

The cover features a dark background with five white, torn-edge paper silhouettes of human heads in profile, arranged in a circular pattern. A thick, bright pink diagonal band runs from the top left to the bottom right. The title 'the core journal' is written in a white, lowercase, sans-serif font, with 'the' and 'core' on the left side of the band and 'journal' on the right side. The text 'volume xxvi spring 2017' is written in a smaller, white, lowercase, sans-serif font, centered on the pink band. The subtitle 'an anthology of ideas and expression from the core curriculum at boston university' is written in a white, lowercase, sans-serif font, centered on the right side of the cover.

the core journal

volume xxvi
spring 2017

*an anthology of ideas and expression
from the core curriculum
at boston university*

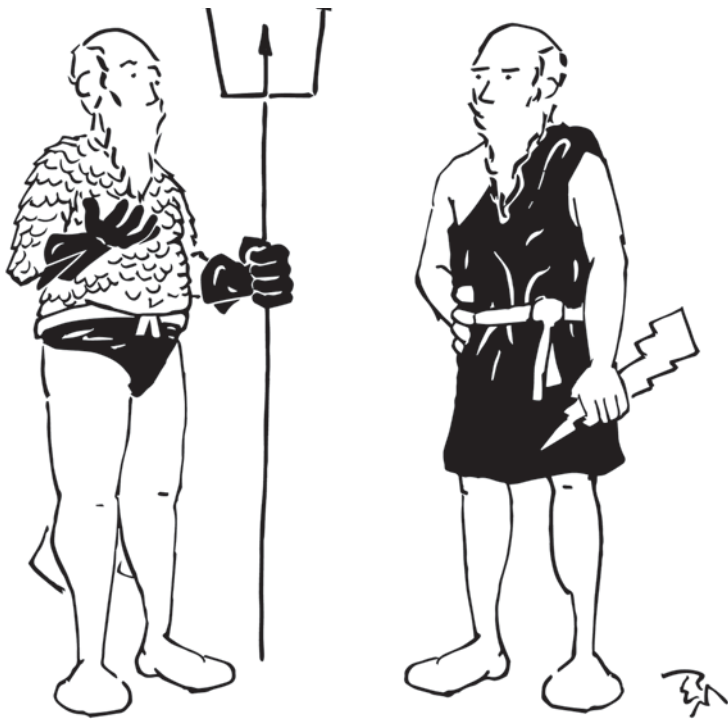
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APRIL 25, 2017

THE CORE JOURNALER





“What? I’m trying a new look.”

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THE JOURNAL OF THE **CORE CURRICULUM**

THE ANNUAL LITERARY AND ACADEMIC
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COMMUNITY AT BOSTON UNIVERSITY

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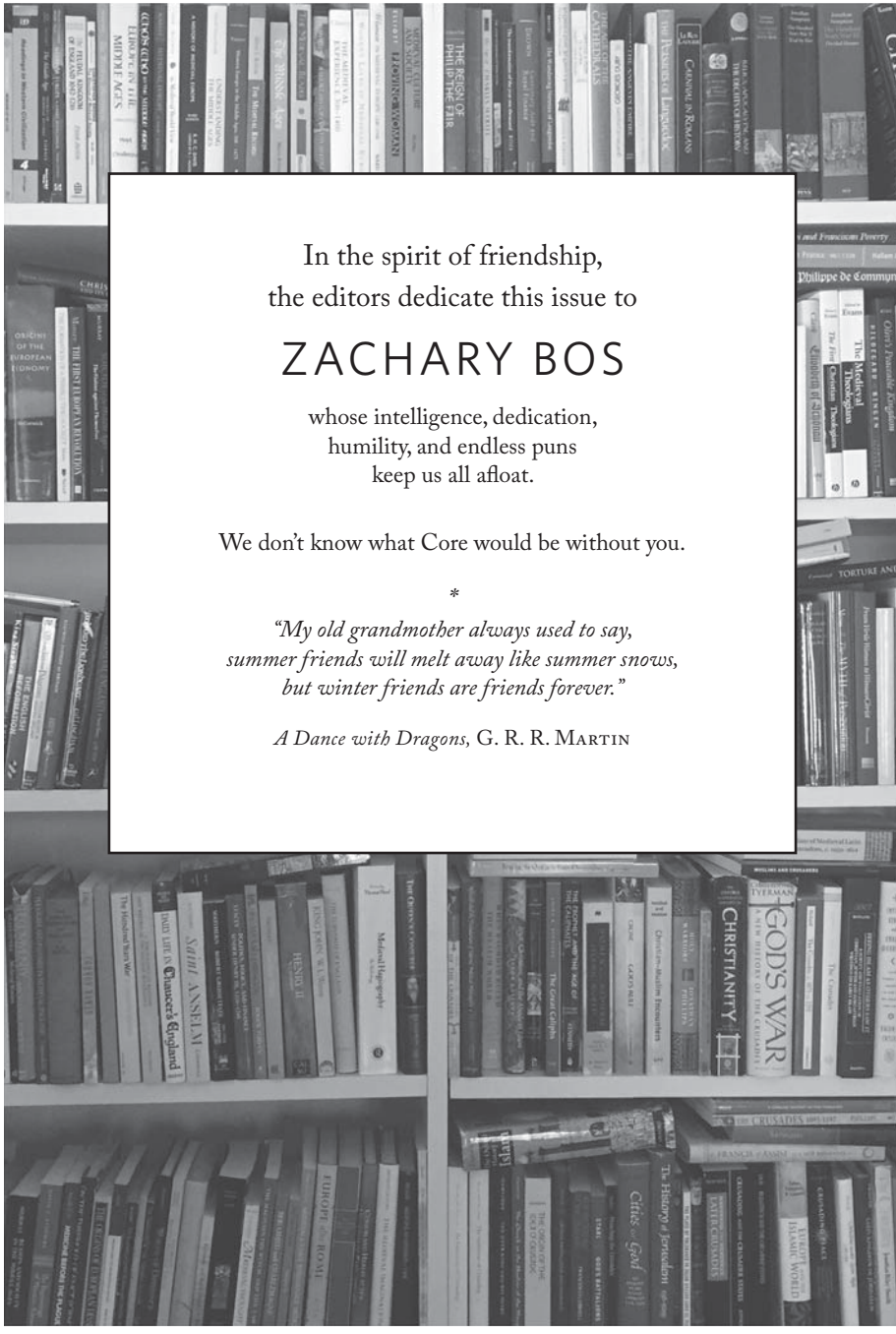
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Zachary Bos

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Prof. Sassan Tabatabai





In the spirit of friendship,
the editors dedicate this issue to

ZACHARY BOS

whose intelligence, dedication,
humility, and endless puns
keep us all afloat.

We don't know what Core would be without you.

*

*"My old grandmother always used to say,
summer friends will melt away like summer snows,
but winter friends are friends forever."*

A Dance with Dragons, G. R. R. MARTIN

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CORE HONORS CHAPBOOKS

Please visit www.bu.edu/core/journal to access copies of our first batch of Core Honors publications in PDF form. Print chapbook copies can be picked up in the Core office or requested for mail delivery.

Gregory Kerr	Proving Thucydides Right: <i>Human Nature and Repeated Actions Throughout History</i>
Ameen Khdair	Paradigmatic Heroism: <i>The Archetypal 'Hero's Journeys' of Dante and Milton's Satan</i>
Farhan Rana	Hajj and 'Asabiyyah: <i>A study of the impact, interpretation, and evolution of social cohesion during the annual Muslim pilgrimage of Hajj</i>

Editor's Note

I constantly talk *about* Core, but when asked what Core *is*, I struggle to find the right words. Core is an *experience*, and like all the best experiences, it is complex, multifaceted, and accompanied by the occasional piece of chocolate. It is this virtuous complexity which evades description. Maybe I can find eloquence via the path of simplicity:

In Core, we read *books*. We read *great* books. And we *love* our books. Our professors are brilliant! And interdisciplinary! And kind! And they fill our minds and our days with knowledge and joy.

We, Students of Core, come to the office—the epicenter, some say, of all things good at Boston University—with our smiles, and tears, and questions. And we're always made to feel welcome. In just the past few days, as we've occupied the chairs and tables of the office with our last-minute rounds of editing, we've overheard the following topics explored in depth and with passionate intensity:

1. The culpability of Wall Street in the financial recession.
2. The role of feminism in evaluating and re-evaluating our syllabus.
3. The question of whether it is ethical to own dogs, or whether ownership is a form of enslavement, subjecting them to a lifetime of idiot human affection.
4. Whether the Milky Way Caramel Apple miniature candy bar is or is not the greatest sweet of all time. (It is.)

This conversational cacophony is *hardly* surprising. Core is a community of readers, writers, scientists, philosophers, and artists—of *course* we're talking all the time! We form a community of, and in pursuit of, knowledge, debate, and camaraderie. I hope that you see those same values at work in this issue of *The Core Journal*.

Before closing this note, I'd like to thank the editorial staff for their hard work and good humor. And on behalf of the staff, I extend thanks to our ever-cheerful advisor, Sassan Tabatabai, and to the ever-supportive Core Director, Diana Wylie.

To all you friends and members of the Core Curriculum: thank you for reading.

With appreciation,

Elizabeth Didykala

on behalf of the 2017 editorial team

The Core Almanac

List of All Authors and Artists Studied in Core, Fall 2015 - Spring 2017:

Aertsen, Alexander, Alfarabi, Aptekar, Aristotle, Augustine, Austen, Bach, Beckmann, Beethoven, Benjamin, Bhagavad Gita, Boas, Bourdieu, Brown, Byron, Cervantes, Chapin, Chekhov, Churchland, Pope Clement XI, Coleridge, Collins, Confucius, Corinth, Cox, Dante, Davis, Degas, Descartes, Dickinson, Dix, Du Bois, Dürer, Durkheim, Engels, Euripides, Evans-Pritchard, Book of Exodus, Forshaw, Book of Genesis, Gilgamesh, Glenn, Goethe, Grosz, Heartfield, Herodotus, Hobbes, Höch, Hochschild, Homer, James, Gospel of John, Johnson, Joinville, Kant, Katznelson, Keats, Khaldun, Kirchner, Klee, Klinger, Kurzweil, Lao-Tzu, Lareau, Las Casas, Leiken, Lenski, Liebermann, Lindley, Locke, Loury, Machiavelli, Madison, Malinowski, Marx, Massey, Gospel of Matthew, Mead, Menzel, Michelangelo, Milton, Mollenkopf, Montaigne, Moore, Nicolelis, Nietzsche, Omi, Petrarca, Plato, Ramachandran, Rembrandt, Ricci, Rousseau, Sacks, Searle, Sepúlveda, Shakespeare, Shapiro, Smedly, Smith, Sophocles, Tacitus, Thucydides, Tilly, Tocqueville, Virgil, Von Baeyer, Wacquant, Weber, West, Whitman, Winant, Woolf, Wordsworth, Wright, Ziegler, and Zimmerman.

Core Faculty, Fellows & Administrators, Fall 2015 - Spring 2017:

Binyomin Abrams, Chemistry	Dennis Costa, Romance Studies
Emily Allen, Core	Bill Coyle, Editorial Institute
Evan Anhorn, Religion	Ben Crowe, Philosophy
Amy Appleford, English	Nicole DePolo, Editorial Institute
Kimberly Arkin, Anthropology	David Eckel, Religion
Jura Avizienis, Writing	Christian Engley, English
Clifford Backman, History	Stephen Esposito, Classics
Thomas Barfield, Anthropology	Rachel Fisher, Classics
Eric Bjornson, English	Maria Gapotchenko, Writing
Zachary Bos, Core	Abigail Gillman, MLCL
Cynthia Bradham, Biology	David Green, Writing/Core
Christopher Brown, Theology	Rose Grenier, Core
Matt Cartmill, Anthropology	Kyna Hamill, Core
Andrew Christensen, English	Alexandra Herzog, Jewish Studies/Core
Alex Claxton, Anthropology	James Johnson, History
Yuri Corrigan, MLCL	Emanuel Katz, Physics

Claire Kervin, Classics	David Roochnik, Philosophy
Catherine Hudak Klancer, Core	Loren J. Samons, Classics
Irit Kleiman, Romance Studies	Christopher Schneider, Biology
Jennifer Knust, Religion	Peter Schwartz, MLCL
Emily Kramer, Editorial Institute	Mohammad Sharifi, Anthropology
Andrew Kurtz, Earth & Environment	Parker Shipton, Anthropology
Paul Lipton, Neuroscience	Gabrielle Sims, Core
Jesse Lopes, Classics	Wayne Snyder, Computer Science
Sarah Madsen Hardy, Writing	Allen Speight, Philosophy
Brendan McConville, History	Robin Stevens, Core
Marie McDonough, Writing	Natalie Susmann, Archaeology
Thomas Michael, Religion	David Swartz, Sociology
Philip Muirhead, Astronomy	Sassan Tabatabai, MLCL/Core
Stephanie Nelson, Classics	Misha Tadd, Religion
Ryan Patten, Editorial Institute	James Uden, Classics
Anita Patterson, English	Frankie Vanaria, American Studies
Simon Rabinovitch, History	Brian Walsh, English
Rachel Ravina, English	William Waters, MLCL
Bruce Redford, Art & Architecture	Andrew West, Astronomy
Robert Richardson, MLCL	Kristen Wroth, Archaeology
Christopher Ricks, Editorial Institute	Diana Wylie, History

2016 Devlin Award Winners: Kellen Dorio and Tiffany Makovic; Honorable Mention, Joseph O’Sullivan, Julia Peters, Morgan Richards and Anto Rondón. // **2016 Divisional Award Winners:** 1st Year Humanities: Ata Sunucu; Honorable Mention, Elizabeth Foster; 2nd Year Humanities: Gregory Kerr; Honorable Mention, Rachel Wipfler; Natural Sciences: Madison Crosby; and Social Sciences: Hannah Needleman; Honorable Mention, Elizabeth Cornacchio and Weiyi Hu. // **2016 Polytropos Award Winners:** Justin-Ryan Abueg, Radhika Akhil, Kathryn Angelica, Dana Barnes, Sarah Brooks, Daniel Brubaker, Catherine Enwright, Justin Lievano, Danielle McPeak, Veronica Priest, and Bryan Purcell. // **Core Honors Projects, AY 2016-17:** KONRAD HERATH is completing a project titled “Manifestations, Definitions and Connotations of *Décadence* in the Poetry of Baudelaire and Symons” under the supervision of Prof. Mehlman; and CHRISTIAN ROSE is completing his project, a cultural history of the term “politically correct”, under the supervision of Prof. Ricks.

Office Staff, AY 2016-2017: Samantha Arnold, Jane Burke, Rosie Carter, Catherine Dossett, Kush Ganatra, Priest Gooding, Chloe Hite, Abbey Janeira, Cassandra Jones, Erica Mai, Gretchen McCarthy, Yanni Metaxas, Anto Rondón, Christian Rose, Kassandra Round, Theresa Sengpraseuth, Alina Szremski, and Cory Willingham. // **Learning Assistants, AY 2016-17:** Izzy Amorim, Madison Crosby, Angel Handa, Femke Hermse, Jessica Miller, Matthew Moon, Julia Peters, Ata Sunucu, and Xiyu Zhou. // **Summer 2016 Admissions Reception Staff:** Rosie Carter, Catherine Dossett, Shanti Khanna, Erica Mai, Emily Parks, Brianna Randolph, and Alina Szremski // **Core Resident Assistants, AY 2016-17:** Brianna Randolph and Isaiah Tharan. // **Word & Way Membership, AY 2016-17:** Jamie Afghani, Caroline Brantley, Miranda Bryson, Rich Driscoll, Ricki Eche-guren, Flannery Gallagher, Priest Gooding, Aaron Heckman, Helen Houghton, Hannah Jew, Gregory Kerr, Anto Rondón, Doruk Uzel, Cory Willingham, and Lexi Zieve.

Founding & Steering Committee Members of EnCore, the Core Alumni Association, AY 2016-17: Zachary Bos, Core '01; Anna Bursaux, Core '01; Fabiana Cabral, Core '08; Erin Rubin, Core '08; Josh Gee, Core '05; Kim Santo Core '98; Joseph Sacchi, Core '06; Amiel Bowers, Core '07; Benjamin Flaim, Core '98; Rania Ezzo, Core '13; Rose Grenier, Core '05; Eric Hamel, '00; Chris McMullen, Core '94; and Stephanie Nelson, PhD.

“Reading the Romantics”—here follows the ‘set-list’ of texts read at the Annual Core Poetry Reading, held this year on April 11, 2017: Zachary Bos read “After Reading Keats’ Ode” by W. H. Auden, extracts from letters written from John Keats to his siblings in 1819, and poem XXIX from *Midsummer* by Derek Walcott; Archie Burnett read “Holy Willie’s Prayer” and “To A Mouse, On Turning Her Up In Her Nest With The Plough” by Robert Burns; David Ferry read lines 719-61 (Book VI) from his own translation of Virgil’s Aeneid, and an excerpt from “Ode: Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood” by William Wordsworth; Brian Jorgensen read an untitled poem usually referred to by its first line, “There Was a Child Went Forth”, by Walt Whitman, and “False Popularity” by Friedrich Hölderlin, translated by Michael Hamburger; George Kalogeris read his own version, titled “Days”, of “Terzinen über Vergänglichkeit” (“Tercets on Transience”) by Hugo von Hofmannsthal, and an original poem, “Rilke Rereading Hölderlin”; Anita Patterson read “The Rhodora” and “The Exile (from the Persian of Kermani)” by Ralph Waldo Emerson; Christopher Ricks read “The Star” by Jane Taylor, “January 1895” by Mary Robinson, “Summer Is Ended” by Christina Rossetti, and “Villeggiature” by E. Nesbit; Sassan Tabatabai read “We Are Seven” by William

Wordsworth, and “La Belle Dame sans Merci” by John Keats; Meg Tyler read the first one and a half lines from John Clare’s “Don Juan”, and Clare’s “The Badger”; and Jon Westling read “General William Booth Enters Into Heaven” by Vachel Lindsay.

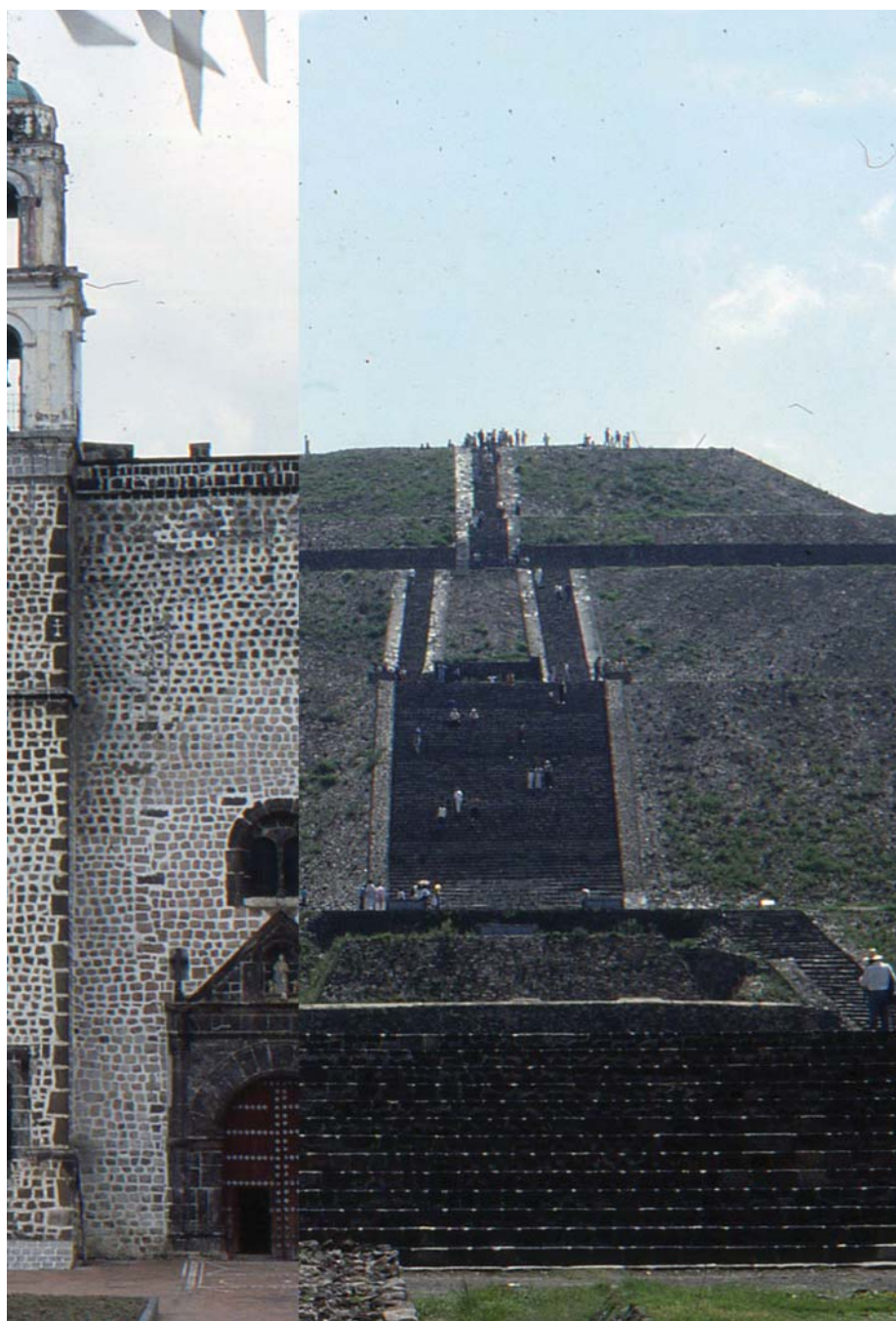
Pets of the Core Office! *Dogs*: Anto’s Jack Sparrow; Alina’s Roo; Zachary and Jenna’s ZsaZsa; Konrad’s Riga; Jura’s Roan; Emily’s Penny; Kimberly’s Olivia; Abigail’s Eevee; Chloe’s Ludwig & Lando; Yanni’s Fergus; Christian’s Felix & Abby; and Helen’s Meatball & Princess. *Cats*: Cat’s Joey & Ella; Kyna’s Jas & Dorian Gray; Chloe’s Leonard; Rosie’s Scotchie; Gretchen’s Snowy; Cassandra’s Jessie; Priest’s Mystery & Magic; Helen’s Eloise; and Elizabeth’s Larry David. *Aquatics*: Sammi’s Gilligan, a turtle, and Deedee, a gourami; and Gretchen’s Mr. Fish, a fish, and Pleb One & Pleb Two, snails. *Critters*: Sammi’s Milo, a hamster; and Erica’s 小猪 (“Little Pig”), a hedgehog.

