the theme of mourning that combines philosophy, theology, psychology, medical science, and the arts. The volume provides a survey of the rich topography of methodologies, problems, approaches, and disciplines in light of which the issues surrounding loss and our responses to it may be viewed. The title of this collection therefore invokes the idea of mourning in a broad sense, which goes beyond the public display of grief caused by the loss of a loved one. The chapters

are organized in such a way as to guide the reader through the spectrum of perspectives represented by the contributors, highlighting the connections and discontinuities between them.

The collection begins with four chapters that consider the metaphysics of death and the theology of loss, including expressions of these ideas in ritual form and their implications for concrete experiences, like reproductive loss. This set of issues leads into two chapters which analyze the relationship between mourning and the recognition of value, and the role hope plays in the experience of loss. There follow four chapters exploring themes in the psychology of loss and the psychological roots of grief in early childhood, psychological vulnerability to loss in later life when opportunities for rebuilding meaning are diminished, and the interpersonal phenomenology of loss. A particular case of the latter is considered in the form of the loss of academic mentors and mentees, and the forms that mourning in those cases may take. This also provides a transition to a set of issues connected with public and cultural aspects of mourning which are discussed in the next three chapters. Community mourning and the need for public commemoration is considered, and how these may become complicated by cultural or historical factors. Differing attitudes to the loss of an idea are contrasted, and how mourning can be expressed in the rethinking of intellectual heritage of a culture. The collection ends with a discussion of the cultural role of sepulchral art, and a meditation on the necessity of living with loss.

In Chapter 1, Jerry Valberg considers the ancient problem of whether death is bad for us. Valberg analyzes this problem in terms famously

adopted in the dispute between Hume and Doctor Johnson. An important part of the meaning of loss in its interpersonal context is connected to the fact that we believe death to be bad for those we lose to it. The thought that this belief is mistaken can be consoling, but it may also impoverish our understanding of loss, and of the relationships it threatens. Valberg attempts to justify our belief in the badness of death even if it is followed by nothingness, as Hume insists.

In Chapter 2, Eleonore Stump considers a closely related question: Is death an evil if the Christian picture of redemption in the afterlife is true? If there is nothing that is left unredeemed in the larger perspective of a theodicy, then grief and mourning seem less justified. Stump argues that this is not the case and considers grief and mourning to be phenomena unaccounted for by traditional theodicies. Her contribution is a new development in her seminal work on the problem of evil.

In Chapter 3, Richard Conrad discusses the same theme in the context of the Catholic Office of the Dead. Conrad compares the Old and New Liturgies, showing how they differ in their respective approaches to death and mourning. The author defends the perspective implicit in the Old Liturgy in which the reality of death and the pain connected with loss are emphasized. Conrad argues that even if we accept universal redemption and resurrection, we are still justified in feeling outrage and anguish when we are bereaved. He defends this claim by suggesting that God does not demand of us that we joyfully accept his will in all cases, and indeed that conforming to God's will in some circumstances might mean willing something different from God.

In Chapter 4, Amber Leigh Griffioen takes the argument of the foregoing chapters a step further. Griffioen focuses not merely on how to philosophically and theologically justify the grief and lamentation expressed in the Christian tradition, but on how to broaden this tradition to make space for the expression of previously unacknowledged grief: that connected with reproductive loss. Griffioen argues, echoing Stump's reasoning in the second chapter, that a theology of reproductive loss that justifies grief and the mourning it prompts must be grounded in the metaphysics of the afterlife, and a resulting anthropology and ethics. For Griffioen, the development of grieving rituals for pregnancy loss that are philosophically adequate and theologically fitting requires a novel conception of God. Griffioen also notes that in the Christian context, grief for an unborn child is often connected to the hope of being able to be reunited despite the premature loss.

In Chapter 5, Balázs Mezei takes up this important theme of hope and considers how it relates to grief and mourning in a broader context of death and loss which undermine

the meanings and values around which we organize our lives. Mezei uses the example of World War II concentration camps to argue that mourning is not merely an expression of an attitude taken towards a senseless loss, but a search for meaning which is guided by hope for the reconciliation of human values with even the most traumatic of experiences.