How many pounds of front-office basket candy have been eaten this year in CAS 119?

From September to the end of October, approximately eight pounds were set out for community consumption. Then November 1st came, and with it, the post-Halloween candy sale at our local shops on Commonwealth Avenue. Taking advantage of those steep discounts, the Core office purchased another thirty-five (!) pounds of candy. That supply was only depleted after spring break. Since then, the office has distributed another eight pounds of sweets to students, faculty, staff and visitors. The total for the year to date, September 1st to April 15th, is about fifty-one pounds.

Pages of Papers Written, by Course. For 101, 18 pages; for 102, 20 pages; for 111, 5 pages; for 112, 12 pages; for 201, 22 pages; for 202, 22 pages; for 211, 20 pages; for 212, 6 pages; and for 204, 21 pages; for a total over two years, four semesters, and eight courses in Core of 146 pages written. // **Pages of Assigned Reading, by Course.** For 101, 1,129 pages; for 102, 754 pages; for 111, 50 pages; for 212, 389 pages; for 112, 858 pages; for 201, 838 pages; for 211, 977 pages; and for 202, 955 pages; for an approximate total of 5,950 pages of reading.

Despite the seemingly insurmountable scale of those reams of writing and stacks of reading to be done in Core, the secret to success in these classes—and University in general, and perhaps in life—can nonetheless be stated in six simple words. These words form the bit of advice that Prof. James Devlin, in the first decade of the Core’s existence, would share with each new class of Core students. Here are those six words, and may they serve you well: **“Read the books, come to class.”** ■



JUSTIN LIEVANO

Conjugating Core

an homage to F. Scott Fitzgerald's conjugation of "cocktail"

*Core Office,
rue des Lumières*

Dear Kyna,

I hate like hell that I can't read all the books I would wish to be reading, but the life beyond graduation presses its demands on me; I've got no time. As "core," so I gather, has become a verb, it ought to be conjugated at least once, so here goes

Present

I core	we core
Thou core	You core
It cores	They core

Imperfect

I was coreing

Perfect

(Past definite)

I cored

Past perfect

I have cored

Conditional

I might have cored

Pluperfect

I had cored

Subjunctive

I would have cored

Voluntary Sub.

I should have cored

Preterite

I did core

Imperative

Core!

Interrogative

Corest thou? (Dos't core?)
(or Wilt core?)

Subjunctive Conditional

I would have had to have cored.

Conditional subjunctive

I might have had to have cored

Participle

Core-ing

PROF. CLIFF BACKMAN

The History of the Western World

according to the Students of History 101

The following is a summary of my first-year Western history course—from its origins through to the start of the Renaissance—according to sentences excerpted from student papers and exams and stitched together to provide a roughly continuous chronology. Spelling and syntax remain as the students themselves wrote.

- CB

The people that believed in Yahwah were desperate. The Hebrew god was powerful and sent profits to deliver His message. In order to please the Hebrew god the only thing man had to sacrifice was a life of sin. The Old Testament covers approximately two thousand years, from 1800 BC to 1600 BC; yet the text itself was written about 90 AD. Abraham was a wandering tribe. Here again, we have the same situation as with epic poetry. The main event in the development of Christianity was the crucifixion of Jesus. On Judgement Day the Christian God will reward the righteous with happiness and immortality in heaven.

Mesopotamia was located at the bottom of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. These rivers would often flood erotically and cause great havoc. In Sumer, dying was attractive. Flooding was a more pleasant experience in Egypt than in Sumer. Dying obviously was pleasant to the Egyptians, and a way for humans to relate to one another. But nature sort of bored the Egyptians and caused them to form a firm government.

Entering the Greeks, we find that their structure is a little different. Greek gods participated deeply in human lives. The *polis* rulers were considered half-gods who resulted from many erotic sexual affairs to produce these half-breads. In Athens girls were only taught how to make love and clothing. The Spartan *gerousia* was a council of 28 men who were over the age of sixty for the rest of their lives. At the beginning of the play Oedipus' happiness is based upon the simple pleasures in life such a wealth, title, and power. But Aristotle believed that reality is on earth, and I'm most comfortable with this view.

It was the era of the Pox Romana. For most of the time of the Republic, Rome was located in Italy. But Rome was not practiced at agricultural technology; its farmers did not rotate crops or employ animal laborers. Slavery provided a place to put unhappy conquered peoples. But with the end of Roman expansion in the third century, the Empire's slaves began to drive up.

Throughout Europe there were many factions of tribes who feared other tribes along with full moons and just about anything that moved—it was like a birthpain to nationalism. Because of the movements starting mainly in France, education was the key to break down the fragmentation. St Augustine was a great philosopher and Catholic theologian. He wrote over 80,000 books. He wrote the book *Confessions* about his ordeal with Christianity. Arianism was the belief that Christ was not divine within the Holy Triangle. Arians were unclean cannibals with beards. In the Middle Ages men even treated *prostitutes* as nothing more than sex objects! In addition, Charlemagne's reign brought Europe the closest it has ever been since the Middle Ages. An example of a vassal's service to his lord is when Roland says to Charlemagne, "If it be your command, I will go and protect your rear, and you will not be ashamed."

The conflict between Church and State erupted after the papacy climaxed in the High Middle Ages. Lay investiture is when amateurs perform Church rites. Meanwhile, the crusader were not faithful to their Christian beliefs: they did not pay their Church dues properly and they allowed their womenfolk to stay out late at night at wild parties. In 1084 Robert Guiscard sacked Rome, like totally. Philip IV saw himself and his ancestors as sent from God, for the Capetians had experienced 300 years of direct decadence. The pope encouraged King John and Otto of Brunswick to make a sandwich out of Philip. Philip fought King John of England and won him. Magna Carta was signed when the barons caught King John abusing himself in his office. Henry I took full control of the Church, the Henry died and became King Stephen for 19 chaotic years. In the 1300s Dante produced some masterful Italian verse. Perhaps his being from Italy accounts this. The scholastic philosophers can be blamed for Gothic architecture. Medieval philosophers reasoned that since Socrates had had a less-than-heavenly marriage, they too would have lousy relationships with their wives.

Wrapping it all up, the bubonic plague made the world as we see it today. ■

CAT DOSSETT

To Odysseus

You left me here, a bleating lamb.
For twenty years I waited, wove and unraveled,
tightening the shroud of myself against hosts of suitors
who would have gladly taken your place.
I knew you were alive. The red thread,

tangled about our fingers, would have surely been cut—
by the sword that had taken your life,
or by the gnawing of fishes at the bottom of the sea.
Had I known your infidelity, I'd have cut it sooner.

You thought it wouldn't reach me.
Blood in your wake, you thought the deaths of your men
and of my suitors would seal your consorts
safe in the past. No witnesses, no evidence. But,
for the first time, your sharp tongue betrayed you,

that night after your return. As the red fingers of dawn
grasped at the horizon, you called her name: Calypso.
I saw your face fall, and rise again, like an actor
returning to the stage with a different mask.

I convinced myself you hadn't, you didn't mean to,
that it had been twenty years, perhaps you thought I had died,
as I had wondered if you had. But I couldn't convince myself.
I knew, under it all. I was the good wife, waiting
until the end of time for you, but you could not wait for me—

you, slave to your loins. But I am not your Argos.
 I am no bitch loyal to her last breath. I am your wife.
 I waited for you, and you did not have the mind
 to wait for me. I am the good wife, and my son

will not suffer under a weak father. You live in fire,
 you die in fire. This parchment burns with you.
 It will blacken and crumple as my heart did.
 When you sail across the river of the underworld
 for a second time, remember how

the hope of soldiers became the hope of women,
 the hope of wives and lovers, left behind.

Note. In the first line, “bleating lamb” is an allusion to “Donal Og” (“Young Donal”), an Irish ballad from the eighth century. Here are the relevant lines, as translated into English by Lady Augusta Gregory: “You promised me, and you said a lie to me, / that you would be before me where the sheep are flocked; / I gave a whistle and three hundred cries to you, / and I found nothing there but a bleating lamb.” - CD

ELLIE FOSTER

“O Grief, O Glory, Destined for Your Father!”: On Sons Dying in Front of Fathers in the *Aeneid*

“**I**n peace, sons bury their fathers; in war, fathers bury their sons,” writes Herodotus, the father of history, on the perversity of war. Virgil’s *Aeneid* is a government-commissioned and politically-inspired epic about the struggle between *furor* and *pietas* (fury and piety) in light of the beginning of Caesar Augustus’ *Pax Romana* (Roman Peace). In the epic, Virgil relies heavily on the motif of sons dying in front of their fathers in order to show both the importance and the tragedy of the sacrifices that an empire requires in order to be founded and sustained. Augustus, whose ascent marked the end of Rome’s Republican civil wars, commissioned the *Aeneid*, but Virgil chose to make the focus of his epic the devastation that is wrought by war rather than the glory found in battle. Virgil stresses in particular the tragedy of the destruction of families through war. He places an especially strong emphasis on situations in which sons die in front of their fathers in order to show that, in war, a victory for one is the tragedy of another. Thus, war should not be romanticized in times of peace, nor its agonies forgotten. And as for the leaders of wars, such as Aeneas or Augustus, they should be appreciated for establishing peace, even if they had to act in morally ambiguous ways to achieve it.

The two main battles within the epic, the Trojan War and the war between the Trojans and the Latins, take place in Books I-II and X-XII respectively. They are similar both in their reasons for taking place and in the carnage they involve, in many ways paralleling each other. The first battle, a continuation of the Trojan War from Homer’s *Iliad*, which Virgil uses as a model for the *Aeneid*, begins because Paris, a non-Greek, abducts a Grecian woman called Helen to be his bride. Similarly, the battle between the Trojans and the Italians in the *Aeneid* begins because Amata the Latin, mother to Aeneas’ intended bride, Lavinia, does not want her daughter to wed a foreigner. The wars’ origins are also similar in that they are indirectly caused by goddesses who are responsible for the creation of the family: Venus and Juno. By inspiring wars, these goddesses are simultaneously responsible for the creation and destruction of families.

Thus the causes of the wars alone indicate that the epic is largely focused on the destruction of familial relationships, since the causes of both wars entail broken marriage bonds and the undermining of the nuclear family.

There are several other instances of the destruction of families throughout the epic. For example, Pygmalion, the brother of Queen Dido of Carthage, kills Dido's husband so he can take his kingdom.¹ Later in the text, Aeneas kills an Italian youth named Liger in battle. Afterwards, when Liger's brother Lucagus asks Aeneas to spare him, Aeneas replies: "Die and be brotherly, stay with your brother" (X.842-843), thus ironically evoking a sense of familial loyalty. However, the most striking destructions of relationships within the *Aeneid* are those in which sons die in front of their fathers.

Virgil encourages filial piety and good parenting, especially good fathering, in the *Aeneid*. Aeneas is the son of Venus, but his mother rarely appears to him in her true form and when she does communicate with him, it is in riddles.² Aeneas has therefore been reared mainly by his pious father. Unlike Ulysses, the hero of the *Odyssey*, both Aeneas and Anchises rear their sons as single parents. Aeneas assumes this role after his wife Creusa dies, the ghost of whom instructs Aeneas to "Cherish still your son and mine" (II.1024-1025). With these words, Creusa passes the burden of motherly protection on to Aeneas in addition to the one he already bears as a father not only to his own son, but also to a fledgling nation. What one cherishes, one protects, which reinforces the idea that leaders, like Caesar Augustus, should protect their own sons and the sons of the nation. Thus Creusa could be encouraging Aeneas to protect their progeny through peace. Through these characters, Virgil thus emphasizes the importance of the bond between father and son, which positions the reader for even greater emotional impact when fathers lose their sons to war in the *Aeneid*.

In fact, Aeneas' first words in the epic are "Triply lucky, all you men/ To whom death came before your fathers' eyes!" (I.134-135), introducing the reader to the theme of familial destruction and to the horrifying image of sons dying in front of their fathers. Here, Virgil is showing that Aeneas believes that it is worse to die at sea than in front of one's own father. Many Romans believed that a death in battle was honorable and even desirable. Virgil utilizes this belief to show how horrifying such a sentiment truly

1 "Her brother, though, held power in Tyre—Pygmalion,/ A monster of wickedness beyond all others./ Between the two men furious hate arose,/ And sacrilegiously before the altars,/ Driven by a blind lust for gold, Pygmalion/ Took Sychaeus by surprise and killed him/ With a dagger blow in secret..." (I.472-478)

2 "You! cruel, too!/ Why tease your son so often with disguises?/ Why may we not join hands and speak and hear/ the simple truth?" (I.558-560)

is, since it entails dying before one's father, the most abhorrent experience a parent can be subjected to. By showing the reader the horrors of war, the reader is better able to appreciate peace and therefore Caesar Augustus for bringing that peace to them.

As Aeneas' band of men is preparing to escape Troy, Aeneas invokes filial piety in order to move his father to act in self-preservation: "Did you suppose, my father,/ That I could tear myself away and leave you?/ Unthinkable; how could a father say it?" (II.857-859). Here Aeneas is implying that a son should not leave his father behind, because fathers need sons to be their caretakers in old age. Strikingly, Virgil unites father, son, and grandson in one image when Aeneas takes his son's hand and picks up his father to take them from the city, saying:

Then come, dear father. Arms around my neck:/ I'll take you on my shoulders, no
great weight./ Whatever happens, both will face one danger,/ Find one safety. Iulus
will come with me... (II.921-924)

An early example of the alternative fate that fathers and sons can meet in war, immortalized by a sculpture in the Vatican, is that of Laocoön and his sons, who are killed by Athena's pet snakes for trying to protect Troy from the Trojan horse. As punishment for attempting to thwart the goddess' plan, Athena's snakes first devour Laocoön's sons and then kill the father,³ having forced Laocoön to watch his beloved children be gruesomely killed before he could experience his own death, which, had he not been condemned to die, he surely would have longed for after witnessing the deaths of his sons. While the Greco-Roman gods destroy Laocoön and his sons, it could be said that Virgil intends for Caesar Augustus, who would go on to be deified after death, to be viewed in contrast to the gods of old as the kind of leader and god who will protect his citizens and their children.

The Trojan horse itself is used to show the perversity of war, when "the boys and girls/ [Sing] hymns around the towrope as for joy/[And,] [r]olling on, it [casts] a shadow/ Over the city's heart" (II.318-322). This is very similar to situations today and in the recent past in which children pick up brightly colored explosives, thinking that they are toys, only to be severely injured or killed. In this quote, many of the children referred to will soon die. Ironically, the city is preparing itself for a religious ceremony

³ "But straight ahead/ They slid until they reached Laocoon./ Each snake enveloped one of his two boys,/ Twining about and feeding upon the body./ Next they ensnared the man as he ran..." II.290-294.

which will be in fact be a funeral, for the city will burn to the ground like an enormous funeral pyre. Virgil's contrast of such tragedy to the peace of Augustan rule could perhaps be a sober way of comforting Roman citizens in that their revel will not be perverted or destroyed.

Prince Hector and King Priam supply another early example of sons dying in front of their fathers. Aeneas describes seeing Hector's grisly wraith in a way that recalls the wounds of Christ, (which may have been the translator's intent, considering that Jesus is an easily recognizable symbol of sons dying in front of their fathers,) and he poignantly notes that the wounds were "received/ Outside [Hector's] father's city walls" (II.373-374) thereby associating Hector's wounds with a lack of protection from his father. The walls of the city could be likened to those of a home or a womb by which one is protected. Because Hector is wounded outside those walls, separation from one's family implies vulnerability. Hector's death is significant because Hector is Priam's best child as well as his heir, so the prince's death represents the destruction of a familial line and a kingdom. Besides Hector's death, almost all of Priam's fifty sons are killed. Aeneas alludes to these children while describing Priam's palace,⁴ once a sign of order and family, having been looted and desecrated by the Greeks. In the same scene, Aeneas describes his soldiers' tactic of using a passage that Hector's wife once used to visit her elderly in-laws,⁵ further highlighting the desecration of the home during war. In contrast to the destruction of the walls of the city and of the home, Virgil may be tacitly suggesting that Augustus' expansion of the Roman Empire implies more safety for the Romans. One would have to go very far to exit his or her metaphorical father's "city walls" in the expanded empire. Thus people are better protected under Augustan rule.

Another disheartening description in Virgil's account of the Trojan War is of "Priam in a young man's gear..." (II.673) as the king feebly attempts to protect his wife and daughters, who were earlier likened to doves to emphasize their purity and innocence. Virgil implies in his description of Priam that an old man should never have to put on a young man's gear. This is because an old man has presumably already paid his dues to his society in his youth, and his sons are meant to be alive to protect him. For all his former virility, Priam's line will be destroyed.

One of the most striking moments of this retelling of the Trojan War is Priam's

4 "Those fifty bridal chambers, hope of a line/ So flourishing..." (II.655-656).

5 "And we had for entrance / A rear door, secret, giving on a passage / Between the palace halls; in other days / Andromache, poor lady, often used it, / Going alone to see her husband's parents or taking Astynax to his grandfather." (II.594-599)



response to the murder of his son Politēs, who is killed on an altar by the Greek Pyrrhus. Priam says, “You forced me to look on/ At the destruction of my son: defiled/ A father’s eyes with death” (II.699-701). Although Pyrrhus is an unsympathetic character in general, the fact that he “kills the son before the father’s eyes,/ The father at the altars” (II.865-866) makes him especially detestable. The abhorrence of the act is amplified by the fact that Politēs murder takes place on hallowed ground, as if Politēs were a sacrificial animal. The horror of the act is increased further when Priam slips on his son’s blood just as he himself is about to be killed,⁶ indicating both metaphorically and physically that Priam has fallen because of his sons’ deaths.

Aeneas, in recounting the Trojan War, remembers how horrified he was at the thought of his family’s destruction, when he asks Venus,

My dear mother,/ Was it for this, through spears and fire, you brought me,/ To see
the enemy deep in my house,/ To see my son, Ascanius, my father,/ And near them
both, Creusa,/ Butchered in one another’s blood? (II.867-873)

Notably, he seems to place his family members in order of social rank: goddess mother, son, father, and wife. This reiterates the theme of good parenting and filial respect, especially since it is Aeneas speaking.

The destruction of families is not unique to the Trojan War. Both Aeneas’ Etruscan allies and his Italian enemies experience such horror. The episode of the Fall of Troy is parallel to that of the fall of the Italians. For example, Aeneas fantasizes about, but does not act upon, killing one of the people who caused the Trojan War: Helen. In contrast, Aeneas considers, and follows through on, killing the instigator of the ‘civil war’ between the Trojans and the Italians: Turnus the Latin.

In that war, to Aeneas’ Etruscan allies, Turnus is an ‘Achilles’ or a ‘Pyrrhus’ figure, while Pallas is a ‘Hector’ figure. Just before killing Pallas, Turnus reveals the extent of his own barbarity by admitting that he takes pleasure in destroying families. He says, “The time has come/ To interrupt this battle. I take Pallas,/ Pallas falls to me. I wish his father/ Stood here to watch” (X.612-615). After Turnus kills Pallas, he proceeds to insult Evander, Pallas’ father, saying, “Arcadians, note well/ And take back to Evander what I say:/ In that state which his father merited/ I send back Pallas” (X.685-691). Turnus is

⁶ “With this,/ To the altar step itself he dragged him trembling,/ Slipping in the pooled blood of his son...” (II.716-718)

saying that Pallas died the death that his father should have died, which though cruel, holds some truth in it. In the natural order of life, parents should die before their offspring do, especially if the latter have not yet reproduced, or their bloodline will end. The virility of young men makes them the most desirable warriors for a society, so a city or nation faces a conundrum when war arises, because through defending the life of the state, they are extinguishing family lines. In Caesar Augustus' age, however, the Romans are able to avoid this dilemma, since Augustus has brought peace to Rome.

Virgil reiterates the idea of untimely death as it relates to fathers and sons when the narrator of Pallas' funeral scene laments, "O grief, O glory, destined for your father!" (X.711) and when Evander is called "Father ill-fated" (XI.72). In fact, when Evander sees his son's funeral pyre, he reacts in a way that the reader might expect a mourning woman to behave. Virgil writes, "As for Evander,/ Nothing could hold him, but he took his way/ Amid them all to where they set the bier,/ Then threw himself on Pallas. Clinging there/ With tears and sobs, he barely spoke at last/ When pain abated..." (XI.203-207). This scene is obviously quite emotional and disturbing, since Evander is throwing himself onto a corpse, which further serves Virgil's purpose of displaying the profound tragedy war in order to condemn it.

The savagery of war is not confined to the actions of the Greeks and the Italians. One of Aeneas' most disturbing acts against his enemies takes place when he sacrifices some Italian youths to Pallas. This can be viewed as a way to avenge not only the death of Pallas, but also for the death of Politēs who was killed on an altar. One of Aeneas' intended sacrificial victims, Magus, escapes at first, but returns to Aeneas to beg for mercy. Magus appeals to Aeneas' sense of filial piety in order to save himself, saying, "I pray you by your father's ghost and by/ Your hope of Iulus' rising power, preserve/ A life here, for a father and a son." He thus implies that he, too, is a father and a son, and that he and Aeneas should view one another as brothers, since they both belong to the human race. His words are reminiscent of what Aeneas says to his father before they flee Troy,⁷ and also of what Turnus will say to Aeneas just before Aeneas kills him at the end of the epic.⁸ Magus' appeal fails to move Aeneas, even though Anchises told

⁷ "Then come, dear father. Arms around my neck:/ I'll take you on my shoulders, no great weight./ Whatever happens, both will face one danger,/ Find one safety. Iulus will come with me..." (II.921-924)

⁸ "I ask no quarter./ Make the most of your good fortune here./ If you can feel a father's grief—and you, too,/ Had such a father in Anchises—then/ Let me bespeak your mercy for old age/ In Daunus, and return me, or my body,/ Stripped, if you will, of life, to my own kin./ You have defeated me. The Ausonians/ Have seen me in defeat, spreading my hands./ Lavinia is your bride. But no further/ Out of hatred."

Aeneas to be merciful to the conquered.⁹ In fact, somewhat disturbingly, Aeneas convinces himself that his father would have wanted Magus to die, just as he will deflect the blame for Turnus' murder at the end of the epic, saying Turnus owes his death to Pallas, even though it is Aeneas who will deal the deathblow.

A poignant death scene in which the son is killed before the father occurs when Aeneas kills Lausus, the son of Mezentius, on the battlefield. Aeneas does not gloat over Lausus' death but instead laments having destroyed such a beautiful youth. This illuminates a difference between the future Romans and the tribes with which they are fighting, since before Lausus' death, both Pyrrhus of Greece and Turnus of Latium sadistically enjoyed killing their enemies, preferring to murder their victims in front of the victims' fathers.

In contrast, the future Romans will recognize that war is an equal measure of glory and tragedy, and that just because something is obligatory, such as defending one's country, that does not mean that it should be enjoyed. Although Aeneas does not kill Lausus in front of his father, Lausus' death is still relevant to the topic at hand because Lausus fights on behalf of his wounded father, prompting Aeneas to wonder at Lausus, saying, "Why this rush deathward, daring beyond your power?/ Filial piety makes you lose your head" (X.1136-1137). The line "[f]ilial piety makes you lose your head" perfectly encapsulates the theme of sons dying before fathers, as the sacrifice a son makes for his father is considered both honorable, on account of "filial piety," and absurd, since it is so counterintuitive to nature. Furthermore, since Lausus is fighting on behalf of his father, Virgil shows the reader again that, just as Evander was meant to have died instead of Pallas, Mezentius should have died the death that Lausus died.

Understandably therefore, Mezentius' reaction to Lausus' death is one of heartbreak and even guilt. Virgil writes,

Gouging up dust he soiled/ His white hair, spread his hands to heaven; and when/
The body came, he clung to it./ "Did such pleasure/ In being alive enthrall me, son,
that I/ Allowed you whom I sired to take my place/ Before the enemy sword? Am I,
your father,/ Saved by your wounds, by your death do I live?/ Ai! (X.1181-1189)

Just as Evander clings to Pallas' corpse, Mezentius clings to that of his son, imply-

9 "Roman, remember by your strength to rule/ Earth's person—for your art are to be these:/ To pacify, to impose the rule of law,/ To spare the conquered, battle down the proud" (VI.1151-1154).

ing a role reversal of parent and child and even of mother and father, as the man grieves like a woman and then clings to his son like a baby might cling to its parent. Virgil's reference to Mezentius' white hair also recalls an earlier description of Priam wearing a "young man's gear." For the same reason, Virgil likely intends to make the reader react emotionally to the tragedy of a lost heir, even the heir of an enemy, reiterating Virgil's critical view of war. Mezentius tells Aeneas that his life is ruined now that his son's life has been snuffed out. Mezentius says, "Hard enemy,/ How can you think to terrify me, now/ My son is lost? That was the only way/ You could destroy me" (X.1229-1232). "Hard enemy" implies that Aeneas is incapable of empathy, but it is rather that he is so extremely bound to duty that, until perhaps the final action of the epic, he acts against his deepest desires and puts the will of the gods before his own—an ironic trait for him to have, considering that his mother is the goddess of lust. Mezentius is therefore uninformed, since Aeneas has already distinguished himself from truly cruel enemies such as Pyrrhus in that Aeneas has not "defiled/ A father's eyes with death" (II.700-701) in killing the "son before the father's eyes" (II.865). He therefore seems more heroic than Pyrrhus or Turnus.

Aeneas has Turnus at his mercy in the final scene of the epic, when the once-proud warrior completely surrenders to Aeneas, saying,

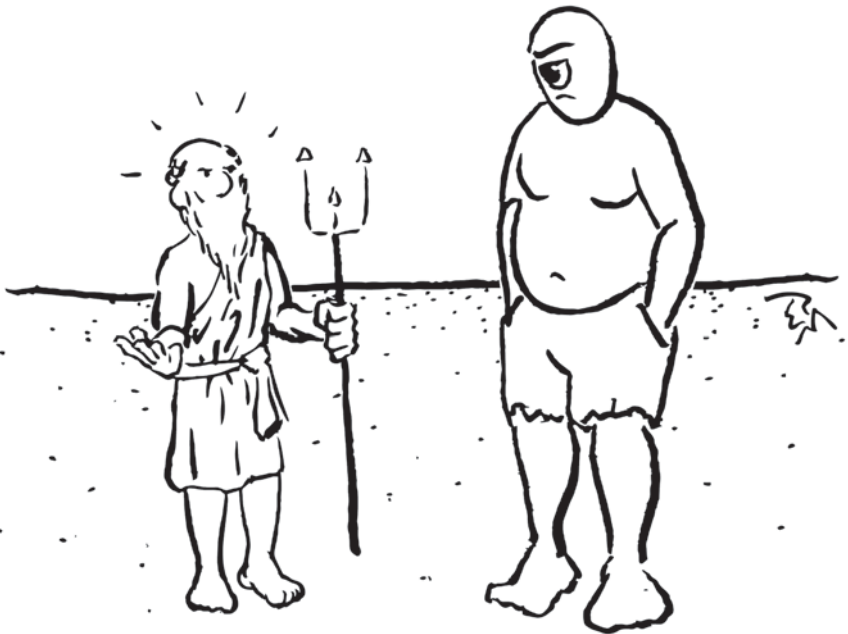
Clearly I earned this, and I ask no quarter./ Make the most of your good fortune here./ If you can feel a father's grief—and you, too,/ Had such a father in Anchises—then/ Let me bespeak your mercy for old age/ In Daunus, and return me, or my body,/ Stripped, if you will, of life, to my own kin./ You have defeated me. The Ausonians/ Have seen me in defeat, spreading my hands./ Lavinia is your bride. But go no further/ Out of hatred. (XII.1266-1276)

Like Magus, Turnus believes that he might be spared if he appeals to Aeneas' sense of filial piety, as a fellow son and leader of men. At first, Aeneas hesitates to take Turnus' life, out of pity for Turnus and respect for Anchises, who, as previously mentioned, told Aeneas to spare the conquered. But when Aeneas sees the slain Pallas' armor on Turnus' shoulder as a war trophy, his feelings of compassion toward Turnus and piety toward his father turn to anger. This prompts Aeneas to plunge his sword into Turnus "in fury" (XII.1295). This final act in the poem may seem vengeful and volatile, but it may also suggest that those who glory in taking the lives of others, as Turnus did, should not be spared. Thus, Aeneas helps prove that the Trojans are worthy of their

empire because they are technically morally superior to their enemies. Although the import of Aeneas' final act remains ambiguous, one thing is clear: the greatest tragedy and the greatest secret of war, is that all wars are civil wars. The loss of a child is felt the same throughout the world because we are all human—all related at some point in time by blood. Virgil uses the universal horror of the death of sons to illustrate this point, which is part of why the *Aeneid* remains a timeless work of art. ■

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“And as if blinding your brother wasn’t enough, he keeps peeing in the ocean.”

SYLVIA REYES

Cheeky, Challenging, and *Chistoso*: Why *El Quijote* Demands More Than Your Average Book

El *ingenioso hidalgo don Quijote de la Mancha* is a daunting masterpiece that must be savored. It is not a book that can or should be read absentmindedly. *Don Quixote* the novel and Cervantes its author both demand that the reader pay close attention, dragging them along for the tumultuous ride and leaves them feeling dazed, confused, and a tiny bit nauseous. Cervantes created an extremely unconventional piece of literature that challenges the notion of what a book is supposed to be.

On a linguistic level, *Don Quixote* is a confusing book. It is written in mostly sixteenth-century Castellano (Castilian), however, there is a marked difference in the way that Don Quixote speaks and the way that everybody else around him does. Don Quixote's speech mimics the fourteenth-century Castellano found in his chivalric romances, though these specific linguistic novelties are not present in English translations they are quite obvious in a Spanish version of the text. For example, Don Quixote uses the Latin F at the start of many of his words, a practice which had fallen out of fashion by the sixteenth century as people had shifted over to using H in a process known as debuccalization, such as when he refers to his lady Dulcinea as "*vuestra fermosura*" instead of "*hermosura*" as would be used today and would have been used when Cervantes was writing. Furthermore, Don Quixote's ramblings are marked with periphrasis and circumlocution such as when he narrates the start of his first sally, stringing "absurdities together with many others, all in the style of those that he'd learned from his books" (Cervantes 31). Deciphering this nonsensical, unnecessarily difficult and convoluted language is so impossible that our narrator tells us "Aristotle himself wouldn't have been capable of [unraveling it] even if he'd come back to life for this purpose alone" (26).

Miguel de Cervantes was a very clever author and yet, the original text of *Don Quixote* is inconsistent and riddled with mistakes and continuity errors. Sancho's wife changes names multiple times from Juana to Maria within the same conversation (63) and to Teresa in Part 2. There are often "errors in mathematics," and "mistakes in chap-

ter titles" (Lathrop 12) such as for Chapter 10 entitled "About what happened next between Don Quixote and the Basque, and the peril with which he was threatened by a mob of men from Yanguas" despite the conflict having already been violently resolved between Don Quixote and the Basque and the episode with the Yangüesans not occurring until Chapter 15. This style of erroneously titling chapters follows the practice of stating "in the chapter title events that took place in the story, but not in the chapter in question" (Lathrop 12). Mistakes like these have been corrected by editors who thought they were simple errors. One large error that is often "corrected" in *Don Quixote* is the fiasco that is the disappearance of Sancho's donkey. While traversing the Sierra Morena, Sancho is described as lacking his donkey which mysteriously reappears later with no mention of what might have happened. In the Penguin edition, Chapter 25 mentions that Ginés de Pasamonte has stolen Sancho's beloved donkey and they are then heartwarmingly reunited in Chapter 30. In the second printing of the book in 1605, the stealing of the donkey occurs in Chapter 23 with Sancho being mentioned as both having and not having his donkey multiple times before they find Ginés and the donkey in Chapter 30. Though these edits make it easier to understand the story it takes away from the brilliance of Cervantes' writing and ironic parody of chivalric romances which characteristically would also commit similar errors and contradictions. (Lathrop 10)

The story of Amadis de Gaula, Don Quixote's role model, has its own peculiar editorial history. The written copy from which all other written copies today have stemmed from was compiled by a man known as Garci Rodríguez de Montalvo. De Montalvo edits (though he refers to it as "correcting" the stories because, as he claims, they had been corrupted by the "deficiencies of poor copyists and composers") the first 3 books of Amadis de Gaula and extensively edits Book 3 because he was dissatisfied with the ending, introducing "some episodes scattered throughout the work which have no purpose other than that of linking Amadis with the continuation that he wrote himself": Book 4 and Book 5 *Las sergas de Esplandián* (Rafael 369). We will probably never read the original Amadis, but we do know that de Montalvo's edits stray dramatically from the original story through references in other texts. Despite being condemned by a priest for being the origin and inspiration of numerous other Spanish chivalric romances, Amadis de Gaula narrowly escapes a fiery demise in Chapter 6 of *Don Quixote*.

The confusion between narrators and authorship is another aspect of *Don Quixote* that makes this book so unique and difficult to traverse. Chapters 1-8 features the voice of what the reader assumes to be Cervantes himself, after all, his name is on the cover,

but all of a sudden the action skids to a halt at the end of Chapter 8, and readers are left deeply confused, because according to the text, they've just read the work of the first "author of this history" and very shortly the "second author of this work" (Cervantes 70) will take on the job of continuing the story which the first author failed to do. However, if author 1 left "the battle unfinished" and author 2 has yet to start his own tale, who on earth is talking at the very end of Chapter 8?

There are many theories as to how many voices exist within *Don Quixote* and how they all fit together. Ignoring the role of Cervantes as overall writer of *Don Quixote* there exists the first author who writes Chapters 1-8, the second author who writes Chapter 9 and onwards, and a disputed third voice often referred to as the 'supernarrator' or the 'narrator-editor' (Polchow 12). Others believe this voice to be the same as the second author and that the interruption at the end of Chapter 8 is his own announcement of his introduction. The 3 main narrator theory makes the most sense as we can often see a different voice occasionally interjecting into the narrative, creating transitions between scenes in a "meanwhile..." fashion or making his own commentary often marked by his exclaiming "*¡válame Dios!*", "good lord!"



"Pull my finger."

Though not a narrator, but definitely a “presence” in the story, Cide Hamete Benengeli as the pseudo-primary source of the two authors adds to the verisimilitude of *Don Quixote* (Polchow 73). Having a source adds authority to the story and has made people wonder if this was a true account. When the people of Spain first read *Don Quixote* in 1605 they were left convinced that this was a real historical documentation of the life of a real man, and demanded to know more about this man. In their quest for knowledge they scoured libraries and bookstores and other sources of text, trying in vain to look for other sources or authors to tell them more about the curious history of Don Quixote de La Mancha which had somehow managed to escape their notice all these years. Students reading *Don Quixote* today can be heard asking the same question: “Wait, was Don Quixote a real person”?

Cervantes is such a brilliant storyteller and world builder that readers have gotten lost in the fiction he creates and have confused their reality with the reality spun in *Don Quixote*. Readers must proceed with caution, lest they find themselves driven to insanity as Don Quixote was through reading because reading is a transformative process. Through the act of reading, Alonso Quixano becomes Don Quixote, a most valiant knight from la Mancha, and he transforms the entire world in order for it to correspond to the fantasy he wants, filled with maidens and knights and giants and wizards and magic, but the real magic at work is reading. Readers of that era remark on “how it felt to become intoxicated by reading and how bookish knowledge was regarded as if it were a magic elixir conferring new powers with every draught” (Eisenstein 72). The magic of reading is allowing yourself to be placed in a fictional world. There is a suspension of disbelief where you accept everything being told to you as truth. A “normal” reader enjoying a “normal” story can exit the world of the book easily and resume their existence in Reality. Don Quixote the character loses this ability, (or perhaps ignores it depending on your own views of his sanity,) and *Don Quixote* the novel blurs the line between fiction and reality forcing the reader to stumble along unsure of what’s real.

What we can be sure of is that *Don Quixote* is meant to entertain. A beast of a book with two parts comprising 124 chapters in all, it is quite a lot to go through. However, reading it is not such a laborious task considering the wonderful instances of humor such as the famous tilting at windmills, poor Sancho being tossed around in a blanket, and the many horrific instances of the expulsion of bodily fluids. Every episode demands to be visualized to fully achieve the effect that Cervantes was trying to create. Even the basic descriptions of our dynamic duo are hilarious and iconic caricatures. The tall and frail old man on a skinny horse wearing ancient armor that is probably too

big for him and the short and fat laborer following him around on a donkey.

The humor might be crude and the story not very “sophisticated” in comparison to many other books that are held in high esteem, but that doesn’t mean that the validity of *Don Quixote* as a revolutionary piece of literature should be dismissed when it is considered for what it fundamentally is. Tragedy is not the only media for a masterpiece. Cervantes was a funny man and a large chunk of his audience appreciated the vulgarity and burlesque nature of his work. It was funny then and it’s funny now. Modern readers have no reason to care about how it acts as a parody of chivalric romances, nor would they be aware of it being a parody of said romances without anybody telling them. They read *Don Quixote* because it is an absurd book about an absurd man doing absurd things. It has survived these past four centuries and has had a tremendous impact because of its absurdity. At the end of his life, Don Quixote’s friends and family realize that they didn’t just love him in spite of his madness, they loved him because of it. They all bought into his fantasy, even if it was just a little. They might not have wanted to admit it then, but his antics brought joy to the mundanity of their lives much like Don Quixote has touched the lives of countless people across time. ■

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LILY FILIPOWSKA

Indifferent and Irreverent: Maternal Theophany in Times of Transition

In the New Testament, God comes to earth, fulfilling Hebrew prophesy and instituting a reversal of hierarchies in which “[the] first will be last, and the last first” (Mt. 19.30). However, in New Testament fashion, perhaps the ultimate reversal of hierarchy in a secular world is the idea that Man created *God* in his own image. Laozi’s *Daodejing* and Virgil’s *Aeneid*—despite their opposing structures, content, and visual representations of divinity—are both products of the authors’ dissatisfaction with the instability of their respective governments. The texts arrive at similarly anti-humanist conclusions through the use of maternal theophany. The mother of a society is its government; in times of political upheaval, both Virgil and Laozi turn to the image of an indifferent mother to present their views of government.

The Aeneid and the *Daodejing* appear to be unlikely candidates for comparison—indeed, they are separated by physical, cultural, and historical distance. To begin discussing how the representations of divinity in these texts produce the same conclusion in opposing ways, I must highlight how comparable civil unrest in the early Roman and Chinese histories produced radically different prose.

The first inklings of the poetic series that would become the *Daodejing* have been dated as early as 300 BCE, during the Chinese Warring States period of 481 to 221 BCE (Lyon 350). The text would have been expanded upon during the first empirical dynasty of China, the Qin dynasty (Lyon 350). While it is perhaps a simplification to compare the first Chinese dynasty with the development of the Augustan Roman Empire, it is valuable to note the similarities in the civil unrest that influenced both the *Daodejing* and *The Aeneid*. *The Aeneid* is a narrative based on a history deeply rooted in Greek and Roman mythology, while the *Daodejing* is an imagery-based collection of proverbs independent of plot. Virgil, some argue, writes Augustan propaganda while the *Daodejing* is an almost utopian rejection of strict Confucian political agendas. *The Aeneid* is an epic poem that depicts concrete moral values (or a lack thereof); the *Daodejing* is a short collection of eighty-one “referentially elusive” passages (Lyon 356).

Truly, one might consider the vaguely comparable historical contexts of the works as mere coincidence in light of their dissimilar structures. However, the works' treatment of divine figures dispels this idea. While the details vary, the underlying anti-humanist depiction of gods in *The Aeneid* and the *Daodejing* is clear despite the differences in structure, time, and history.

The major theophany that Aeneas faces is his mother, Venus. The Aeneian presentation of maternal theophany varies greatly from the typical Western maternal trope of compassion and care. Venus is no Virgin Mary. To begin, Venus delays her revelation to Aeneas for as long as she can, to the great vexation of her son. Virgil eloquently highlights this miscommunication as Aeneas begins his first discourse with what, to him, is a "Spartan girl": "To Venus then / The son of Venus answered..." (Virgil I.427, 440-1). This initial interaction between divine and human is symbolic of the larger maternal theophany of *The Aeneid*: Venus is an indifferent, withholding, and self-centered mother. On the surface she appears the image of perfection; however, her beauty does not manifest itself in love for her mortal son. Venus not only "chose to hear no more complaints" when Aeneas, sighing, poured forth the "annals of adversity" of his journey from Troy, she "broke in, midway through his bitterness" (Virgil I.532, 508, 533).

Completely disregarding the needs of her son, Venus performs the bare minimum child support by creating a mist to cloud Aeneas in his venture, but she does this only as an afterthought. In her egocentrism, she quickly leaves Aeneas to fend for himself while she returns "in joy" to "her shrine / And Hundred altars" (Virgil I.569-70). This apathy is clearly reserved for Aeneas as a mere low-status *demi*-god; Venus has no such contempt for her immortal son, Amor. While Venus' dealings with Aeneas are curt and business-like, she addresses Amor with an almost unsettling fervor and favoritism: "My son, / My strength, my greatest power, *my one and only*," (Virgil I.907-8). Indeed, Aeneas is but a drop in the ocean of Venus' attention.