Chapter 6 focuses on the closely related topic of mourning as a form of recognition of value. It takes up the problem of the limits of mourning and sorrow in light of inestimable loss. The authors Cathy Mason and Matthew Dougherty consider the question of how it might be appropriate or even desirable to move on, and continue one's life, if mourning is proportional to the value of what has been lost. They argue that ceasing to mourn can be a fitting response to the object of love, which may represent its value in our life better than unending mourning.

In Chapter 7, Colin Murray Parkes takes a wider view of the issues surrounding the psychology of mourning and bereavement, arguing that human responses to loss are rooted in behaviors that have survival value in early childhood. In particular, this includes the disorientation and distress experienced due to the absence of a caregiver. The way that the relationship with caregivers in early childhood develops shapes later responses to loss in adult life, which in turn may require different therapeutic approaches that are sensitive to those early experiences, and not merely to facts about the suffered loss. The chapter also serves as a new introduction to Parkes's seminal work on this topic.

Chapter 8 discusses the disorientation and distress suffered as a consequence of the death of someone close as a result of the social distancing and disruption of the familiar in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic. John Cottingham argues that although grief and mourning are usually associated with the loss of some clearly definable good, this does not exhaust the phenomenology of loss. The chapter considers examples of this in poetical and religious accounts of loss, including those of Dante, Horatius, Keats, Housman, Manley Hopkins, as well as Eleonore Stump's seminal work, and Biblical accounts ranging from the Psalms to the Gospel of Luke. Cottingham then returns to

the theme of hope as a guiding principle for grief that prevents it from slipping into depression and mourning collapsinginto despair.

Chapter 9, written by the editor, analyzes the phenomenology of loss and considers the connection between the interpersonal dimension of grief and the sense of disorientation caused by the radical change in how the world is experienced after loss. The author argues that an important part of this experience is constituted by sharing the world with others.

With the loss of others, it is not merely that an element of the world we inhabit is removed, but rather that the whole world is radically altered.

The chapter proposes a second-personal account of this phenomenon and suggests that grief and mourning are an attempt at rebuilding—to the extent that this is possible—the shared world.

In Chapter 10, Douglas Davies considers a particular case of mourning that could be seen as an example of how loss might threaten the way we view the world. Davies focuses on loss in a relationship between an academic mentor and mentee. The chapter considers how idea-generation is aligned with emotions and how it confers a sense of identity, which is threatened by loss. Davies observes that, because grief connected with this loss lies outside of the usually recognized circles of personal bereavement, it seldom finds public recognition. Yet, by applying the theoretical notion of "dividual" rather than individual personhood, he explores how shared knowledge contributes to identity formation, and how, through a process of mourning, this "dividual" identity may persist. The contribution is an important new addition to Davies's seminal work on the themes of loss, mourning, and grief.

Chapter 11 considers the relationship between public and private aspects of recognizing and coming to terms with loss. Anthony O'Hear argues that given the universality of human mourning, public commemoration and mourning rituals play an important role in this process, which cannot be reduced to overcoming the psychological trauma of private grief. The chapter looks in particular at the consequences of death being left

unmourned, becoming problematic and at times tragic, and impeding personal healing and the restoration of communities affected by the loss. O'Hear claims that public commemorations can often have the opposite effect of simply opening up old wounds, and that, in fact, by recognizing those previously deprived of recognition may help with both private and public healing. The chapter develops themes that are present in some of O'Hear's most important works, including The Landscape of Humanity: Art, Culture and Society (2008) and The Element of Fire: Science, Art and the Human World (republished 2013).

In Chapter 12, Roger Scruton examines a case of mourning that is complicated for the community by historical and cultural factors. Scruton begins by considering the mourning for a devastated culture which was made impossible in the German experience by the appropriation of the German cultural heritage under the Nazi dictatorship. A complete repudiation of the values which we feel have been compromised by being employed in disgraceful contexts creates a conflict, Scruton argues, as it contradicts the obligation of piety we have towards our ancestors. He suggests we have a duty towards the dead, and that leaving this duty unfulfilled in the end makes it impossible to accept loss and move on. This contribution was written shortly before the author died and it is, as far as the editor is aware, the final piece that he completed before his death.

Chapter 13 combines the approaches of the three preceding pieces and considers an interesting case of mourning for an idea. Lesley Chamberlain looks at what she calls a "minimalist British version of 'The Death of God.'" Chamberlain compares two responses to Henry Sidgwick's skepticism towards moral realism. She contrasts Bernard Williams's enthusiasm with Alasdair MacIntyre's sorrowful acknowledgment of the loss. The chapter analyzes how these two attitudes influence the prospects for the reconstitution of value in human moral life.