Venus is not merely an indifferent and narcissistic mother; she and her counterpart in Aeneian maternal theophany, Juno, are actively manipulative. The goddesses ponder "new interventions" and create "stratagems"—ploys to get back at one another rather than support their respective humans-of-choice (Virgil I.896, IV.180). It appears as though Venus' motherly instincts only kick in during times of peril. Venus, "as a mother sorely frightened," supplicates her husband Vulcan for support of Aeneas: "a mother begging for her son" (Virgil VIII.491, 510). Vulcan senses the desperate nature of this shift and directly addresses Venus' destructive apathy:

... If concern like this
 Had moved you in the old days, even then
 I might have armed the Trojans lawfully—
 For neither Jove almighty nore the Fates
 Forbade Troy to endure, Priam to live,
 Ten further years... (Virgil VIII.530-5)

Venus is inattentive to the point of letting her favored city, Troy, perish prematurely. The driving forces of Venus' and Juno's conniving is not love for Aeneas or Dido or any other mortal—it is for the civilizations of Italy and Carthage. Juno quips to Venus, "Your fear of our new walls has not escaped me, / Fear and mistrust of Carthage at her height," yet "Venus knew this talk was all pretense / All to divert the future power from Italy to Libya" (Virgil IV.138-9, 149-51). What is at stake for the goddesses is not the lives or futures of Aeneas or Dido, but rather the glory, affluence, and support of their respective cities.

Finally, this is evident in Venus' pleas to Neptune as war brews in Italy. Completely unaware of the gruesome loss of life that occurred as a result of her and Juno's meddling, Venus focuses instead on Juno's treatment of the city of Troy: "[Juno] never holds her peace. To have devoured / a *city* from the heart of *Phrygia's* people / in her vile hatred, this was not enough, / Nor to have dragged the remnant left from *Troy* / Through all harassment..." (Virgil V.1021-6). Venus' and Juno's attitudes towards humanity are thinly veiled, self-centered attempts at maintaining their *own* influence rather than furthering the interests of mortals.

It is not a far jump to conclude that the depiction of these motherly, divine figures reflects the Roman view of a broken republic and a green empire. The republic is seen as a beautiful, gilded, self-serving institution which propagates its own affluence at the expense of its more common citizens. The inter-governmental warring that disintegrated the Second Triumvirate and produced Augustus as the sole ruler of the Roman Empire is depicted in the city-focused strife between Juno and Venus. Moreover, Venus' preferential treatment of Amor over Aeneas is symbolic of the corruption of the republic, its embezzling elite, and its indifference to its people. This indifference is seen with contempt and vexation. Aeneas sums this up well as he laments, "Why may we not join hands and speak and hear / The simple truth?" (Virgil I.560-1). While this can be interpreted as a call *for* imperialism, Aeneas, a de facto Augustus, does not heed his exasperated plea for transparency and stability as he deceptively fills his men's hearts

with a hope he does not share.

The maternal theophany of Juno presents another aspect of the understanding of government in the Roman transition from republic to empire. Unlike Venus, Juno does not physically manifest herself to Aeneas, but rather is present through her vengeful acts of nature, as she “buffet[s] on the waste of the sea those Trojans,” or sends her messenger Iris to do her bidding in the form of a rainbow (Virgil I.44). This connection to nature reflects the helplessness which the non-ruling class felt in regards to the political elite, the common people simply being buffeted by the storms that the powerful brew. Juno’s callous, indifferent, and decidedly unloving nature as a mother is venomous; in her schemes she looks to undermine *other mothers*. Juno sends Iris to compel Trojan mothers to set Trojan ships aflame; Allecto, doing Juno’s work, first goes to the bed of Amata, mother of the Latins, to “pervade all her senses, / Net her bones in fire” (VII.489–90). In this depiction of Juno’s motherhood, Virgil suggests that the power of an indifferent, malicious, self-centered government (as the mother of a society *is* its government) is so poisonous that it seeps in and contaminates other authorities in its destructive path. Such a mother, if she were mortal, cannot survive: the Trojan women, “free of Juno [. . .] take cover in rock caves, ashamed / To face the daylight, face what they had done” while Amata goes on to commit suicide (Virgil V.880, 877–8).

I close my analysis of maternal theophany in *The Aeneid* by making the point that Aeneas, the founder of the Roman race and the man to whom Augustus traces his lineage, emulates qualities of both these goddesses. In beauty, Aeneas resembles Venus, as he “shone in the bright light, head and shoulders / Noble as a god’s” (Virgil I.800–1). In wrath, Aeneas takes after a more distant mother figure, Juno. Virgil opens his epic by petitioning the Muses to consider, “Can anger / *Black* as this prey on the minds of heaven?” (Virgil I.18–9). Virgil closes by depicting Aeneas in the throes of furious battle, casting his Jovian lightning bolt of a spear “like a *black* whirlwind bringing devastation” (Virgil XII.1256). The reader cannot pity Aeneas or his war-hungry descendants because, indeed, they take after their godly mothers—Virgil the propagandist comments on the failure of the republic while providing a warning to the coming empire.

The Daodejing has a much less concrete theophany because it does not rely on a plot; instead, the image of the Dao has to be gradually pieced together by the reader. *The Aeneid* presents tangible gods, and even blurs the line between the mortal and godly, while the Daodejing offers paradoxes and incomprehensible images. Maternal imagery abounds: “[The Dao] gives birth,” “The Gateway of the Mysterious female is called the root of Heaven and Earth,” “[The Dao] can be taken as the Mother of Heaven and

Earth,” “Dao gave birth to the one” (Laozi 10,6,25,42). Yet, there is no clear moment of revelation in which the reader can *visualize* the Dao. Instead, the Daodejing offers the reader broad, contradictory ideas suggesting the vastness and incomprehensibility of the Dao, even going so far as to explicitly state, “Looked at but not seen, it is called invisible. / Listened to but not heard, it is called inaudible. [. . .] Boundless, boundless, it cannot be named” (Laozi 14). The reader is not *shown* the Dao, the reader is *told* of the Dao; we must go out and find it in nature on our own. The text provides images which are analogous to the Dao, such as a running river or water in general.

The Dao, too, is an indifferent mother in that she provides life and nourishment, but is not explicitly for or against humanity. The text suggests this indifference in contradictions: “Heaven and Earth are not benevolent,” and yet “Water excels at benefiting the ten thousand living things while not competing against them” (Laozi 5,8). The Dao is elusive, but not out of spite or willful deception. The Dao’s elusiveness instead suggests that its presence is not to be revered or sought after, but simply acknowledged. One cannot define the Dao, its spontaneity reigns supreme. In the context of mother as government, the Daodejing is radically against the action of authority.

While *The Aeneid* condemns indifference of the government, the Daodejing promotes it as the only way to achieve peace. The lack of revelation of the maternal Dao and emphasis on non-intentionality and chaos seems to be reflective of the idea that the Chinese people who compiled the Daodejing did not believe that a meddling government could solve the problems of civil unrest. In fact, the text even explains that a removed government provides the people with the best foundation for peace:

When the government is drowsy, drowsy
 The people are generous, generous
 When the government is alert, alert
 The people are contentious, contentious. (Laozi 58)

The Aeneid and the Daodejing were both written in the face of civil war, the corrupt elite, and transition to the loss of freedom that accompanies the stability of a dynasty or empire. As a result, they arrive at the very same conclusion: peace cannot come from a government which focuses on itself to the great disservice of its citizens. *The Aeneid* comes to this through negation—a government which is indifferent to the plight of its people, like an abusive mother, will result in constant revival of war. Conversely, the Daodejing implies that a government which *denies* its selfhood, its vanity and power,

can provide constancy and peace through the inherent goodness of its people. The Eastern and Western attitudes towards indifference are completely polarized—an indifferent government is destructive to Virgil, while it is necessary under Daoism—yet their focus on the value of the people in promoting peace is derivative. I close with a line from the Daodejing that sums up these sentiments: “When the common people are not in terror of the authority of those in power, then will arrive the Great Authority” (Laozi 72). ■

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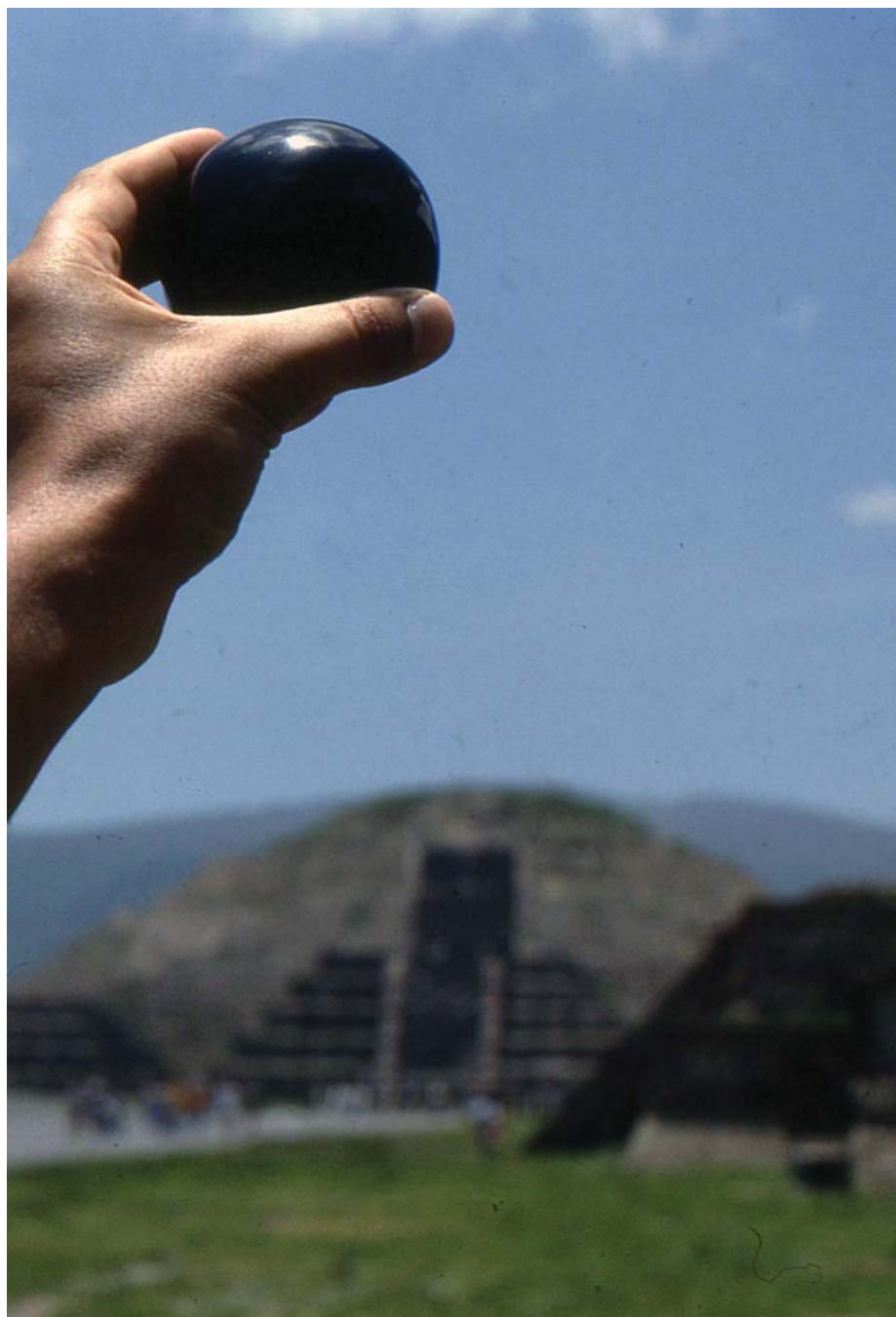
COMPILED BY THE EDITORS

The Analects of the Core

“A spectre is haunting Europe — the spectre of communism. All the powers of old Europe have entered into a holy alliance to exorcise this spectre: Pope and Tsar, Metternich and Guizot, French Radicals and German police-spies.” (Marx and Engels, *Communist Manifesto*) // “She had read a wonderful play about a man who scratched on the wall of his cell and she had felt that was true of life—one scratched on the wall.” (Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway*) // “Since we must risk being wrong, let us risk what gives us pleasure, rather. The world does the reverse, thinking that nothing does you good unless it hurts: pleasantness is suspect.” (Montaigne, *The Essays*) // “Finally, from so little sleeping and so much reading, his brain dried up and he went completely out of his mind.” (Cervantes, *Don Quixote*) // “What is dark within me, illumine.” (Milton, *Paradise Lost*) // “Men cannot know each other till they have eaten salt together.” (Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*) // “What great fools we are! ‘He has spent his life in idleness,’ we say. ‘I haven’t done a thing today.’ – ‘Why! Have you not lived? That is not only the most basic of your employments, it is the most glorious.’” (Montaigne, *The Essays*) // “What are men to rocks and mountains?” (Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*) // “I am not omniscient, but I know a lot.” (Goethe, *Faust*) // “I had only to appear, and the universe would be filled with my presence, not, of course, the entire universe, with which I could, as it were, dispense, since I did not need quite so much space.” (Rousseau, *The Confessions*) // “I should infinitely prefer a book.” (Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*) // “I’m feeling so? I don’t know how?/ I wish that Mother would come home.” (Goethe, *Faust*) // “Take courage, my heart:/ You have been through worse than this.” (Homer, *The Odyssey*) // “Solitude sometimes is best society.” (Milton, *Paradise Lost*) // “I prefer men to cauliflowers.” (Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway*) // “It’s been many years since I had such an exemplary vegetable.” (Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*) // “I am not over-fond of salads nor of any fruit except melons. My father loathed all kinds of sauces; I love them all.” (Montaigne, *The Essays*) // “What intelligent things you say sometimes! One would think you had studied.” (Cervantes, *Don Quixote*) ■



[The visual analect at left is a representation of Prof. L.J. Sa(l)mons, executed in pencil by friend of the Core Caroline Foster, ENG '18.]



SHANTI KHANNA

Sexual Desire and Godly Devotion in Attar and Dante

In both *The Conference of the Birds* by Farid ud-Din Attar and *The Divine Comedy* by Dante Alighieri, the authors explore the divine through what is most earthly: human sexual desire. Dante and Attar investigate the ways in which passion and devotion are intertwined; they create characters that fall more deeply into their faith as they fall in love. The authors also explore ways in which passion can lead characters astray from the way of God. Dante places many self-absorbed lovers in the rings of the *Inferno*, while Attar condemns selfish love through the Hoopoe's words of advice to the other birds. Both authors discuss the ways in which the human characteristic of passion can be a constructive way to help one attain closeness to God, but also the ways in which passion can be a distraction from piety.

Dante explores the idea of passion by writing about lovers whose stories and experiences parallel each other. Two pairs of lovers that he discusses in detail are Francesca and Paulo in the *Inferno* and himself and Beatrice throughout *Commedia*. These lovers, while similar in their shared emotional experiences, have vastly different fates in the afterlife. Through storytelling, Dante asserts that these characters caused their own fates through the way in which they interpreted the lust that they felt while they were alive.

The adulterous Francesca and Paulo are aberrant characters who are found in the second circle of the *Inferno*, surrounded by others that have also "sinned within the flesh, subjecting reason to the rule of lust" (*Inferno*, Canto V.38-39). This description, taken from Dante's narration, explores the idea that sinful love is a passion that makes a character forget reason. In the contrapasso style that Dante uses throughout the *Inferno*, the characters suffer a punishment that fits their crime. Francesca's and Paulo's punishment is to be swept up by a "hellish hurricane, which ... drives the spirits with its violence" (*Inferno*, Canto V.31). These characters are being swept up by the force of passion, thus they are unable to control the hurricane's forces in hell.

The characters respond to their punishment by "[cursing] the forces of the divine," which shows disrespect to God and a lack of remorse. These lovers do not understand that they have caused their own fates. Throughout the second circle, the characters continue to deny responsibility for allowing passion to take hold of them. Francesca

blames her adultery on *Lancelot*, the book that she was reading at the time she fell in love. She says, “that reading led our eyes to meet, made our faces pale...” (*Inferno*, Canto V.131). By not taking responsibility for her actions, Francesca can never achieve repentance and therefore, her lust is sinful. Unlike the lovers of *Purgatorio* or *Paradiso*, the lovers in the *Inferno* allow themselves to be swept up by passion and they lack remorse and respect for God.

Like Francesca and Paulo, Dante and Beatrice have a relationship outside of marriage. However, Dante does not portray his passion towards Beatrice as sinful. Instead, he describes his feelings in terms of divinity. He says that when he sees Beatrice he feels “the mighty power of old love” (*Purgatorio*, Canto XXX.39). By calling his love “mighty,” Dante shows that he views his passion as godly and bigger than himself. He continues to elevate his passion to a divine level when he portrays Beatrice as an angelic figure in *Paradiso*. When Dante sees Beatrice, he says, “the loveliness that I saw not only surpassed our human measure ... only the Maker can enjoy it fully” (*Paradiso*, Canto XXX.19-20). By describing Beatrice’s beauty as more-than-human and saying it can only be truly enjoyed by God, Dante implies that his passion for her is also otherworldly. In the end of *Paradiso*, Dante continues to elevate his feelings of passion by saying that it is love that “moves the sun and other stars” (*Paradiso*, XXXIII.145). By portraying human feelings of love as a godlike force that is greater than the self, Dante distinguishes his righteous passion from the sinful lust of those in the *Inferno*.

Just as it is in *The Divine Comedy*, erotic love in the *Conference of the Birds* is complex, and it can lead either to or away from religion. Throughout the birds’ journey to find the Simorgh, the Hoopoe gives advice about the right ways to love. The journey the birds embark on should be read as an allegory; the Hoopoe is leading the birds just as a religious leader would lead devotees to God. By telling the birds how to love correctly, the Hoopoe is telling them the best way to worship God. In between narrations about the birds, Attar tells anecdotes about human love and passion. He details human occurrences that mirror the birds’ experiences; like the birds, the humans can be drawn away from or closer to God through sexual desire.

The birds’ excuses for not wanting to go with the Hoopoe to find the Simorgh depict sinful, self-absorbed forms of passion. The Nightingale says that his “love is the rose” and that because he has found the rose, he has no reason to journey to the Simorgh (36). This is an example of false love; passion convinces the Nightingale that he does not need to find God. The Hoopoe says that the Nightingale’s love is “only for the show of things” and is nothing but “a fleeting turbulence” (36). Through this

dialogue between the Hoopoe and the Nightingale, Attar establishes the idea of superficial love as transient and unworthy of one's time, meanwhile implying that a deeper love of God is lasting. The Hoopoe also says that the rose laughs "not with you, as you say, but *at* you" (37). This shows that the Nightingale is being duped by his love. He, like the other birds, is missing out on a relationship with a higher power because he is being misled by his earthly desires.

The Hoopoe goes on to explain divine, righteous passion. He says that a true lover "is one in whom all thoughts of the Self have died" (57). By establishing that love is about moving past selfish desires, the Hoopoe sets up the path to enlightenment, which is also about renouncing the earthly self. In the same stanza, the Hoopoe says one must "give up mortal sight, for only then can you approach the light" (56). By juxtaposing the correct way to love with the way to reach God, Attar establishes that the correct form of human passion can lead one to a closer relationship with divinity.

Attar also tells anecdotes about humans, which serve to illustrate and explain the ideas of love the Hoopoe teaches to the birds. He tells the story of Sheik Sam'an, who "fasted, prayed, observed all sacred laws" (57). While from this line it may seem that the Sheik is committed to God, he is not truly devoted. He falls in love with a Christian woman and leaves Islam, succumbing to his passion for the Christian woman. He says that her "honeyed lips provoked the world's desire," using erotic language to show the extent to which he is infatuated with her (59). Ironically, the woman decides to convert to Islam, after receiving a vision that she was wrong to lead the Sheik astray. The Sheik "spelt out the faith [of Islam] to her" converting back to his original religion and this time becoming truly enlightened. Through this erotic relationship with a Christian girl, the Sheik learns the difference between the empty ritual he once practiced and the true meaning of devotion.

While from very different cultures, these two religiously influenced texts converge on the same set of related themes: that love is what one makes of it; that lovers are responsible to direct their passion constructively, so as to grow closer to God; and that the wrong form of love can be a hindrance to true piety. ■

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Tranquility in the Tao Te Ching

The Tao Te Ching proposes a simplistic, egalitarian society that has the underlying principle of following the Tao. Although attractive in its modest and harmonious approach to life, its biggest fault might be that it takes its optimistic outlook to an extreme. The text also provides profound criticism on the perception and application of democracy in America today.

A major positive aspect of the Tao Te Ching is the simple, harmonious and equal life it offers. "The great state wants no more than to provide for all people alike," says Lao Tzu, emphasizing that a great state focuses first and foremost on its people and the opportunities they have (61). These opportunities only cover the most basic needs such as food and shelter, but Lao Tzu argues that this is enough for a happy life. This might sound unacceptable to some modern readers, but one must remember that the Tao Te Ching bases its principles on embracing simplicity and reducing desires (19). Through unlearning and devaluing virtues that society has long grown accustomed to, Lao Tzu argues that people can understand how to be content with the natural flow of life, which ties into the concept of the Tao. Inaction and solitude are key practices in this tradition (47, 48). Because the Tao is defined as the nameless flow of life, returning to fundamental habits and submitting to the natural course of actions is the way to "cultivate virtue" (54). As the Tao is intrinsically good, allowing oneself to exist without restriction leads to a happy, "long-lasting" life (16). These thoughts make one picture the Taoist society as a stable, peaceful community, where everyone is given a few identical resources and left to a harmonious existence.

Lao Tzu's concept of the ideal ruler also reflects these ideas. The sages, who are close followers of the Tao, are introspective and inactive people (22). They do not boast, preach, or interfere with others' actions. They do not rely on their knowledge or rhetoric, but instead allow the Tao to spread in the way it is naturally inclined to do (18). This is how the ideal ruler is supposed to be as well, they must strive to preserve the Tao (32). As this requires inaction, the ruler essentially becomes the emptiest or the most passive of them all—"a shadowy presence" (17). This shows that the ruler is more of a model for a perfect life than a governor, as he or she would not pass any laws or prohibitions that would restrict their subjects in any sense (57, 58). Essentially, this governing system gives the people freedom to be who they are, while also encouraging them to follow the

image: from a calligraphy workshop
in Prof. Green's CC 102 section in Spring 2017



Tao. Furthermore, Lao Tzu argues that the passive government would attract people from other lands and urge them to live the simple, harmonious life (61). Therefore, following the Tao Te Ching results in a perfect, sustainable society.

While the Tao Te Ching presents a solid argument for its ideal society, there are some faults that must be taken into consideration. For example, the optimistic outlook can irritate some readers. Lao Tzu believes that inaction and spontaneity will return everything to an ordered state (3). The Tao, itself, is the natural flow of life, which means that people should flow naturally according to their impulses and desires (25). The perfect government is passive; Lao Tzu provides no rules or rituals that provide a moral code for society (61). The problem with this idea is that it assumes that people and their natural impulses are intrinsically good. One can very strongly argue that the tendency to commit morally bad actions is natural and it is actually the law or the moral codes that control these instincts. Therefore, letting people live in accordance with their natural impulses may intensify the negative parts of human existence if actions such as theft, murder, and rape are inherent to human nature.

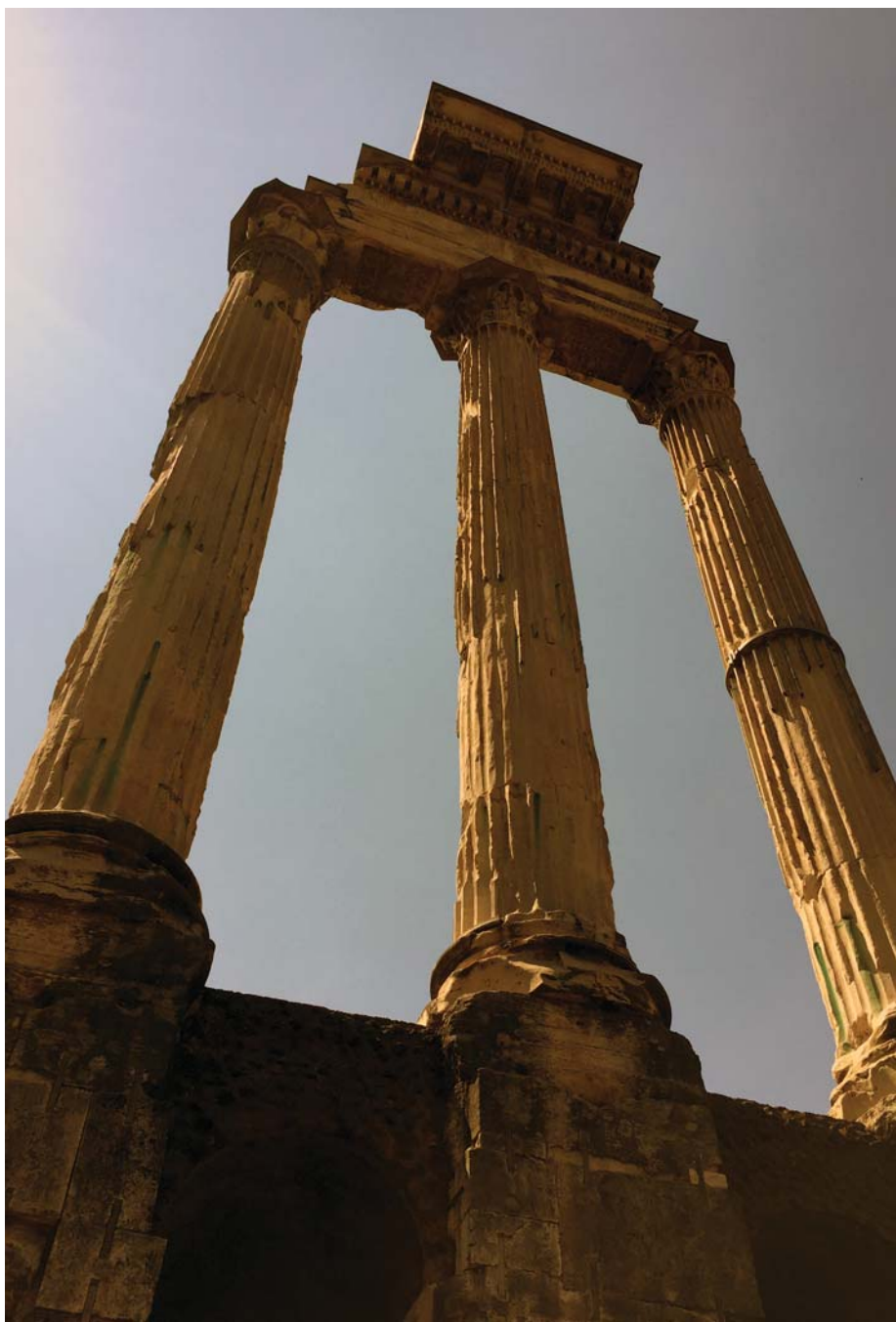
This optimism can also underestimate the need for individualism. The Tao Te Ching allows for very little individual existence and expression, as the key action is inaction. One of the major advantages of following the Tao is that one lives a long-lasting life (50)—enduring is a characteristic of Heaven itself (7)—but the Tao Te Ching does not really tell one what to do with one's long existence. It advocates being passive at all times and frowns upon most activities that one would find enriching, such as traveling (26). Aside from the supplied necessities and work required for what seems to be an agricultural society, there does not seem to be much to experience. A Taoist would probably argue that following the Tao should give one enough contentment with life, but one does wonder if other wonderful human products, such as the arts, could ever be a part of this society.

Even with the aforementioned weaknesses, I would still like to live in a Taoist society. It is far removed from the urban life people are accustomed to nowadays, and the simple serenity of that life is quite attractive to me. The society has only a few concerns as shown in this particular passage: “Make their food savory, their clothes fine, their houses comfortable, their lives happy” (80). It is fascinating how easily happiness is attained, because the process is quite complicated in modern society. Today, happiness is an unreachable goal for many people, because they are overcome by feelings of insecurity and anxiety. The Tao Te Ching serves as an incredible contrast to this insatiable society, as it just exists and is satisfied with this existence in and of itself. I find it comforting to think that happiness is within reach and one just has to return to one’s roots. I am also inclined to believe that humans are naturally positive beings, who will be good if they are in their unrefined states. Lao Tzu addresses this claim by arguing that knowledge and artificial values are the ones that create the negative sides of humanity (18). It is the value people give to money that pushes them to theft, not their natural disposition.

Although the Tao Te Ching is not necessarily a democratic text because it is not concerned with establishing a government that values opinions and self-expression, it still has some ideas that current democratic societies could learn from. First off, Lao Tzu would disapprove of the race for positions of power. The Tao Te Ching condemns any kind of preaching and values quiet (17). Its main concern is to provide for all people in an equal manner (61). Therefore, Lao Tzu would be repulsed by how alienating today’s democracy can get, as the race for power pushes the candidates to exploit certain groups of people while disregarding others. The main goal of the election—‘providing for people and thriving as a nation’—gets lost in the competition of proving that one candidate or political party is better than the other. Furthermore, not only is there a yearning for power, but there is also a certain luxury and glamor attached to these positions, which Lao Tzu despises (9). The constant advertisements and superficial showcases go against the ideals of the Tao Te Ching. Essentially, the text reminds the people that the act of ruling is much more important than the process of obtaining the role of a ruler, and that the focus on the election itself should not undermine the actual act of governing. ■

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ZACHARY BOS

Jeu de boue

*objects are what matter. only they carry the evidence
that throughout the centuries something really happened
among human beings* Claude Lévi-Strauss

belief creates the actual fact William James

As children, following instinct's urges,
we ran barefoot through the backyards, intent
on finding the hidden pools in the heart

of the wild, the untouched mud glistening
around their edges. Beside them we crouched,
digging in with clawed fingers to gather

the rank matter into our hands, rolling
the muck into black eggs, dripping and soft.
One of us played priest, blessing them each with

a spectacle of nonsense words and spit.
One of us would serve as king, and decree
which eggs would be set aside to harden,

and which smashed back into the earth. At last
one of us would be the prophet, brushing
the mud-egg skin with a black crow feather

to scry the fate of the mute forms curled-up
inside, in their postures of transforming,
to borrow the sight of their dark hens' eyes.

ELIZABETH DIDYKALO

The Choice in Enlightenment

While the Enlightenment was indeed a time of great change, not all great thinkers immediately parted ways with old thoughts and perspectives. Instead, many battled with the old and the new, or against the new, or slowly changed their beliefs over the course of their lives. In his *Candide*, Voltaire captures this range of different knowledge-seeking paths that people took during the Enlightenment via an assortment of various characters who similarly have different journeys toward (and within the) Enlightenment. Kant describes enlightenment as an “exit from self-incurred immaturity,” and we can see the truth of this statement by examining the journeys of the characters Pangloss and Candide. While Pangloss deliberately does not allow himself to change his opinions or learn from the world around him and therefore does not leave immaturity and does not reach enlightenment, Candide eventually begins to question the world, which enables him to mature.

As *Candide* follows the story of the protagonist’s life starting from his very youth, the structure of the narrative in itself suggests that this will be a story about the growth and maturity of the protagonist. Maturity is the stage in which one has reached full development, both physically and emotionally. No one is born mature, as it requires going through different life experiences and learning from them in order to develop emotionally. Voltaire constantly inserts experience after experience, almost always something tragic, into the characters’ lives. The plot is completely saturated with such moments, to the point where the onslaught of tragedy becomes comedic. These are frequent because they demand attention: the reader and the characters all ask themselves: why did these events happen? What do they mean? There is a direct connection between how the characters answer these questions and what they learn from each experience; therefore these events offer the opportunity for maturation for those who are willing to take it.

The extensive number of opportunities in which Pangloss has to mature makes it all the more poignant that he chooses to stay in a state of immaturity. This lack of maturity makes him useless as an emotional comfort, and makes his ideologies seem daft, which are both markers of immaturity: “It is true that the meal was mournful; the guests mingled tears with their food, but Pangloss consoled them, assuring them that things could not be otherwise.” (12) This assurance is completely useless and is objec-

tively a terrible thing to say to people who are suffering, which is something Pangloss is incapable of understanding. After every tragic, life-altering event that Pangloss experiences, he falls back to his default philosophy in order to explain what has happened and to cope with it moving forward. By doing this, he ignores the reality around him, automatically disqualifying him from reaching enlightenment. Voltaire further insists upon this idea by describing Pangloss as a beggar with syphilis who has lost one eye and one ear. The eyes and ears are part of the senses, some of the most precious things a human has because they tell of the world around oneself, allowing one to interpret and learn through these senses. This is, of course, lost on Pangloss, who did not need them anyway. It is clear that his immaturity is self-incurred: “‘While you were being hanged, dissected, lashed, and were rowing in the galleys, did you continue to think that all went as well as could be?’ ‘I still think as I always did,’ said Pangloss, ‘for, after all, I’m a philosopher, and it would have been inappropriate for me to change my mind.’” (75) Even when directly asked to look back on his experiences, Pangloss turns a blind eye (the only one) to the opportunity and consciously refers to his default belief, continuing to speak his meaningless drivel.

Candide’s journey to enlightenment is a process because it does not happen all at once, but he does eventually change his philosophy and escape the immaturity he had been holding on to for so long. Candide does this by looking at the practical aspect of events, for example, he searches for practical solutions, and the more he does this, the further he gets away from Pangloss’s mode of dealing with events. After Pangloss justifies the existence of syphilis through a long and ultimately useless ramble, Candide responds: “Well, that’s a remarkable fact, but we must get you cured.” (9) While this happens in Chapter 4, where Candide certainly still has some of his youthful optimism, it is this ability to lean towards examining the practical aspects of a situation that lead to his enlightenment, which comes to him in the ultimate form: a life philosophy.

Voltaire beautifully illustrates the conclusion of Candide’s and Pangloss’s journey by starkly comparing the two in the very last paragraph:

Sometimes Pangloss said to Candide, “All events are linked together in this, the best of all possible worlds; for after all, if you had not been driven out of a beautiful castle, with hefty kicks on your backside, because you loved Miss Cunégonde, if you had not been arrested by the Inquisition, if you had not crossed America on foot, if you had not thrust your sword through the baron, if you had not lost all the sheep you had obtained in the good land of El Dorado, you would not be sitting here eating

roasted pine nuts and pistachios.” “That’s well said,” replied Candide, “but we must work on our land.” (79)

Despite mentioning numerous difficult and tragic experiences, Pangloss cannot analyze them far enough to gain anything from them other than that they were part of a long chain of cause and effect that led to Candide eating pine nuts and pistachios. This conclusion, like all of Pangloss’s conclusions, is useless. His insistence on repeating such lectures only goes to show that he is stuck on his need to be a philosopher so deeply that he will say what he thinks sounds philosophical in order to maintain this persona. In sharp contrast, it is Candide’s simple response that shows he has reached maturity. Rather than engage in philosophical discussion or mindlessly absorb and agree with that which Pangloss says, Candide states his own new, informed philosophy of life, which is that the most important thing is to deal with the practical situation at hand, that is, the garden, symbolically talking about the importance of fulfilling the daily requirements of life rather than simply focusing on lofty ideas.

By virtue of living during a time of great thinkers, it is likely that Voltaire found fault with the lens through which many of these people looked at the world. He clearly insists that blind optimism in philosophy is useless and even harmful, as we can see when Pangloss tries to comfort various characters throughout the narrative by offering them optimistic words rather than practical action. Voltaire describes a large variety of both human and natural evils in order to show that it is ignorant to maintain one’s philosophy at the expense of not acknowledging such things. Candide grows from a young man who is convinced of Pangloss’s easy, empty words to an adult who is focusing on the here and now, showing the importance of practicality and the availability of maturity for those who choose to find it. Most importantly, Voltaire offers the reader the idea that finding enlightenment does not have to mean transcending the human world, but rather landing firmly on the soil beneath one’s feet in order to tend to their garden. ■

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CAROLINE BRANTLEY

Honor in the Tragedy of Ajax

In Ancient Greek culture, honor largely determined the status of a person and his or her legacy in society. In *Ajax* by Sophocles, the importance of honor is twofold; honor is established broadly for how it weighs on the individual character of a person, as well as how it defines his or her place in the community. Through this broad context, honor manifests itself through both Athenian democracy and the honor code of Greek warriors, both of which leave Ajax in a state of shame and influence his suicide. Therefore, for Ajax, suicide does not simply serve as his escape from a loss of honor, but it also acts as a heroic way for him to reclaim control over the fate of his individual honor and collective honor in society, which are both determined through democracy and the warrior's honor code.

In *Ajax*, the notion of honor in the community as a whole is significant; a person's merit weighs heavily on his honorable actions and dignity. Honor holds the utmost importance and is presented with regard to traditional Athenian democratic values, in which citizens would vote democratically and directly impact others. At the beginning of the play, Ajax loses his honor as a result of democracy; he is denied his deceased cousin Achilles' armor and, consequently, he becomes enraged and vengeful against those who used democracy to sabotage his honor. Ajax laments,

But I, the son of that man—after sailing with no less strength
to the very same Troy and having defended the Greeks
no less by the deeds of my hand—
I die in such disgrace, stripped of honor by the Greeks. (437-440)

Ajax is a great Greek warrior, but his failure to secure Achilles' armor places him in a shameful position of submission in the Athenian community. For Ajax, the "deeds of my hand" (439) are just as strong as those of his father, and yet he is still denied honor. Ajax has fought just as valiantly and strongly as his father, so to be denied Achilles' armor is the public's ultimate insult to him. To Ajax, being denied recognition and respect means that he has been "stripped of honor by the Greeks" (440) and will "die in such disgrace" (440) if he does not take action to restore his honor. Thus, Ajax immediately turns to vengeance and a murder plot to enact revenge on the Greeks who

democratically opposed him. By trying to murder them, Ajax speaks out against his perceived indecency of the events; when he fails, he turns to suicide as a surefire way to react to the indecency and to regain control of his fate.

Although a democratic vote is the reason that Ajax initially loses his honor, his mutinous plan to murder his fellow Greek soldiers compromises Ajax's honor under the Greek warrior code. As a Greek soldier, Ajax has committed himself to serving the Greek army and killing the enemies, so the attacks that he attempts against his comrades are considered mutinous. After his failed attempt, Ajax debates whether he should abandon the Greeks and sail home to regain his honor, but he decides against this idea, realizing it would be even more dishonorable than his previous actions of betrayal. He ponders,

Shall I sail homeward across the Aegean, abandoning my station
by the anchored ships and leaving the sons of Atreus all alone?
And what face shall I show when I appear before my father,
Telamon? How will he ever bear to look upon me
when I appear naked, stripped of the prize for prowess,
a prize which *he* won as a great crown of glory?
No, doing *that* is intolerable. (460-466)

In the passage, Ajax asks himself “what face shall I show” (462) if he abandons his army out of cowardice. However, he realizes that abandonment will not revoke his mutinous actions, and instead he would remain “naked, stripped of the prize for prowess” (464) like he feels in his current shame. Ajax decides that “doing *that* is intolerable” (466) and that by returning home he would commit an ultimate offense against the Greek warrior code. Instead, his decision to stay and to take his life shows that Ajax is aware of the honor code and wants to redeem a sense of honor, even if it is through his own death.

The Greek community largely influences the notion of honor in democracy, but Ajax also faces internal and individual shame, which influence his personal opinions and affect his ideas of honor. In his personal struggle with his loss of honor, Ajax is the sole authority in his outcome; he must decide for himself if he will live or die. Ajax asserts that it is his duty to “live with honor or die with honor—that is the choice the man of nobility must make” (479-480). As a “man of nobility” (480), Ajax knows that it is his responsibility to uphold and seize control of his own honor, whether in life or

death. Ajax has already sacrificed honor in his life, so he accepts that he can no longer “live with honor” (479) and must die nobly. However, in Ajax’s mind, there is only one method for him to ensure that his death is noble. By committing suicide, Ajax believes he will “die with honor” (479), having been successful in his death and restoring his place as a brave Greek warrior, instead of as a shameful character who lost his honor. The death of Ajax also serves as his final cry for justice in democracy. Since Ajax feels the public has dishonored him through a democratic vote that did not go in his favor, his suicide serves as the final and most significant act of democracy for Ajax, in which his sole vote determines his fate and denounces the verdict that the Greeks decided on his honor before.

The completion of Ajax’s suicide fulfills his desire to take control and to restore his honor in death, despite the actions in the community that have worked against him. Thus, Ajax here relies on the warrior code as an individual to determine his own fate and to make his death quick, successful, and honorable. If Ajax were to fail in his suicide, he would lose even more honor, so he cries out,

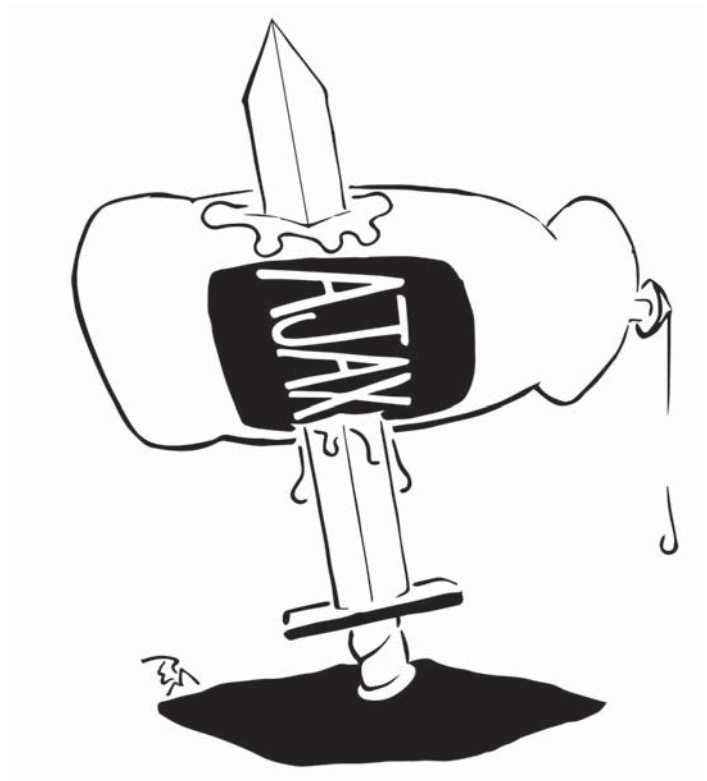
Let me not be spied first by one of my foes
and thrown out, exposed to the dogs and birds as booty!
Such is my supplication to you, O Zeus. At the same time I call on
Hermes, conductor of souls to the underworld, to set me asleep soundly
with one swift leap that brings no convulsions, no struggle,
when I have ripped through the ribs with this sword here. (829-834)

Ajax calls to Hermes, relying on the gods for the success of his death, to “set me asleep soundly / with one swift leap” (832-833), knowing that if he were to butcher his suicide he would lack honor and break the warrior code again for failing to kill properly. Thus, Ajax seeks to fall on his sword so that it brings “no convulsions, no struggle, / when I have ripped through the ribs” (833-834) and that he will bring about death quickly. In executing his own demise, Ajax finds authority over his honor and his legacy, which he would not have occurred if he stayed alive and was subjected to the will of the Greeks. For Ajax, it is imperative that he is the one to control his last breaths, and he prays that he not be “spied first . . . and thrown out” (829-830), for fear of losing authority and instead turning his death into a weak and dishonorable moment. Through his death by suicide, Ajax restores himself to honor by acting on his beliefs without fear, and he restores his warrior honor by taking responsibility for his actions by taking his own life.