Chapter 14 explores another important context of the public dimension of human responses to lossin the form of sepulchral architecture. Alexander Stoddart focuses on the Necropolis of Glasgow, which houses an impressive collection of sepulchral forms

that commemorate the dead and at the same time address the living. The author considers the role of the tomb as an enduring testament to death and a sign of personal grief, which in time becomes a reminder of the bonds that account for the endurance of the community. Stoddart argues that Classicism is the architectural style that is best suited for the purpose of housing the dead. This is because, he claims, Classicism embodies those aspects of our relationship with the dead that are most difficult to represent, and for that reason are the most disturbing.

In Chapter 15, Raymond Tallis offers a meditation on enduring in the face of the loss which permeates our lives. "The art of outliving," Tanis observes, is "more pertinent the longer we live as this implies outliving many persons and things that in different periods were important to if not constitutive of our lives." He associates the ability to outlive with the capacity for personal growth, albeit this may often seem like a betrayal of those we have lost, and of ourselves. In what is at times a very personal account, Tallis's contribution connects with the opening chapter on the badness of death, and argues that living is itself outliving, just as growing up is growing away.

While each of the chapters can be read individually, the reader will benefit from reading the contributions in the suggested order, which emphasizes a movement from the reality of loss to the need to accept it in our lives through a detailed consideration of its metaphysical, psychological, interpersonal, cultural, and moral dimensions. <>

Jan Patočka and the Phenomenology of Life After Death edited by Gustav Strandberg, and Hugo Strandberg [Contributions to Phenomenology, Springer, ISBN 9783031495472]

This volume contains for the first time in English, Jan Patočka's seminal essay "The Phenomenology of Afterlife", as well as contributions surrounding and analyzing this text. In his essay, Patočka reflects on our relation to the dead and on how the departure of a loved one affects our continued existence. The premise of Patočka's investigation is

that our existence always takes place by and through an originary and reciprocal "being for others".

The contributors in the volume extend the field of inquiry into the wider phenomenological and post-phenomenological discussion of death by being cognizant of how works of literature can broaden our understanding of the care of death, grief, forgiveness, and non-reciprocal love. Also included are reflections on issues of philosophical anthropology, community, collective memory, and the ecstatic nature of life – issues that can all be related back to Patočka's initial reflections, but which nonetheless radiate into a myriad of directions. This volume appeals to students and researchers in the field.

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From its very inception philosophy has been preoccupied with death, so much so that many philosophers have received the reputation of being somber, melancholic, and morbid in nature. By continuously reflecting on the meaning and nature of death, philosophers have seemingly been shrouded in darkness to such an extent that their contemporaries considered them to be dead long before they met their own demise.

While this image of the moribund philosopher can certainly be questioned, the fact remains that many philosophers, and then especially the ancient ones, have insisted that there is an essential relation between philosophical thought and death. A life dedicated to philosophy would, it seems, at the same time imply a life lived in the shadow of death.

This is, at least, what Plato could be said to claim in the suite of dialogues that revolve around the trial and death of Socrates. To begin with, we have no reason to fear death, since death is, as Socrates expresses it in the Apology, something of which we cannot have any knowledge. Hence, to fear death is "nothing other than to think oneself wise when one is not; for it is to think one knows what one does not know". But Plato does not only admonish us to discard all of our irrational and hubristic fears of the unknown. He also holds that death is intimately tied to the ethos, the way of life, of the philosopher. This is spelled out most clearly in the Phaedo, in which Socrates introduces the notion that death is the separation of the soul from the body, something which in turn implies that the state of being dead is a state in which the soul has been liberated from the body and exists by itself. By and through the dialectic of the dialogue, Socrates uses this notion in order to show that throughout his life the true philosopher attempts to avoid all that is associated with the contingency of the body. The philosopher is temperate and keeps away from bodily pleasures in the form of food and drink, he despises superficialities such as fine clothes and other bodily ornaments, and he considers the bodily senses as hindrances "in his attempt to search out the pure, absolute essence of things". (2005, 229, 66a) As Socrates puts it, those who practice philosophy in the true sense of the word therefore "study nothing but dying and being dead". (2005, 223, 64a) In fact, philosophy, as a specific way of life, can be understood as a continuous practice in dying, a continuous attempt to live life as if it was already over and as if the soul had already been liberated from the shackles of the body. Thus, it would, as Socrates remarks, be absurd if someone "who had been all his life fitting himself to live as nearly in a state of death as he could, should then be disturbed when death came to him". (2005, 235, 67e) In other words, for Plato, death is not only

something we should not fear, it is something we as philosophers should embrace and welcome.