Ajax's suicide is influenced by many factors; along with an obligation to uphold his honor, he faces immeasurable sorrow and distress, so his suicide is not only the result of his desire for honor. However, honor plays an enormous role in his decision and serves as his own justification for his death. Through the influences of individual and societal honor with regard to Athenian democracy and the warrior honor code, Ajax employs the idea of restoring his honor in suicide as a way to handle the upsetting, dishonorable events in his life and as a way to salvage control over his fate, despite the shame he has been dealt. Through this act, Ajax is able to posthumously gain honor, and he leaves behind all the grief and shame that he has experienced in his life. ■

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KACI X. TAVARES

The Narrative Impact of Quantum Limits upon Literature

When one hears the phrase “scientific inquiry,” one might immediately think of complex mathematical equations and intensive research. Scientific inquiry, however, is hardly a straightforward cocktail of math and experiments. In the field of quantum physics, researchers must conduct their inquiry with a kind of intellectual wariness, following discoveries that contradict the seemingly stable worldview suggested by the principles of classical physics. These theoretical developments—including Heisenberg’s Uncertainty Principle and Bohr’s Principle of Complementarity—showing that there are limits on the accuracy of quantum measurement are similar to issues authors contend with when translating works or choosing forms of narration.

The work which led to Heisenberg’s 1927 Uncertainty Principle was motivated by a key aspect of scientific inquiry: the desire for accurate measurement. Heisenberg performed a thought experiment attempting to measure both the momentum and position of an electron by using a photon, which is a seemingly non-invasive probe. (Wolfson) Heisenberg hypothesized that a photon’s short wavelength would “snugly [fit] over [an] electron to capture its precise location.” (Grandy 13) He noted, however, that though photons have high frequencies (allowing them to accurately measure position), they are also high-energy particles. When a photon interacts with an electron in a system, it transfers energy to the electron, which alters the electron’s momentum. (13) Although a probe must interact with a system in order to take measurements, the probe should act primarily as an observer, not as a participant in the system. (Katz)

To resolve this potential issue, Heisenberg thought to measure momentum by “reduc[ing] the photon’s energy, but that implic[d] a longer wavelength which in turn implic[d] a less precise position measurement.” (Grandy 13) Here, Heisenberg met with a conundrum. As Lindley puts it, “It wasn’t either-or, but an inescapable compromise. The more an observer tried to extract information about the electron’s position, the less it was possible to know about its momentum, and vice versa.” (147)

This occurs because an electron can act as both a particle and a wave, depending on how a person decides to measure it. In response to the Uncertainty Principle, Bohr

founded the Principle of Complementarity, which states that the particle and wave aspects of matter are complementary. One can conduct a wave experiment to observe wave behavior, and a particle experiment to see particle behavior, but no single experiment can reveal both. (Wolfson) In other words, Heisenberg explains, “Measurement defines what is being measured.” (Lindley 155)

Although one may find the Uncertainty Principle specific to the world of quantum physics, the idea of—as Pauli put it—choosing to look through the p-eye (momentum) or q-eye (position) (145), also applies to the domain of English literature. When studying narrative voice, one finds that the perspective from which an author chooses to tell a story limits whose story is being told. Similar to the way Heisenberg says that measurement determines what is being measured, or “the act of observation determines what is and isn’t being observed” (7), a narrator in a story determines whose story is and whose story is not being told.

To take an example, let’s consider Austen’s *Pride and Prejudice*. The story of William Darcy and Elizabeth Bennet’s complicated journey to find love is told by the omnipotent third-person narrator. If, however, Austen had chosen to write from Darcy’s first-person perspective, the story would change entirely. The more one knows about Darcy, the less he or she can know about Elizabeth because one’s perspective has shifted. One would also be subjected to Darcy’s bias, while the other characters’ perspectives fade to the periphery of the story. In this case, the act of measurement—i.e. the choice of perspective belonging to the narrative voice—changes, determines, and limits what is being measured—i.e. whose story it is which is being told. The story would shift again, however, if Austen had decided to narrate the story from Elizabeth’s first-person perspective. In this case, the more one knows about Elizabeth, the less he or she can know about Darcy. Like a measurement will determine how an electron behaves, Austen’s choice in narrator also determines whose story *Pride and Prejudice* becomes.

One might argue that the Uncertainty Principle and Principle of Complementarity cannot be compared to literature because the third-person narrator is, after all, *omnipotent*. An omnipotent narrator may be seen as an opportunity for the author to choose not to choose, and look with both “eyes” at once, the p- and the q-. By choosing to include both Elizabeth’s perspective and Darcy’s, the author sacrifices the specificity and clarity a perspective from just one character would lend the story.

Like a physicist attempting to slow a photon in order to determine an electron’s momentum and position simultaneously, the information one takes from the unspecified measurement has a sense of blurriness to it. Similarly, in a novel, a reader knows

each character well enough to get a sense of a character's disposition, but lacks the intimacy or clarity he or she would get from being directly inside any particular character's head. A narrative voice—no matter if in first-person, second-person, or third-person—therefore must always be evaluated for its trustworthiness, and for its strength and weakness as a vehicle for the story told.

The same element of inexactness comes up in the language used to discuss quantum physics itself. Just as translating poetry between Italian and English results in an approximation of a phrase that only exists in one language or the other, Heisenberg and Bohr were forced to use German to make attempts at “translating” the ideas and language of quantum mechanics into an understandable approximation in their own language. (Lindley 147-50) As Bohr said, “our words don't fit.” Despite the inexactness caused by this language barrier, the discussion of quantum physics and scientific inquiry goes on, measurements are made, and novels are written. What quantum physicists and literary authors have in common is their determination to keep pushing forward in their respective fields despite the impossibility of perfect clarity or perfect translation. They do so only by respecting the fact that uncertainty is an inescapable component of inquiry, creativity, and discovery. ■

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KELLEN DORIO

How Cervantes and Shakespeare Call the Aristotelian Social Model into Question

Aristotle posits society as the necessary, inevitable result of humans' natural desires and urges to be political and social; however, as reiterated throughout literature, not each individual benefits from the society he/she exists in. In this instance, such individuals may actively choose to leave their society, or society as a whole, opening themselves up to both personal benefits and external criticism. Cervantes and Shakespeare explore this issue throughout their respective works, *Don Quixote* and *Hamlet*. Both acknowledge the toll society takes on the individual, and the simultaneous liberation and condemnation one can encounter by removing oneself from one's assigned social role. Additionally, they consider the possible negative *and* positive personal effects exiting a legitimately corrupt society can present. While these works do not necessarily negate Aristotle's claim that society is the nucleus of human interaction, they do question the results of its practical applications and shed light on the potential harm of its deviations from the Aristotelian model.

One of Aristotle's primary propositions is that society exists for the benefit of its majority, not for the sole benefit of a particular individual member. To this end, people are expected to carry out the roles society has assigned them for the benefit of their community, regardless of their opinion of this role or alternative aspirations they may hold for themselves. While this allows his proposed ideal society to function "for the sake of the common advantage that its members derive", it also presupposes an entire population of selfless, community-minded individuals (Leotsini 26). Though this theory may seem relatively uncontroversial when broadly examined, it becomes questionable on a more individual basis. Aristotle's generalized conclusions are implicitly called into question by conflicting examples on the personal level when individuals and their relationships to society become more of a central focus than that of society as a whole. In particular, examining the effects of an ill-fitting assigned place in society can reveal the detriments of a social model that does not account for the needs and wants of its individual members. One could argue that this exclusion sets a society up for failure

by all but tempting its members to leave it in order to escape the undesirable roles to which they were assigned.

Cervantes makes this argument with the titular character of his novel *Don Quixote*. He introduces Don Quixote as a plain-named, lower class, aging inhabitant of a crumbling estate in a small village. This protagonist appears to embody mediocrity; one who leads a relatively monotonous, unadventurous life, whose “idle moments... [account] for most of the years”, but whose inner life takes him great distances away from this bucolic community he is a part of (Cervantes 27). Don Quixote’s prolific reading of chivalric romance novels, his intense investment in them, and his eventual attempted embodiment of their characters reflects his dissatisfaction with his life and with his world. In making the world of these books his reality, he is able to escape from the drudgery of his place in society, and let his vividly imaginative mind run far from the tedium of his life. Since the primary method of his escape, this chivalric romantic literature, is a product and fixture of the culture he inhabits, one can assume that Don Quixote is not the only member of his community that feels a lack of fulfillment and a desire for more than their society can provide them with. This presumed mutual longing seems to imply that “humanist social reform was channeled into the chivalric political dreams” (Graf 134). Additionally, readers come to see throughout the novel that such escape from society is frowned upon by other members; people assume that Don Quixote is insane for embodying a chivalric knight, and the chivalric romance novels themselves are criticized for being frivolous, negatively influential, and “devilish” throughout. His niece blames “all those damned chivalry books...for scrambling the finest mind in La Mancha”, and his housekeeper claims that “he [is breaking out through] the gaping gate of his madness...his problem’s in his brain-box”, implying that others viewed his behavior as a direct result of these books and his mental insertion of himself into their world rather than of any internal desires or dissatisfactions (Cervantes 50, 526). These characters urge Don Quixote to give up both his chivalric dreams and his obsessive reading of such novels in order to return to his duties as the manager of his estate, and rejoin the community he was once an active part of.

It appears that Don Quixote’s fellow villagers support an Aristotelian model of society; they follow the paths laid out for them and criticize those that deviate from theirs in order to maintain a proper social balance according to their rigid expectations. The seriousness with which they regard Don Quixote’s antics reveals an inability to conceptualize a world beyond their own, and a lifestyle other than the mundane, focused ones they lead. However, at the end of the novel Don Quixote reverts to his

former dejected, “sane” self and those that had been his biggest critics urge him to take up a new fantasy for their mutual entertainment, and for the alleviation of the pervasive mood of dejected tedium he reinforces in his “reformed” state. This dependence on their local “madman” for levity implies that, whether or not they acknowledge it, they all feel some level of boredom and dissatisfaction with their daily lives, but may not know how to remedy this feeling and therefore write it off as insanity in *Don Quixote*. With this final shift, Cervantes appears to show the toll that social roles take on the individual, as well as society’s tendency to both criticize and derive gratification from derivations from such prescribed roles.

Like in *Don Quixote*, social roles, expectations, and their effects are interwoven throughout Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*. Though many characters, particularly Hamlet himself, grapple with aligning their assigned social roles with their real experiences, the play’s primary female characters deal with an additional layer of this struggle. It appears clear throughout the play that its women are expected to remain quiet, obedient, and un-opinionated. In a work that highlights introspection, the expectation of several of its central characters to remain selfless and silent appears incongruous with many of its central concerns. Shakespeare’s inclusion of this social role for his female characters seems to mirror the hypocrisy of this society; though women’s roles are integral for the functioning of society, they are not expected to voice their opinions about such a position.

Ophelia falls most prey to the Aristotelian conception of society, particularly that of benefit for the majority and the aim of the “political community...not at what is immediately useful, but at what is useful for the whole life” (Leotsini 26). She appears to unquestioningly follow the fickle demands of the males around her, and willingly puts herself through heartbreak at Hamlet’s hands multiple times simply because her father, brother, or king had asked her to. She is consistently lectured to about the course of action she should take on personal, highly emotional issues, and is never met with any concern for her feelings on such matters. David Leverenz claims throughout the play that Ophelia “is only valued for the roles that further other people’s plots” (302). This makes her a representation of the obedient, selfless citizen around whom Aristotle built his social model. However, her mental breakdown and eventual suicide suggest the taxing nature of such behavior. Because of the silent obedience that is expected of and delivered by her, her feelings are “misrepresented, not responded to, or acknowledged only through chastisement and repression all along” (Leverenz 300). Her “manic-depressive fit”, as many critics characterize it, is the only time Ophelia

appears most comfortable with expressing herself—only then does she clamor for attention, speak at length, and voice her own opinions (Leverenz 304). Though “her speech is nothing” and “[carries] but half sense”, it appears most revelatory of her true self (Shakespeare IV.V.8-9, IV.V.4-7). During this time, she recites poems, sings songs, and speaks kindly and of beautiful things; even as she drowns she “[chants] snatches of old lauds” (Shakespeare IV.VII.177). This reveals her true self to be one much happier and more carefree than the one that she presents throughout the majority of the play because of the oppression she experiences at the hands of her male counterparts and the toll it takes on her. Therefore, her escape from such a society, whether intended or not, frees her in a way she never could have been had she continued on in her normal state. With this, Shakespeare makes a statement against the perfect Aristotelian model by exemplifying an extreme version of the strain it can cause and the few and unfair methods for true escape it presents.

Unlike Ophelia, Queen Gertrude does break away from what is expected of her by marrying her deceased husband’s brother, a practice considered to be incestuous and sinful at the time. Though Shakespeare does not provide us with the reasoning behind her decision, deviating from the path expected of her both as a woman and as a ruler reflects an intentional exit from the social roles imposed upon her. Gertrude’s lack of commentary on her remarriage, even when met with criticism, appears loaded—since society restrained women from making such decisions for themselves and for their own purposes, any explanation other than a pragmatic one, which could have been offered up easily or by Claudius instead, would appear outside the realm of her social possibility. Even without a proffered reason, her choice is criticized constantly throughout, both in the form of gossip and direct chastisement by her own son, who attempts to demean her for her sexuality and her related choices, telling her to “confess [herself] to heaven, repent what’s past, avoid what is to come” and insultingly begs her to “go not to my uncle’s bed. Assume a virtue if you have it not” (Shakespeare III.IV.150-1, III.IV.160-1). While these criticisms eventually lead her to succumb to the guilt manifested in the “black and grained spots” of her soul, her presumably personal decision and commitment to it presents a contested but self-motivated deviation from the social norm assigned to her (Shakespeare III.IV.90).

Additionally, her treatment of her husband furthers her from this social standard. Instead of remaining the obedient, caring wife throughout, she refrains from telling King Claudius of Hamlet’s plan to kill him, and disobeys his direct order to not drink the wine that eventually kills her. This disobedience and apparent lack of appropriate

levels of wifely concern present the ultimate deviation from the norm for a female of the time and lead however indirectly, to her death. With this example, Shakespeare warns not only of the dangers of removing oneself from society in such a way, but also, by implication, those that stem from imposing such strict, unattainable social roles in the first place. Though these characters were expected to emotionally disadvantage themselves in order to better serve the majority, they instead fall prey to bodily harm when they attempted to exit a society constructed to hurt them from the outset.

Building on this conception that societies serve the benefit of the majority, Aristotle “maintained that friendship is the motive of society” and that “in order for human beings to flourish there must be mutual concern” (Leotsini 23, 33). While his theories work well with his imagined society of obedient, community and friendship minded citizens, they are in discordance with many examples of real societies. Aristotle fails to account for a fundamental flaw within such a theory—he does not account for the possibility of citizens who seek pursuits besides the highest forms of happiness and goodness. He reiterates the need for people to belong to a society, but neglects to make concessions for societies that contain such members and/or rulers and therefore become harmful to its citizens. Though one can presume such a society would not exist in Aristotle’s proposed world, since a majority-minded society could not fall out of favor with its members, his emphasis on people’s inherent need for community raises questions concerning the proper course of action in the case of a detrimental society.

Cervantes explores the effects of this deviation from the Aristotelian model by setting *Don Quixote* within a stifling society that we see throughout the novel vis-à-vis the narrow-minded citizens that consistently diagnose Don Quixote’s imaginative adventures as symptoms of insanity. We also get a better look at the political culture of this society with Don Quixote and Sancho Panza’s brief stay with a local duke and duchess (Cervantes II.XXX-LVII). The rulers themselves are extremely hypocritical and disingenuous; they oscillate between good hosts and cruel, self-centered pranksters who “were highly amused by their conversations with Don Quixote and Sancho Panza, which confirmed their intention to play hoaxes” (Cervantes 720). Additionally, their bestowal of a governorship upon Sancho Panza hints at an ill-run government; the willingness of these rulers to risk the well-being of their people at the hands of a highly unsuited governor for the sake of a joke speaks poorly of their priorities.

With these scenarios, “the theoretical idea of the perfect state was exposed by the realities of courtly corruption and tyrannical power” (Graf 136). Cervantes mirrors this with Don Quixote’s crusade to fight the injustices of the world around him—though

the villains he perceives exist only in books, “his determination to redress grievances, right wrongs, correct injustices, rectify abuses, and fulfill obligations” appears to be real and motivated by real concerns (Cervantes 30). Therefore, his fantastical adventures still make the case for breaking ties with a society that fosters such an unjust environment “both for the increase of his honor and for the common good”, as well as to remedy one’s society in hopes of returning to a reformed version of it instead of extricating oneself from it completely, as appears to be Don Quixote’s primary intention (Cervantes 27). This suggests a two-fold approach towards dealing with a detrimental society—one could either attempt to fix the state of the world around oneself and/or create a solid enough sense of oneself to bear the conditions one is placed in. Though Don Quixote sets out to do the former, he actually employs the latter approach, as he “had been conquered by another’s arms but... [is] the conqueror of himself, and that... is the best conquering you can wish for” (Cervantes 970). With this, Cervantes appears to suggest that the best deviation may be to live within oneself, instead of fully within one’s community as Aristotle suggests.

Shakespeare takes a more extreme approach to this exploration by placing *Hamlet* within an outwardly corrupt society—the titular character’s rightful rule is usurped by his murderous, incestuous uncle, who appears to have little interest in serving anyone other than himself. Even though their society appears highly corrupt, its preservation still appears to be the primary concern of many of its members. Many conversations regarding Hamlet’s “madness” and potential expulsion to England revolve around his ability to eventually rule, Hamlet’s will is regarded as “not his own” since “on his choice depends the safety and health of this whole state”, and the constant dismissal of Hamlet’s remaining grief reads as an attempt to seamlessly transition into the new order of the state (Shakespeare I.III.17–21). These repeated instances show the preoccupation with society itself within *Hamlet*, despite its corrupt state. This presents an awareness and embodiment of Aristotle’s principal belief that people are naturally social and political; despite the circumstances, the characters largely make a concerted effort to live within their community, presumably because they fear they will be worse off without it. Though they recognize the flaws within their current state, they focus on finding a way to live within or improve it, rather than doing away with or leaving it completely.

This essentiality is further reflected by the consequences with which any who attempt to leave the kingdom are met—Laertes leaves Denmark only to lose his father and the sanity of his sister; Hamlet’s journey to England is interfered with by pirates and very narrowly precedes his death; and Ophelia and Queen Gertrude die seemingly

due to their deviations from social expectations. Even at the play's close, when all of the corrupt members of this community lie dying, Hamlet uses his last breaths to name a successor and ensure the continuation of this kingdom. Despite the characters' frequent questioning of their personal place in society, all seem to fall prey to the overall importance of society for human existence and success. With this, Shakespeare appears to be acknowledging the significance of society in general, but supporting a change in one's position within it or of its rulers should either of these social facets present signs of corruption or potential harm.

As I have attempted to show, Cervantes and Shakespeare both explore the potential corrupting and stifling effects of a society that strictly adheres to Aristotle's models. Though both authors implicitly acknowledge the importance of society in general, as their characters attempt to live within and/or improve the communities they inhabit regardless of their corruption, they advocate for more focus on the individual than Aristotle presents. *Don Quixote* and *Hamlet* both exemplify the harm strict social roles can inflict upon people, and the temptation it may create for them to exit their communities. Overall, Cervantes and Shakespeare acknowledge the importance of Aristotle's primary theories while highlighting the need for social adjustments in societies that fail to account for the individualism of its members. ■

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MARÍA ANTONIETA RONDÓN ANZOLA

Dear Dr. Snedsam

The following documents are the records of a world delved in anachronism, in which the characters of literature are real and co-exist. Five such characters, in this best of all worlds, happen to be seeing the same psychiatrist. Here, we see their letters to that esteemed professional, as they each in their own way attempt to justify their madness—or, instead, declare that they wholly reject it. Through these letters, we see their feelings laid bare, and come to understand what it is they sense from the people surrounding them. They write about what they are doing to help themselves, and by writing, help themselves in another way.

Dr. Snedsam does not write back.

Dr. Snedsam only reads.

One might imagine him sitting comfortable, aloof and silent, in his armchair, his round glasses perched on his nose, and a cigar clamped between his fingers.

Either that, or picture him as an absence, a blankness in the room. For truly, isn't it as likely that Dr. Snedsam does not exist at all? In this case, he would only exist as an idea, or more likely, as a vessel, a synonym or pseudonym for the general concept of a "shrink."

If one wishes to write a letter to express one's emotions and worries, Dr. Snedsam is as good a receptacle as any to receive correspondence. He's always available, after all. Though, one mustn't expect to get an answer back. But then, why should all we do be aimed at the response that results from what we do?

Whether Dr. Snedsam exists does not lessen the trouble behind each of these five letters, and the disturbance in heart or mind of those who wrote them. It is a matter of preference, whatever the reader decides.

A bibliographical note. References to *Hamlet* are taken from the Signet edition, and to Rembrandt, from the biographical work, *Being an Account of the Last Years and the Death of One Rembrandt Harmenszoon Van Rijn* by Hendrik Willem van Loon, 1930.

- AR

It is I, Doctor—Hamlet of Denmark.

Horatio insisted I write to you. He is a peculiar sir. He believes if I write about my troubled thoughts they shall vanish. What a piece of work is a man! Must I trust that in writing my heart will forget its torments?

Dr. Snedsam, I saw my father's ghost yesterday. Have you seen a ghost before? I swear I saw it, and it spoke to me, and now I worry about what I must do. My mother would not believe me if I told her I saw her husband's ghost. I'm sorry—the ghost of the father of her son might be more appropriate. Who would believe me, except for my sweet friend Horatio?

Although, it is true he saw it himself.

I must now find the truth about the matter of my father's death: my father's assassination.

My uncle and my mother seem to have forgotten about simple decency. Claudius calls my mother his sometimes sisters now his queen. Disgusting incest is. And is this not incestuous?

Yet again, I am the madman. The one who saw a ghost, the one who is upset by loss, not the one who displays amnesia. Nay.

Dr. Snedsam, if you please, I will let you know what results of my plan. I will play something like the murder of my father before mine uncle, I'll observe his looks and if he but blanches, I know my course.

I must now resume with the rest of mine own day. O, vengeance! How it can tire one's soul.

—H

Estimado Dr. Snedsam,

It is a pleasure to write to you on this candid morning. I must confess that for a moment I did not have a clue who you were. I found my squire Sancho Panza writing a letter to you, and it took me days to finally remember who you were.

Now I write to you, my old friend. You must want to join our cause! Since it is clear that although I did not know who you were, you were aware who Don Quijote de la Mancha was. That is why you wrote to my squire, is it not?

Well, my congratulations, Dr. Snedsam! I do wish to meet with you in the days to come. And when we encounter each other, I wish you could explain to me what it is you are a doctor of. I myself have many tales regarding what Sancho and I have seen in our travels.

You would be most surprised to discover that we have visited many castles and even fought giants. As you must also know, my love for my lady Dulcinea del Toboso is what keeps me going in my travels. She, and my horse Rocinante, of course.

I do believe we can work together on different projects, for the better of España!

As it is written, it shall be done, Dr. Snedsam. I wish not to delay you from your daily tasks, nor do I wish to be delayed from mine.

*With my gratitude,
Don Quijote de la Mancha*

Doktor Snedsam:

I have thought about writing to you in the last days because my new life in Amsterdam is making me question what I am doing.

As you know, I find pleasure in painting myself, not because I am egocentric or arrogant, but because it is me whom I portray in those self-portraits, the way I want to be portrayed. This means that I (the content of the painting) cannot be let down or feel offended by the work of the painter.

I am my own judge when it comes to my self-portraits. That freedom from responsibility soothes me. When I paint for others, I fear what they might say about my work. Did Dante feel this way? Did Michelangelo fear the estimation of the Pope, as he lay beneath that ceiling?

I can't paint the way they want me to paint, and they know that too. Of course you will say that I ought to be practical and ought to try to paint the way they want me to paint. Well, I will tell you a secret. I have tried and I have tried very hard, but I can't do it. I just can't do it! And that is why I am just a little crazy. But not as crazy as they may think!

Paintings are supposed to move the people that see them, but also move the man that makes them. In the same way, paintings should be dynamic (oh how dynamic!) and not static.

Maybe this is just a thought. Vague and static.

But I know I am just different.

With Best Regards,

Rembrandt

To Dr. Snedsam -

In one of the villages Don Quixote and I visited, someone told me about you.

Apparently, I am free to write about anything. Is that true?

Well, I only want to say I miss my family, but it is clear to me that I must do this for them. Get on with this journey around España, acting as if I am the squire of an old, old knight.

Fighting windmills as if they were giants... Can you believe it?

My master is not a madman, though. I feel he is only trying to get by. I am glad he has me around as his contention wall. However, it is because I have stuck with him that people believe ME to be mad. ME?

I am only doing what I must do, cómo se dice, para el mejor, for the better.

Plus, if all turns out well, I will be rewarded. Maybe with noble property, as my master says.

He is looking at me right now. He is probably surprised I know how to write.

He is an unusual person, for sure.

I must end this letter now, before he asks whether this quill is a dying bird or not.

Sancho Pancho

FROM THE DESK OF OPHELIA

Hamlet told me about you, Dr. Snedsam. I have only now resolved to write because singing does not help me anymore.

What am I to do with Hamlet's words of so sweet breath composed?

Mine own father is not at home anymore. He is dead and gone. Mine own sweet Hamlet has vanished. He is gone. And will he not come again?

I cannot choose but weep. If I speak, I weep. If I sing, I weep. To think they should lay him in the ground, alone.

At which hour I saw mine own brother Laertes; I believe he thought I lost my wits. I was singing, as I keep telling you. I was singing. Because I know he will never come again. Mine own father, mine own Hamlet. Both of them or just one of them?

I wish I had them together, but I have lost them together. Does mine own Hamlet know my father died? O, mine own willow tree!

Mine own only company!

Mine own tree protects me, and when I sing, it is not disturbed. It understands. They do not. Do they have friends, Dr. Snedsam? I wish to sing now, I will stop at this. Pray, love, remember... pray, love, remember, sing.

Up, up, up.

up to mine own willow tree

Reports on Recent Science

GHISLAINE DE BREE:

Why Do We Get Depressed?

My foothold is tenon'd and mortis'd in granite,
I laugh at what you call dissolution,
And I know the amplitude of time.

- Whitman, *Song of Myself*

According to findings by the Department of Health and Human Services, 6.7% of adult Americans will experience depression in their lives. (SAMHSA) A number as high as this should bring about the end of the stigma associated with this mental illness, but seemingly our society has not yet been able to normalize it. This hazy view of depression within society seems to echo the scientific understanding of the disease as the source, or reason for, depression is not yet completely clear. Research is still being done and new treatments are being looked into, such as increasing quality neurons rather than focusing on serotonin levels. Improved technologies have provided a greater consensus as to how the illness takes place in the body. The disease manifests itself internally but the psychological symptoms can directly affect a sufferer's physicality, as fatigue, feelings of worthlessness or suicide, and insomnia can cause dramatic weight gain or loss, along with a lack of energy. The discussion of mental health within, and outside, the scientific community is extraordinarily important because it is clear that societal attitudes towards diseases such as depression directly affect sufferers.

In the early years of the mental health discussion it was believed that depression was simply a chemical imbalance directly linked to a lack of serotonin in the brain, because when patients were given serotonin boosters their moods increased. However, this simple explanation does not do justice to the complexity of the disease, as there are "millions, even billions, of chemical reactions that make up the dynamic system that is responsible for mood, perceptions, and how you experience life." (Harvard) Faults in the nerve cell communication system, such as oversensitive receptors, result in the lack of certain neurotransmitters, such as serotonin, and these miscommunications



can seriously affect mood. Therefore, when serotonin levels are increased symptoms are minimized. Advances in neuroimaging techniques in the last two decades have allowed researchers to take a better look at the brain chemistry of depression patients and come to conclusions about their cell connections. In the 1990s, the hippocampus, a part of the brain which is vital for memory and emotion, became a major focus. Yvette Sheline's 1995 research at Washington University suggested "the possibility that depression per se is associated with structural changes in the hippocampus, perhaps reflecting neuronal loss." (Sheline et al.) The paper suggests that hippocampal size was 9-13% smaller in women suffering from depression compared to women who were not depressed. It also became clear that the longer a person was depressed, the smaller their hippocampus; this is believed to be the result of stress inhibiting the generation of new neurons. This leads to the more recent neurogenesis theory of depression, wherein it is believed that rebuilding healthy neurons will lead to improvements of mood.

Currently, the disease is still mainly treated by SSRIs (selective serotonin re-uptake inhibitors) such as fluoxetine, more commonly known by its market name Prozac. SSRIs increase serotonin levels, and therefore mood, by reducing the neurotransmitters' reabsorption. (Carlat) There is a lot of talk within the scientific community about a treatment that would directly affect neuronal growth. However, SSRIs have been suggested to perform minimal neurogenesis. Researcher René Hen tested this by comparing the impacts of Prozac on two sets of depressed mice. One set had no other medical issues whereas the other set did not have the potential for neurogenesis. The experiment showed that only the mice without neurogenesis issues could recover from depression, and this clearly implies that neurogenesis is required to recover from depression. (Sahay et al.) Perhaps if a medication could be created to aid neurogenesis within the brains of depressed individuals, the disease would be more manageable.

Although we are able to understand the neurological happenings behind depression, it seems that its causes are still up for debate. The disease does transpire internally but whether it is entirely endogenous can be questioned. Most arguments for a genetic root seem to suggest susceptibility instead of predisposition; for example, a person may be genetically vulnerable if their neurological system is prone to responding incorrectly to stress, which could easily trigger depression. Our massive genotype means that pinpointing a specific gene is extraordinarily difficult; however, in 2003, researcher Terrie E. Moffitt discovered a serotonin transporter gene (5-HTT) with a variant that when expressed led to higher likelihood of depression. (Duenwald) One allele of this gene is inherited from each parent, and it can take two forms: short or long, with the

longer being a more efficient transporter. The presence of the shorter allele does not directly lead to depression but instead increases the risk thereof, particularly if a person is homozygous for the short allele. It is clear that this internal vulnerability needs external stimulation in order to trigger depression, so depression cannot be exclusively endogenous or exogenous.

An interesting way to look at the idea of a depression gene is through the perspective of natural selection. This somewhat animalistic theory suggests survival of the fittest, and by this school of thought the 5-HTT gene should be diminishing within society. Surely susceptibility to depression is a negative thing, and by Darwinian theory it should be phased out of the human genome. An oversimplification of this idea could suggest that suicide rates in those carrying the short allele should be higher, therefore reducing the number of carriers. However, in 2009, Paul W. Andrews and J. Anderson Thomson, Jr. published an argument for an adaptive advantage that comes from depression. (Andrew and Thomson) Their argument, known as the analytic rumination (AR) hypothesis, suggests that depressed people are more introspective about their issues, as they are not distracted by external stimuli as easily as those not depressed, and therefore can become better analyzers of their own complex problems. Interestingly enough, arguments have been made for Darwin himself reaping the benefits of depression as Jonah Lehrer of *The New York Times* suggested that “For Darwin, depression was a clarifying force, focusing the mind on its most essential problems.” (Lehrer) A depressed person’s rumination seems to bring poetic justice to a disease that has a very bad reputation, although this positive impact does not outweigh the woe of the illness.

Winston Churchill referred to his depressive spouts as visits from a black dog, and there is an elegance in his ability to dissociate himself from his disease. Depression demands to be taken seriously as its complexity seems to make it more than just an illness, as Churchill suggested. The physical impact that the disease has on parts of the brain, such as the hippocampus, suggests that the disease is a double edged sword, as it also damages a person’s psyche. Even though treatment has been proven to help, researchers still have a long way to go, both in terms of neurogenesis and genetic comprehension, in order to bring true justice to sufferers. ■

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RACHEL CHMIELINSKI:

New Gene Editing Method Inspires Hope and Skepticism

There has been incredible growth in the world of gene modification in the past few years. This is largely due to the development of the CRISPR Type II gene editing system, a mechanism which allows scientists to manipulate and modify the DNA of living cells. (Regalado 12/15) CRISPR uses an enzyme, called cas9, to make a precisely targeted, double-stranded cut in the DNA. The cut is so precise because it is guided by an RNA molecule, referred to as a "guide RNA". This molecule matches up with a specific and unique sequence of DNA. (Bassett) By selecting the desired sequence of RNA, researchers are able to slice the DNA at any desired point. This level of precision was not possible before CRISPR.

Interestingly, CRISPR was not *created* by scientists; it always existed. CRISPR was originally observed in bacteria and was a defense mechanism against viruses. (Ad-gene) Scientists noticed that there was a single DNA sequence that was continually repeated, and different sequences between the repeated ones. They named this pattern "clustered regularly interspaced short palindromic repeats"—hence, CRISPR.

In its original form, CRISPR defends against viruses by hanging on to small portions of the code of dangerous viruses, making it easier to identify and fight against

them if they invade the body. Cas9 would also play a part in this process with its precise slicing abilities, by cutting up the foreign DNA to destroy it. (Regalado 3/15) After years of development, scientists have learned to modify CRISPR for general gene modification purposes. Since the guide RNA matches only with the sequence the scientist wants to target, only the damaged DNA is targeted for removal and replacement by a normal copy. Thus CRISPR is the most efficient and effective form of gene modification to date.

Scientists are only scratching the surface of the potential uses and benefits of CRISPR. These include, but are not limited to: lengthening human lifespans while slowing down aging; combatting world hunger by editing genes in farm crops to allow them to grow in a greater variety of climates; and curing diseases, such as Huntington's disease. (Patterson) Throughout this past year, researchers in China have been using CRISPR to manipulate genes in dogs and other animals. They even experimented with genes by the name of myostatins in beagles, making the dogs more muscular. (ibid.)

While CRISPR specializes in destroying harmful genes, the goal is to replace these genes with normal and healthy copies, according to Dr. Bence Gyorgy, a research fellow at Massachusetts General Hospital, in an interview with CNN. CRISPR can seem like the answer to all problems, from disease to aging. However, there are ethical questions raised by this powerful tool. CRISPR has become so controversial, that a three-day summit was held in Washington, D.C., to discuss the impact and responsibility surrounding this new discovery. Attendees of the summit included scientists, the president's science adviser and policymakers. "The overriding question is when, if ever, we will want to use gene editing to change human inheritance," summit chair David Baltimore of Caltech said in his opening statement. (Achenbach)

One of the main arguments against using CRISPR is simply that it is too much too soon. This technology is still very new, and the impact on future generations is unknown and unpredictable. The potential of experimenting with something this powerful, with potential consequences that can be passed on to later generations, is a terrifying thought to many. CRISPR research must be done responsibly and ethically. But with all the capabilities it seems to have, who will be in charge of making sure we do not go too far? The biological systems of the human body are extremely complex; researchers have no idea what the true effect of tinkering with the human genome would actually be. Gene editing has the best of intentions, but intentions, and even early successes, do not provide any assurance that there will not be long-term ill effects.

Moreover, the capability of gene editing to prevent disease also comes the with

potential for editing for the purpose of cosmetic choice. The concern is that parents would want to use this technology to “edit” their children to be better versions of themselves, before they are even born. Given the lengths parents will go to to give their children a head start in this world, it is not an unreasonable fear.

This powerful new technology presents tremendous potential, as well as significant ethical concerns. The scientific community will need to balance experimenting with this technology with restraint. It only takes a few people driven by profit and ambition to have serious consequences on future generations. The ethical issues must be confronted openly and transparently, with everyone holding each other accountable. ■

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MEGHANA DWARAKA:

The Effect of Living Beings on Climate

It is a well-known fact that climate has a direct impact on life. For example, rising global temperatures are causing the Edith's checkerspot butterflies to move northward, in search of cooler climates. (Than) Corals are becoming more heat tolerant and many are now able to survive in hot water pools. (Marris) We see instances of living organisms adapting to climate change on a daily basis. But does climate also adapt to inhabitation? If so, is it possible that living organisms themselves created conditions that make our planet habitable?

In 1953, two landless laborers, Thimmakka and Chikkanna, planted hundreds of banyan trees alongside the highway connecting Kudur and Hulikal in Karnataka, India. In that year, the annual temperature range of this region was approximately 20°C to 44°C and the total annual rainfall recorded was 792.2 mm. At present, the trees have grown to their full size. Now the recorded temperature of this region ranges from 15°C to 35°C (Yr.no) and the annual precipitation has risen to 877.24 mm. (Ravindranath) This fall in temperature and rise in precipitation is opposite to the climate change trends demonstrated by all other regions of Karnataka where temperatures are rising and precipitation is falling.

In the above example, the lower temperatures and higher precipitation near Kudur can both be attributed to the banyan trees. Trees have a low albedo—the measure of “how well the earth’s surface reflects solar energy” (NSIDC) that enables them to absorb sunlight and therefore cool their surroundings. Moreover, in order to carry out photosynthesis, they absorb carbon dioxide (a greenhouse gas) from the atmosphere, which helps reduce the temperature further. Transpiration (the loss of water vapor through leaves) by trees boosts the formation of more clouds, which results in higher rainfall. It is therefore evident that the vegetation of a region plays a significant role in regulating its climate.

Interestingly, it has been observed that when a region’s original vegetation is supplanted by a different plant type, the climate of the region changes in response. In the 1990s, the cotton fields in most of Georgia were being destroyed by boll weevils and were eventually replaced by pine tree forests. The change in vegetation attributed to the subsequent cooling of the region, according to many climatologists. (NCSCO) This idea of biological organisms altering climate has been demonstrated in a more scientific manner through a computer simulation called Daisyworld.

When this simulated world is populated by white daisies, the temperature of the planet lowers because white daisies reflect light. Contrarily, when it is populated by black daisies, the temperature increases because black daisies absorb all of the light. However, when the temperature of this planet gets too high or too low, the daisies are unable to survive and die. This means that plants can only control climate within the constraints of the environmental conditions required for their survival.

The examples of Karnataka and Georgia are not proper scientific evidence because it is based more on observation than experimental results. Therefore, variable factors have not been controlled. For instance, the lower temperature in Georgia may also have been due to the cool winds blowing through that region in that year. It must also be recognized that there have been studies that have shown that, as the quantity of carbon dioxide in the air increases, the carbon dioxide uptake of plants does not necessarily rise. Therefore, plants may not be efficient regulators of climate by themselves.

Animals also have a substantial impact on climate due to their biological processes and physical activities. The Daisyworld experiment was extended to include animals such as foxes, rabbits and other species. Temperature regulation significantly improved when a larger number of species interacted with each other: “the system was robust and stable even when perturbed.” (Lovelock 215)

Earth’s climate is not only influenced by the bigger forms of life, but also by microscopic organisms. A study conducted by marine biologists of University of California, San Diego demonstrates that “ocean microbes can influence cloud brightness, which in turn helps determine if solar energy is absorbed on Earth’s surface or reflected away from it, and thus influences temperature.” (Iacurci)

Furthermore, recent evidence shows that the Southern Ocean, the cloudiest region on Earth, owes its clouds to microscopic plants called phytoplankton, which live in the ocean: “A new study has measured how particles and gases emitted by these creatures enter the atmosphere,” (Gramling) and “act as nuclei around which clouds form.” (ibid.) An international research team found three-billion-year-old microfossils of phytoplankton, (Messer) which suggests that these organisms were living in the oceans three billion years ago. This implies that cycles of cloud formation and precipitation came into existence at the same time oxidative photosynthesis came into existence. Hence, the link between biological activity and climate might have actually originated when very basic forms of life emerged.

In addition, research indicates that “microbes have been absorbing and releasing greenhouse gases ever since they first evolved in the ocean more than 3.5 billion years

ago.” (Zimmer) Microbes, especially the ones involved in carbon and nitrogen cycles, decompose organic matter which releases carbon dioxide as a result. This has interesting implications on the impact of microscopic organisms on climate. Since the luminosity of the sun during the time of its formation 4.567 billion years ago was only 70% of its current luminosity, the earth should have initially been frozen solid. (CC III lecture notes) However, there is strong evidence that the Earth was warm enough to have liquid water 3.6 billion years ago. Scientists believe that this warm temperature of the earth was due to the presence of greenhouse gases, which may have been released by primitive microbes as described above.

Furthermore, it has been observed that these primitive microbes are highly adaptable and can survive even in the most extreme temperatures. Therefore, it may be fair to hypothesize that microscopic organisms emerged when the Earth initially had an extreme climate; these organisms then created greenhouse gases that warmed the planet and created an atmosphere favorable to the evolution of life. Although there is uncertainty as to how the first living organisms actually came into existence, it is strongly supported they played a role in creating the conditions for evolution and the perpetuation of life.

This hypothesis is in accordance with the Gaia hypothesis, which suggests that “the organic and inorganic components of Earth have evolved together as a single living, self-regulating system,” and that the Earth’s “living system has automatically controlled global temperature, atmospheric content, ocean salinity, and other factors, that maintains its own habitability.” (GaiaTheory.org) The examples outlined in this paper demonstrate this relationship perfectly—the microscopic organisms are linked to greenhouse gases just as plants are linked to the regulation of carbon dioxide.

The hypothesis that living organisms have helped shaped the climatic conditions necessary for survival, however, has many limitations and uncertainties. Firstly, this hypothesis still does not explain how the very first living systems originated. It is commonly believed that the very first organisms “alive” were very tiny, basic systems that later evolved into larger and more complex forms. But a titanic number of such tiny beings would have to be present to raise the temperature of the entire planet to levels necessary for liquid water to exist.

It is, in fact, easier to believe and prove that life originated due to pre-existing favorable conditions. Moreover, there is also a lot of uncertainty regarding the processes that these primitive organisms may have used to produce greenhouse gases that warmed the earth and made it habitable. Thus, the view that living organisms them-

selves created habitable conditions on earth might be too optimistic. However, it is safe to say that climate and life are inter-dependent, and have helped shape each other over millennia, to produce the conditions of the world in which we live today. ■

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MORGAN RICHARDS

Bronzino's *Allegory of Venus and Cupid*: Poem or Painting?