These reflections on death, and on the relationship between philosophy and death, that we find in Plato's work, have reverberated through the history of philosophy. A century or so after Plato's own death, Epicurus would, for example, write in his famous "Letter to Menoeceus" that "death, the most frightening thing, is nothing to us; since when we exist, death is not yet present, and when death is present, then we do not exist". (1994, 29) While Epicurus' attitude is reminiscent of Socrates' injunction that we should not fear what we do not know, other thinkers would build upon Plato's understanding of the necessary relation between death and a philosophical way of life. It was, for instance, echoed in Seneca's thought when he wrote "he will live badly who does not know how to die well." (1997, 92) This sentiment lived on in Cicero's work who approvingly quoted Socrates' sayings from the Phaedo, and would later find its way into the work of later thinkers such as Montaigne, whose essay "That to Philosophize is to Learn to Die", noted that "premeditation of death is premeditation of freedom. He who has learned how to die has unlearned how to be a slave". (1966, 60)

To be sure, this Platonic way of addressing our own mortality gradually disappeared with the onset of modernity. The focus of most modern philosophers was no longer the purported immortality of the soul and our possible survival after death. This notwithstanding, death has remained an important and recurring theme in modern thought as well. And even though we would be well advised not to exaggerate the importance of the Platonic position for modern philosophy, there are still lingering traces of it. While it has taken different forms, the recognition of the importance of death in and for life is still present in modern philosophy. To see this, we only need to remind ourselves of Hegel's analyses of the master-slave-dialectic. In the fight for life and death, it is ultimately the master's willingness to risk his own life that sets him apart from the slave: "it is solely by staking one's life that freedom is proven to be the essence, namely, that as a result the essence for self- consciousness is proven to be not being [...] but rather [...] that self-consciousness is only pure being-for-itself." (2018, 111)

At the same time, also the slave, the one who lets himself be enslaved rather than killed, thereby goes through an important transformation, for the slave

> felt the fear of death, the absolute master. In that feeling, it had inwardly fallen into dissolution, trembled in its depths, and all that was fixed within it had been shaken loose. However, this pure universal movement, this way in which all stable existence becomes absolutely fluid, is the simple essence of self-consciousness; it is absolute negativity, pure being-for-itself" (115).

In the post-Hegelian tradition, the ability to face up to our own finitude has been interpreted not only as what separates the master from the slave, but also as what separates man from other animals: all animals die, but man is the only animal who may consciously choose his own demise. While it is possible to live without engaging with our own death, such a life is ultimately deemed to be unfree, just as Montaigne once noted.

A similar, albeit differently formulated, understanding of death can be found in Heidegger's seminal analysis of being-towards-death in Being and Time. When Dasein confronts its own finitude, it stands, as Heidegger formulates it, "before itself in its ownmost potentiality of being" in such a way that its own authentic existence is disclosed. (2010, 241) By explicitly relating to our own finitude, we are thrown back upon ourselves and torn away from the inauthentic way of being, in which we ordinarily live our lives. That is, we are torn away from "the they," and the way in which it covers over our death by turning it into an impersonal form of "dying" that we can purportedly control. In order to truly exist, in order to exist authentically and to live our life – and not merely repeat the life of others – we need to live it such that we are open to the fact that our own death is a necessary part of our lived existence. Even though he radically transformed our understanding of death by analyzing it in strictly atheist terms, Heidegger's thought is clearly in keeping with the valuation of death that we find from Plato and onward in Western philosophy.

However, regardless whether we are speaking of the intimate connection between philosophical thought and death, the relation between our mortality and freedom, or of how our own finitude forces us to take responsibility for our own life, it is clear that

philosophers throughout history have almost always focused on how we relate to our own death. Instead of attempting to come to terms with the many deaths that we do experience in our lives, philosophy has privileged the only death that withdraws from our experience, or that we can only experience momentarily at the cost of never experiencing anything else. In and of itself, this is not that surprising, for due to the opacity, anxiety, and sense of wonder that our own death gives rise to death is one of the perennial questions of philosophy. Still, this has led to a situation in which the death of others has received surprisingly little philosophical attention. One notable exception to this, however, is Jan Patočka's (1907–1977) essay "The Phenomenology of Afterlife", to which this volume is dedicated.

In this essay, Patočka reflects on our relation to the dead and on how the departure of a loved one affects our existence. The premise of his investigation is that our existence always takes place by and through an originary and reciprocal "being for others". Even our own relation to ourselves is predicated on this reciprocity: we relate to ourselves in ways that are mediated by the reactions and responses of others. However, this constitutive reciprocity disappears as soon as the other dies. Thus, the death of the other gives rise to a set of themes that concern not only our relation to the dead, but which at the same time calls human existence as such into question.

Taking Patočka's essay as its starting point – the first English translation of which is included in the volume – the contributions in this anthology seek to respond to the questions that Patočka once raised by continuing the reflection that he initiated. Before presenting the individual contributions in greater detail, it is, however, necessary to provide a more detailed account of what Patočka actually puts forward in his relatively short, but philosophically rich essay.

The Phenomenology of Afterlife

During large parts of his life, Jan Patočka was banned from publishing. The censorship and oppression of the communist regime of Czechoslovakia meant that he could never truly pursue an academic career. As a result, many of Patočka's most important texts were only disseminated in a clandestine way during his lifetime and were only

published posthumously. This is also the case when it comes to the essay "The Phenomenology of Afterlife". Unfortunately, this essay was left unfinished by Patočka and was, as far as we know, never disseminated during his lifetime. In fact, we do not have much information about the essay at all, and we still do not know exactly when it was written, though it was clearly written sometime during the latter part of his life. The essay was found together with a number of other manuscripts that date from the 1960s, which seems to suggest that the essay was written during the same period. Some have argued, with some plausibility, that it was written after Patočka's wife Helena had passed away in the autumn of 1966. Yet, in a letter to Walter Biemel written in 1976, Patočka notes that he is working on "a study on 'life after death and immortality'".3 Ultimately, we still do not know whether or not he had already began working on it in the 1960s and merely sought to finish it in 1976, or if the manuscript as a whole was written at a later date. But regardless of when it was actually written, and regardless if it was written in a state of mourning, Patočka's attempt at coming to terms with the afterlife of a loved one remains a fascinating essay about something that all of us someday will face. In what follows, we will provide a summary of the main arguments in Patočka's text. Needless to say, this summary will not delve into all of the aspects of the essay, but our hope is that it can provide the reader with some important signposts about Patočka's way of thinking.

In the beginning of the essay Patočka notes that the question of afterlife usually has been reduced to a question concerning the mortality or immortality of the soul. From Plato onward, the immortal soul has served as the substantial guarantor for our posterity. The question we need to ask ourselves, however, is how we are to conceive of the afterlife if we reject that conception: "how would afterlife be possible without its own substantial bearer?" (this volume, /130/)4 The immediate answer to this would be what Patočka calls a kind of "positivist consolation": the diseased other has disappeared but lives on in us; in our recollections, memories, and the stories that we tell. To be sure, this is not immortality, but a precarious afterlife that is dependent on us, even if it arguably is the only thing that we can hope for. Still, this form of afterlife gives rise to a number of interrelated questions. It is remarkable, Patočka notes, "that nobody has

asked with philosophical thoroughness: how does the other live in us? Who is this surviving other? What is his mode of being? To what extent is he identical to the one who lived, and how is this identity modified?" (/130/) These are the questions that Patočka sets out to analyze phenomenologically in his essay.

When addressing these questions, Patočka starts out by noting that our existence is always already "an intersubjective formation". In order to analyze this "formation", we need to break it down analytically into its constituent parts. We are, first of all, beings in ourselves, and as such, "we live in our own, original, live presence in ourselves". (/130/) This is a form of presence that only I have access to, and one that other people cannot participate in. Even though Patočka does not refer to Husserl in this context, his understanding of this form of presence is clearly indebted to Husserl's analyses in the Cartesian Meditations. This original presence is admittedly quite opaque: in it, all our experiences arise in their actuality, but in a way that makes them inseparable from who we are. Because of this inseparability, our experiences can only appear in an unreflected form, which as Patočka writes, "prevents the capturing of the how" of experience. (/131/) In order to understand our experience, we need to objectify it and ourselves and change perspective so that we are no longer only an experiencing agent, but also the experience that is being analyzed. In turn, this requires that we, at least to some degree, make ourselves public, that we turn our original and unshareable presence into something public or visible that can be shared by others, something which is primarily done by and through language. Our being in ourselves would thus be transformed into a being for ourselves. But if we truly want to understand the imbricated nature of our existence, these two forms (being in oneself and being for oneself) need to be understood in relation to our being for others.

My being for others has its specific originarity as well, but one that I cannot fully comprehend. I know that I appear for others, just as others appear for me, but I can never perceive myself as a whole in the way other people can. Instead, my being for others is, Patočka writes, "the object of fantasy, imagination, meaning, considerations concerning me as an object of various purposeful actions of others". (/133/) We do, however, have a basis for these more or less imaginary constructions. I am a being for

others, but others are beings for me as well, and hence I know what it means to appear for others. Furthermore, our appearance in relation to others can be understood in both synchronic and diachronic terms: the other appears to me in the originarity of sensory givenness, but the other is also present to me in his physical absence. Of course, this also holds true for my being for others, which, as Patočka puts it, means that I can "live my own afterlife, my quasi-life in others". (/133/) Our existence is thus an "intersubjective formation" that is constituted by the imbricated interplay between being in oneself, being for oneself, being for others, and another's being for me. As long as we are alive all of these aspects of our existence are synchronized with each other and constitute an integral whole. The question that Patočka now raises is how this synchronic unity is affected when someone close to us dies, or, as he himself puts it: "to what mode of being does the deceased pass?" (/133/).

To begin with, it is important to recognize that all forms of being for others that is not a mere figment of our imagination (such as a character in fiction) once had its own originality for itself. Even when someone dies, it thus still has its own inner originality. However, it is a being that is no longer synchronous with us any longer. What has disappeared is, to phrase it differently, the possibility of a reciprocal exchange with the other. Patočka writes:

> The dead person does not co-perceive, does not execute anything, but he withdraws from all this completely and becomes a mere object, which does not have the sense of "together" anymore, does not have the sense of participation in human enterprises, actions and interests. This participation is something that essentially takes place in reciprocity – life is life in reciprocity, and thus in the duality of being in itself and being for itself. (/134/)

Even after death, the deceased other is a being for us: he continues to be a part of our lives and we continue to relate to him, but there is no possibility for any synchronous exchange any longer. The other lives on, but at the mercy of our recollections, which also places a responsibility on our shoulders insofar as the deceased other can no longer affect how we actually perceive him. The dead person does not, Patočka writes, "have this possibility to make himself anymore; the dead person is a closed history, and even his possibilities are dead". (/134/) This, then, presents us with an obvious problem, since the closed history of the other could mean that his identity is now predicated on

our highly subjective memories of him. Patočka's example here is of his dead father. For him, he is "my father", whereas others might remember him as "Headmaster P.", which could give the impression that the afterlife of the deceased is based on the respective roles and titles they once had when they were alive. (/134/) We might instinctively think that this is problematic, but if other people do not only live on as particular roles, who or what is actually preserved in their afterlife?

When attempting to answer this question, Patočka makes reference to Roman Ingarden's analysis of the metaphysical quality of a work of art, a quality that, according to Ingarden, presents itself as the unifying element of the artwork through which the artwork affects us, but which also has the capacity of unifying all of its multiple traits (form, content, color, style, etc.). (see Ingarden 1973) While Patočka does engage with Ingarden's aesthetic theory in other texts (see Patočka 1990, 354f.), in this context he draws attention to the fact that something akin to this metaphysical quality seems to be present in our relation to the departed. Even when there is no longer any possibility of a synchronous exchange with the other, according to Patočka, we still perceive this metaphysical quality: it is present in photographs, portraits, literary remains, as well as in the words and deeds that we remember from the other. The metaphysical quality is, as he puts it, "something global, and therefore it has an affective character, the character of explicable implicatedness, which does not coincide with any detailed explicatum". (/135/) It is, we might say, the unmistakable sense that is present in the other's being for another; an affective sense of unity that encompasses all of the different traits that we associate with the person in question. Even though this quality does not arise from the originary relation that the other once had to himself – it is after all present even when this originary relation has disappeared – it is still related to something living according to Patočka, to something that is more living than the specific features and individual qualities of the departed. We can understand this to be analogous to Ingarden's notion of the metaphysical quality of the work of art, but it is also related to Merleau-Ponty's analyses of our perceptual experience, to which Patočka also refers in his essay. Following Merleau-Ponty, we could then speak of this quality as that which makes it possible for us to recognize who someone is before we

can actually see them properly (by recognizing their specific gait and "style" of comportment) (see Merleau-Ponty 1967, 166f.). To be clear, we can only grasp this quality if the deceased other was someone close to us; but if the other was close to us, this quality lives on as an essential aspect of the other's afterlife.

The other thus lives on in us, and while this form of afterlife might give us some consolation, it will of course not alleviate the sorrow and sense of loss that the death of a loved one entails. As we have already seen, "life is life in reciprocity", according to Patočka, and it is precisely this reciprocity that disappears when a loved one dies. There is, he writes, "a vacuum left after this reciprocity, there is suddenly a wall against which our habitus of reciprocity is crashing". (/137/) If we look closer at this form of reciprocity, it becomes clear that it takes the form of a need for the other in our life. But we do not merely need the other as a mere existence, we need the other to need us, just as he reciprocally needs our need for him. By drawing on Alexandre Kojève's famous interpretation of the master-slave-dialectic in the Phenomenology of Spirit, Patočka notes that there is a complicated structure in play here, since this reciprocal need for the need of the other will never reach any point of saturation, but is continuously intensified. Patočka also makes clear that this need should not be understood as a form of objectivation of the other or as an attempt to control the other's freedom (a position Patočka identifies with Sartre's understanding of intersubjectivity, but which can also be found in the Hegelian conception, upon which Patočka, at least in part, bases his analysis):

> We do not make ourselves into an object in order to take possession of another's freedom, it is on the contrary fulfilment by emptiness: the need is not to be quenched, but should on the contrary be rekindled constantly, it should be renewed all the time: which is also the reason why the need for the other has the character of incessant actualization. This is why when real "saturation" occurs, when the need disappears, the result is a disappointment. (/137–138/)

As Patočka here makes clear, our need for the other's need is rooted in a sense of emptiness or lack, but in an emptiness that is complicated by the fact that the other's need for us will never fulfil it but will rather act as a catalyst that continues to intensify our need. As such, our need for the other's need is, Patočka notes, distinct from how our material needs, such as our need for food, sex, shelter, etc., are structured.

If we want to understand the peculiar structure of our need for the other, we have to remind ourselves of Patočka's initial claim that our existence is an "intersubjective formation". Since our existence is always already an existence that is imbricated with others, we simply need others in our lives. I am never only a being in and/ or for myself and as such I am never self-enclosed, but always already "the experienced identity of this outer and inner just as the other himself is". (/140/) Were it not for the presence of other people, my being-outside-my-self, just as the outside-himself of the other, would never lead anywhere. On the contrary, it is only in relation to another person that my being for another becomes explicit and actualized. Since my being for another is an essential part of who I am – an essential aspect of the integrity of my existence – it is only by relating to others that I become who I am, and that I can become someone different than I was before. This is precisely why I need the other's need: I need to be a being for another, and this can only take place in a true sense if the other reciprocally needs me in his life so that he is a being for another as well. Even though Patočka never uses the concept himself, we can also speak of this in terms of identity. Without the reciprocal engagement with others there is no being for another, and hence an important aspect of my identity will never be actualized. From this, we can also understand why this continuous process of need will never come to a halt. I live my life in and with others, and this can never result in any sense of saturation or fullness since this would imply that my identity could be closed or completed, which it never is, not even when I am dead. This is also why my being for another cannot be understood as a form of alienation. It is not, Patočka writes, "something essentially inauthentic, but it belongs to the full content of one's own being, to what this being essentially is, but what it can become internally, recuperatively only through another". (/140/).

As soon as we recognize how essential the other is for our own being, we can also start to understand in greater detail the sense of loss we experience when a loved one dies. The loss that we experience in such situations is not only the loss of a loved one, and the loss of the reciprocal engagement that we used to have, it is also a loss of the possibility of relating to ourselves that the other enabled for us. Hence, we also experience this loss as "the annulment of our own existence" and as a "living death".

(/141/) We go on living, but what was once an essential part of us has died. It is a living death, in which we have lost "the possibility to feel ourselves, the possibility that the other used to give us, the possibility that we were for ourselves on the basis of the other". (/141/)

As will become clear from the other contributions in this volume, Patočka's understanding of the afterlife, together with his analysis of how the death of the other manifests itself as a living death for the survivors who are left behind, elicits a wide variety of questions. For instance, in what way can Patočka's reflections help us to understand grief and mourning; how is our relation to the dead affected when our life together was marked by conflict or by non-reciprocal love? Likewise, how are we to understand our existence to begin with, when the "intersubjective formation" that we are is no longer limited to our co-existence with the living, but is permeated, perhaps even haunted, by our relations to the dead? The contributors in this volume seek to respond to these, and to similar, issues, and they do so by extending the field of inquiry into the wider phenomenological and post-phenomenological discussion of death; by taking cognisance of how works of literature can broaden our understanding of death, grief, and forgiveness; and lastly by reflecting on issues of philosophical anthropology, community, collective memory, and the ecstatic nature of life – issues that can all be related back to Patočka's initial reflections, but which nonetheless radiate in other directions.

The Essays in this Volume

The volume begins with Patočka's essay "The Phenomenology of Afterlife", here translated into English for the first time. The rest of the volume consists of papers discussing Patočka's essay.

The first three papers contextualize Patočka's essay in various ways. Jan Frei identifies seven thought complexes in Patočka's essay, the contexts of which he then locates in Patočka's oeuvre as a whole. This makes it possible for Frei to explain why Patočka sets up his essay in the way he does, that is, why he decides to observe the afterlife only in the consciousness and actions of others.

Gustav Strandberg relates the analysis in "The Phenomenology of Afterlife" to Patočka's reflections on death in his philosophy of history and political thought. By way of such an interpretation, Strandberg shows how Patočka's phenomenological analysis of the afterlife can help to shed new light on his understanding of human co-existence and solidarity.

Nicolas de Warren discusses Patočka's essay in its wider phenomenological context, especially with reference to Husserl, Ingarden and Scheler. The main theme of his essay is the interplay of disappearance and participation, the ways in which the dead person continues to mean for me while the details of our life together fade from memory.

One central point in Patočka's essay is that my relation to the dead lacks reciprocity. The next three papers discuss this claim. Hugo Strandberg focuses on forgiveness in relation to the dead: is forgiving someone possible if reciprocity is lacking, and what would it mean to see oneself as forgiven by someone dead? These questions raise methodological issues about the very possibility of describing such experiences philosophically.

Tomáš Hejduk gives one example of post mortem reciprocity: the ways in which someone dead lives on in his projects, projects that can still surprise and challenge us. For Hejduk, this calls for a rethinking not only of death but also of life.

Ondřej Beran confronts Patočka head-on, by discussing precisely one of the things Patočka's denial of reciprocity rejects: encounters and communication with the dead or with spirits. How should reports of such encounters be understood? One of Beran's points is that people claiming to have had such experiences do not have to be understood as affirming some ontological or metaphysical thesis, such as the one denied by Patočka.

The four last papers relate Patočka's essay to other philosophers and writers. Erin Plunkett starts out from Søren Kierkegaard's account of loving the dead and highlights problems in it. She then turns to Patočka's essay, showing that Patočka's insistence on

authentic being for others allows for a more hopeful and intersubjec-tive relationship to the dead than the Kierkegaardian one.

In her paper, Lovisa Andén relates Patočka's essay to historiographical discussions about the relation between memory and historical knowledge, discussions undertaken by thinkers such as Paul Ricoeur and Pierre Nora. Andén argues that we can understand testimonies and archives as different modes of being with the dead, modes that continue to constitute both our individual field of experience and our collective historical situation.

The theme of Antony Fredriksson's paper is Clarice Lispector's novel The Passion According to G. H. In the light of Patočka's essays, Fredriksson discusses one theme he identifies in the novel, that life is constituted by material processes beyond that which we conceive as living.

Lastly, Niklas Forsberg discusses Derek Parfit's attempt at alleviating fear of death through philosophical redescription. One point in Forsberg's paper is that Parfit's focus on his own death, the death of the "I", gives rise to a one-sided discussion and that Patočka's reflections on the death of the other therefore shed important light on Parfit's theory. <>

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