Re-discovery, renewed appreciation and the ultimate celebration of humanity and the innate beauty of the individual as well as his creations are tirelessly used descriptions for the Renaissance, countless rephrased in the attempts to portray the artistic and cultural peak of this era. Taking the old and making it new, the classics became a central theme of art and literature in the Renaissance. However, the art and writing of the Renaissance are not as coherent and homogenous as they appear. One of the deviations in forms of expressions spurred by the High Renaissance was a style referred to as Mannerism. While the art of the Renaissance is typified by naturalism, beauty and balance, Mannerist art can be highly stylized and alienating. One of the most striking examples is *An Allegory of Venus and Cupid* (1545) by the Mannerist painter Agnolo di Cosimo, known as Bronzino, which depicts Venus in an amorous encounter with her son Cupid surrounded by several figures of unclear identity and significance. The mystery and controversy that continues to surround this painting for nearly five centuries after its creation is an outcome of layered messages, some reflect traditional Renaissance forms but others are more subversive. These complicated and enigmatic aspects of his most famous work parallel Bronzino's life and creative output, both as a painter and as a poet, exemplifying the struggle to distinguish between appearance and reality in Renaissance art and literature.

On a cursory level, Bronzino led a typical and relatively quiet life for a Florentine Renaissance intellectual and artist. Bronzino's literary pursuits began in the form of poetry writing during the peak of the High Renaissance. As a novice, Bronzino emulated Petrarchan lyrical poetry, whose subject matter commonly focused on purity and unattainable beauty of the individual. (Parker) In addition, Bronzino's lyric verses commented on the pursuit of artistic creation. Further expanding the confines of what it means to be a conventional Renaissance artist, Bronzino was well known amongst his contemporaries for these writings, as well as his art. As a painter, Bronzino was part of the apprentice and tutelage tradition of artistry and craft in the Western part of the world during the Renaissance. Pontormo, a renowned Italian Mannerist painter became an active advisor for the aspiring youth. (Pilliod) He formed a close paternalistic



An Allegory of Venus and Cupid. 1545, oil on canvas. The National Gallery, London.

bond with his advisor. Through this mentorship and the weight of his own accomplishments, Bronzino's was later accepted into a society of artists who strayed away from the reserved, classical idealism and celebrated the sensuous, luxurious "refinement" of the Mannerist style. These select few formed the core of the learned society titled the "Accademia Fiorentina" in which Pontormo was also a member. (Parker) Bronzino was well read and versed in the classics; he knew the major authors of antiquity as well as Dante and other notable Italian writers. (Gaston) In these ways, Bronzino's upbringing, educational foundation and working life was typical for a Renaissance artist in Florence in the mid-16th century.

Bronzino's apparent conventionality, however, is deceiving and obscures a more subversive set of activities that characterized both his life and work. In addition to his lyrical poetry, Bronzino also wrote in the burlesque style, *rime in burla*, characterized by its satirical verses and lewd central themes. Bronzino's bawdy poems were well known among his contemporaries and associates, a select group of artists and intelligentsia reputed for their subtle provocation. Even in this company, Bronzino was known for his spirited nature and propensity to act as a renegade, causing him to be expelled from his learned society for many years. In regards to his personal life, he never married, yet, in the wake of his close friend's death, he became the patron and father figure of his friend's family. (Parker) Despite the appearance of this conventional extended family, several historians have concluded that Bronzino was homosexual and likely had a long-term romantic relationship with the Italian humanist, Benedetto Varchi. (Gaston) Bronzino's transgressive tendencies and his delight in playing the sly provocateur need to be incorporated in the analysis of his painting.

Just as Bronzino wrote reverently and irreverently, his painting often coupled these two modes of expression. One of his more widely recognized artworks, *An Allegory of Venus and Cupid*, exemplifies the highly stylized approach of the Mannerists. This approach features elongated and often distorted figures, which transform the graceful and naturalistic forms characteristic of Michelangelo and other Renaissance painters and sculptors. (Kleiner) The *Allegory of Venus* also embodies Bronzino's trademark twists by depicting classical nudes wrapped into sinuous, sensuous figures and placed into plot lines that leave the voyeur questioning the artist's intention and more importantly the painting's purpose. The focal point rests on the figure of Venus, whose pose overlaps and intermingles with that of her son, Cupid. These characters are drawn from classical literature, consistent with the Renaissance's focus on reworking material from antiquity, but rather than cheerful cherubs and displays of chaste beauty or maternal

benevolence, Bronzino eroticises the forms. Art historian Robert Gaston emphasizes that this “imaginative recasting of the familiar personages of poetic tradition constituted a large part of Renaissance originality.”

The positioning of the central figures creates an unease in the pictorial narrative for the viewer, who would be aware of the incestuous relationship between Cupid, now depicted as a teenager, and his mother. Further insinuating sexual deviancy is Venus’s protruding tongue, and Cupid’s fondling of her right breast. Venus’s tongue recalls the serpent and Eve’s fall and corruption of Adam, a correspondence that is reinforced by Venus’s identifying apple, won at the Judgment of Paris. (Gaston) The theme of betrayal and deceit is amplified by the presence of two masks lain besides Venus’s feet. (Bosch) Therefore, Bronzino uses several classical motifs and imbues them with sexual energy and lascivious undertones while sending messages that can be read on different levels.

These ambiguous and multi-layered meanings are amplified when the viewer considers the other elements in the painting. Where the figures in the forefront are clearly identified, the surrounding characters and their significance are more difficult to discern. (Bosch; Barolsky) As identified in textual records describing the painting by one of Bronzino’s contemporaries, personifications of Time, Folly, Envy and Deceit interact behind the illuminated nudes. Although one could most likely assign each entity to the animated figures based on their action, expression, and presentation, there has been considerable debate over these assignments, making it impossible to construct a concrete narrative from the painting. Perhaps the most puzzling character is the hybrid girl-monster, who is the only figure in the painting that looks directly at the viewer. (Gaston) In contrast to her forthright gaze, the remainder of this character is obscured, but the viewer can see the scales that form her lower body, again referencing the serpent. The chimera holds a honeycomb in one of her outstretched hands, while the other holds a hooked barb. These objects represent, on one hand, a cloyingly sweet and decadent taste of amorous love, but the other hand holds an allusion to punishment and the temptation of Eve in the representation of the girl’s figure morphed with that of a snake, frozen in unearthly contortions. By hiding the creature-like hybrid in one of the furthest visual planes of the piece, the viewer sees that she is ever present, watching, commenting on the surreptitious nature of sin and wantonness. The *Allegory of Venus* is extravagant and airs on the side of ostentatious, yet it arguably cautions us regarding the dangers of our inner desires. In this way, Bronzino’s art ventures beyond the limits of most Renaissance art, which functions to celebrate humanity through the

demonstration of the capabilities and craft of the artisan himself.

Bronzino's duality of disciplines, as a writer and a painter, places him amongst a distinguished few, including the famed Michelangelo, whom he emulated. Scholars have argued that it is essential to understand Bronzino's motivations and sensibilities as a writer and painter in order to appreciate and interpret his art fully. One key idea advanced by Gaston is the importance of the competition and communication between the two mediums for Bronzino. Gaston points to the practice of *ekphrasis*, "the rhetorical description of landscape, architecture or works of visual art" as a motivating force for Bronzino. (Gaston) Rather than looking for visual antecedents to understand the *Allegory of Venus*, Gaston maintains that the painting represents the artist's attempt to eclipse the expressive capabilities of poets—in essence, *ekphrasis* turned on its head. Effectively, Bronzino paints with a poet's sensibilities. This analysis explains why efforts to locate Bronzino's work in the simple evolution of Renaissance painting are frustratingly incomplete. Gaston explains, for example, that comparisons to a superficially similar painting by Michelangelo are inappropriate:

[Bronzino] eschews close imitation of Michelangelo's *Venus and Cupid*, itself a *risposta* to the classical and vernacular love-poem, because visual originality is crucial to his struggle with the vividness of poetry. (Gaston)

The origins of Bronzino's ideas and representations in the *Allegory* must be viewed in the context of literary ideas as well as visual traditions.

Related ideas are advanced by the Italian Renaissance scholar Deborah Parker, who argues that it is necessary to probe even deeper into Bronzino's poetry to understand his painting. Specifically, she argues that Bronzino's simultaneous participation in two poetic traditions—the lyrical Petrarchan and "*le rime in burla*"—provide the necessary lens through which to decipher his puzzling representations in the *Allegory*:

... his burlesque and lyric poetry present very different worlds. The lyrics project an idyllic realm of noble sentiments, while the capitoli portray a carnivalesque world in which nothing is sacred. The lyric poems show Bronzino to be a part of a gifted coterie" and "carefully constructs an amiable social community" [while] "the other blithely deflates established norms and institutions. (Parker)

Parker contends that Bronzino's innovation was his mixture of the sacred and the

profane in a single work. In the case of the *Allegory of Venus*, the sacred elements include the classical players and the sublime beauty of their depiction. These elements are juxtaposed with the profanity of the incestuous interplay of Venus and Cupid and the foreboding of retribution, as well as the puzzling yet playful hints directed towards the audience. By fusing the sublime and the degraded, Bronzino asserts that reality encompasses both. That his life mirrored his work in reflecting manufactured refinement alloyed with raw and base complexities makes this message more compelling. ■

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MATTHEW MOON

Two Philosophers Walk Into a Bar

INTERIOR BAR—NIGHT. *The room is dimly lit, loud with the noise of merrymaking late on a Saturday night. Almost everyone is absorbed in their own conversations, so only one man in the corner notices two new patrons enter, arguing: THOMAS and JEAN.*

THOMAS: Oh yes, beautiful Jean. I'm sure this environment will be perfect for our discussions, won't it? A cesspool practically festering with malcontent and primal urges. Amazing choice of destination.

JEAN: For God's sake Thomas, I'm not sure what you expect of me! You could've said no to coming tonight!

THOMAS: Of course not, that would be rude. Do you think me a brute?

JEAN: No, no. You're simply confused. And I have undertaken to set you straight, haven't I? So, what will it take?

The two stop walking in the middle of the room. THOMAS looks away from JEAN and his eyes land on the lone man watching them from the corner, coincidentally the only place with open seats. A smile crosses his face, and he turns back to JEAN.

THOMAS: How about a seat first? I think I see the perfect spot.

THOMAS leads the way as the two walk over to the table. The man watches them, sipping his beer, and gives a slight smile when they stop in front of him. His name is LEWIS.

LEWIS: Hi there, how's it going?

THOMAS quickly sits down and leans forward with his forearms on the table.

THOMAS: I believe you could be of assistance to myself and my companion.

JEAN, surprised by the quick progression, stammers a bit then cuts THOMAS off.

JEAN: My word Tom, have a little decency!

JEAN leans forward and stretches a hand toward Lewis.

JEAN: Hello, my name is Jean and this is my good friend, Thomas. We noticed the open seats and thought we'd ask to join you.

LEWIS takes her hand and shakes it, then gestures to the chair beside him.

LEWIS: I'm Lewis, nice to meet you. Please, take a seat.

JEAN smiles broadly and seats himself at the table. THOMAS has been leaning forward eagerly the whole time, waiting for the exchange to end.

JEAN: Splendid! Waitress, a round for the table!

A WAITRESS nods and moves to bring drinks for the table as the three settle in. THOMAS quickly returns to his previous request.

THOMAS: So, are you willing to lend your services?

LEWIS looks at THOMAS and raises his eyebrows.

LEWIS: Well I suppose that would depend what services you require, friend.

THOMAS: As an example and arbiter of course, what other kind of service could I possibly be requesting?

JEAN: Now Tom, don't you think we should get to know our new friend a bit first before we go placing that kind of responsibility on him?

THOMAS: Nonsense. He's a man like any other, therefore he's as valid an arbiter as any other. He'll be fine.

JEAN: Well, if we do this and one of us convinces this good fellow of our shared point of view, will you accept it even if it ends up not being the same as yours?

THOMAS: Absolutely! That kind of willingness is the only thing keeping us from each other's throats. "I authorize and give up my right of governing myself to this man" (Hobbes 109) in the hopes that he "distribute to every man his own" (95).

Surely you can endorse that.

THOMAS looks intently at LEWIS: .

THOMAS: So, the way of it will be that Jean and I will both present our viewpoint for your mediation. You shall decide which of the two is the more valid, and we will both be bound to this decision. In this way, justice will be dispersed and a true conclusion will be reached. Do you understand?

LEWIS looks between THOMAS and JEAN slowly, considering the proposition. He shrugs his shoulders.

LEWIS: Sure, not like I have anything better to do.

THOMAS: Indeed. Who shall begin?

LEWIS: How about you, since you seem so eager?

THOMAS: Fine.

THOMAS shakes his shoulders and settles back in his chair.

THOMAS: I believe man is a violent animal, tempered to civility only by the confines we place on ourselves for our own self-interest. Government, society, commonwealth, whatever term you prefer, exists primarily to keep us from killing each other—a state that only persists under the assumption that both you and I have given up the right to take each other's lives. All subsequent social convention and decency derives itself from this original covenant, to the extent that any individual man is separated from the state of nature only by the things which he takes as the normal trappings of society. Therefore, the commonwealth, though it requires the forfeiture of some individual rights, works to the benefit of all by pacifying man into civilized society.

THOMAS closes his eyes and smiles, confident that he has said all that needs to be said.

LEWIS looks at JEAN and motions for him to begin, not saying a word. She sighs.

JEAN: Lewis, let me ask you this. Are you happy living under the laws your government places on you?

LEWIS: They can get abrasive from time to time.

JEAN: And have you ever felt that your fellow man possesses a barely contained

bloodlust writhing just beneath the smile he displays as you pass on the street?
 LEWIS: Not particularly, no. Although Old Man Smithers hasn't been happy with my lawn care lately.

JEAN: But on the whole, you don't feel as though your life is protected only by those laws that have been placed over you. I'll tell you why. It's because people aren't like Tom said they are. They're generally compassionate and concerned for the welfare of themselves and their fellow man. If man were to live in nature, they wouldn't all be killing and pillaging, they'd be building homes and making families, content in their own well-being. So, "I would very much like someone to explain to me: what kind of misery can there be for a free being whose heart is at peace and whose body is in good health?" (Rousseau 50).

LEWIS: I couldn't tell you.

JEAN: Exactly, Lewis. And yet, in this civilized world we live in, we see misery on every corner. Downtrodden men and women broken by the very system they've created. You see, "they all ran to chain themselves, in the belief that they secured their liberty," however, "society and laws, which gave new fetters to the weak and new forces to the rich, irretrievably destroyed natural liberty" (Rousseau 79). Government may be inevitable, Lewis, but that does not mean it is for the best.

THOMAS: That's all very pretty Jean, but "eloquent speakers are prone to ambition; for eloquence seemeth wisdom, both to themselves and others" (Hobbes 60). Tell me this about a man Lewis, if Jean is right: "what opinion he has of his fellow subjects, when he rides armed; of his fellow citizens, when he locks his doors; and of his children, and servants, when he locks his chests" (Hobbes 77).

JEAN: Oh please, Thomas, I don't claim that every man acts reasonably, "the human race would long ago have ceased to exist, if its preservation had depended solely on the reasoning of its members" (Rousseau 64). I simply claim that, underneath it all, man isn't as savage as you say. Nature had a beauty of its own that society has forced us to leave behind. "Man is born free, and everywhere he is in chains" (Rousseau 156).

THOMAS: I don't understand you. You see misery and assume compassion. People like you are the reasons we fall into all these messes we see around us. We need to understand the nature of our place in the world if we are to have any hope of surviving it.

JEAN: I would expect nothing less Tom, coming from you. I understand you've been jaded, but seeing the good in people isn't wrong. If everyone thought as you

thought, I doubt anyone would consent to your blasted covenants in the first place!

THOMAS waves his hands in the air dismissively.

THOMAS: It doesn't matter, we disagree, of course we do. The only logical thing to do is to bow to the whims of our intelligent, arbiter friend here. His judgement is justice, and we submit to it. So, what is it then? Is it he or I?

THOMAS and JEAN quiet down and look intently at LEWIS. Each seems eager to hear the verdict, and certain that he is correct. LEWIS bows his head a moment, thinking over what he's heard. A moment later, he looks up, glances between his two subjects and speaks.

LEWIS: Well, it seems to me that neither of you are correct.

THOMAS: What?!

JEAN: I don't understand.

LEWIS: You've both gotten so caught up in your arguments that you've stopped looking at what's right in front of you. You both think differently, and the personalities of one of you give evidence against the arguments of the other. Jean, you're compassionate and believe people live compassionately. Thomas is guarded against challenges to his person and is willing to defend himself to the end. If there's one person that thinks like either of you think, then it's safe to assume there are others too. And, if there are that many of either mindset, then neither of your arguments can be valid. If a portion of people live like Jean, then Thomas's assumptions are wrong. If another portion have the same beliefs as Thomas, then Jean can't be right either. As long as people have different beliefs, as you two show they do, then no single model can apply to all of them.

LEWIS falls silent as both THOMAS and Jean stare at him with open mouths. The two philosophers look at each other in disbelief, then THOMAS slams his hands on the table.

THOMAS: Ridiculous! I can't believe we selected an imbecile to be our arbiter.

Obviously if we'd chosen from better options, we'd have received a better impartial decision!

JEAN: I couldn't agree more. This man clearly doesn't understand the fundamental decisiveness of philosophy. You were right about this place, there's nothing for us

here. Let's return to my home and we can finish this discussion over brandy.
THOMAS: A marvelous plan.

THOMAS and JEAN stand up from the table without saying another word to LEWIS. As they withdraw through the door to the bar, LEWIS: can barely make out their words as their argument begins anew, as if he hadn't even been there. Just as they leave, the WAITRESS arrives with the three beers JEAN had ordered.

WAITRESS: What happened to your friends?

LEWIS: I guess they didn't like the environment.

WAITRESS: Well, do you still want the beers?

LEWIS: Yeah, better leave them. My buddy Adam should be getting here soon and he hates to let things go to waste. ■

JANE BURKE

Hobbes, Master of Persuasion

Thomas Hobbes applies his own experiences with political chaos and social upheaval as well as his admiration for geometrical proofs to outline human nature in *Leviathan*. Born prematurely to an anxious mother and a quarrelsome father during the Spanish Armada, Hobbes claimed fear his twin and observed how this fear dictated him and his peers throughout the English Civil Wars (Martinich). Hobbes was also highly educated and preferred to “prove things after [his] own sense” using geometry and reason (“Hobbes, Thomas”), and by manipulating the reader’s fear throughout a structured “proof,” he is able to produce a strong argument in *Leviathan*. Hobbes splits his argument strategically into parts with varying pace and severity in order to define human equality and to embody the turmoil in his lifetime, taking the reader on a dynamic adventure of self-realization where he or she is ultimately convinced that an absolute monarchy is the best form of government.

Hobbes immediately acquaints the reader with the concept of equality in the introduction of *Leviathan*, asserting that when a man “looketh into himself and considereth what he doth, when he does think, opine, reason, hope, fear &c...he shall thereby read and know, what are the thoughts and passions of all other men upon the like occasions” (Hobbes, Introduction, p. 3). Hobbes takes into account the difficulty of understanding oneself, so he essentially teaches the reader how to do so by beginning with the most basic principle of sense and painstakingly outlining the human cognitive process. By including his own definitions and specific examples in this much detail, Hobbes makes it clear that he has mastered the skill of dissecting the individual and convinces the reader that he is qualified to unfold the remainder of his discussion. Hobbes asserts that both man and beast possess understanding but “that understanding which is peculiar to man is the understanding (OL:) not only of the will, but also of the conceptions and thoughts of other men” (Hobbes, I.ii.10). Even though the “nature of that we conceive be the same”, every person’s “reception of it” is different (Hobbes, I.iv.24), and this difference is what makes human interaction both colorful and catastrophic according to Hobbes. Up to this point, Hobbes keeps his discussion steady and reasonable so that the reader remains interested but is not intimidated.

When man finds himself lost in a world of infinite ideas, his inborn desire for the truth steers him to interact with others and to “demonstrate or approve [his] reck-

onings to other men" (Hobbes, I.v.2). This unique curiosity and inclination towards competition sounds innocent, but it is actually the beginning of the end for Hobbes' mankind as well as a turning point in his argument. Once people begin to exchange their thoughts, controversy arises because humans are both susceptible to mistakes and rigid in their beliefs. Hobbes explains how a disagreement can be settled by either assigning a judge, fighting it out, or leaving it undecided. This is the first point in Hobbes' argument where the next step is unclear, so in order to stick to his structured regime, Hobbes adds the assumption that his man is living in a state of anarchy, or what Hobbes defines as a state of nature. This insertion is the first brushstroke of Hobbes' darker, concrete painting of mankind, and although the reader can feel a sense of tension, he or she cannot decipher the final image and thus continues to watch Hobbes' creation unfold, completely oblivious that he or she has been lured into quite a disturbing sight.

Consequently, Hobbes' argument accelerates exponentially, alluding to how quickly chaos escalates once mankind is ungoverned. Hobbes expands on equality by redefining it as all men restlessly striving for power in life only to be entirely powerless in avoiding death. Since no government exists to ensure the security of the people in anarchical society, every person has the individual responsibility and innate drive to preserve his or her life at all times, even if it is at the discrepancy of someone else. This leaves every person in a state of utter isolation and fear where no one else can be trusted and the only option is to strike before being stricken. According to Hobbes, this environment of distrust and uneasiness places mankind in a state of war, where everyone is motivated to fight for glory. Hobbes understands that his accusations of mankind are extreme and that the reader may find it strange that nature should separate and cause men "to invade and destroy one another," so he asks him or her to "consider with himself" (Hobbes, I.xiii.10). This is Hobbes' strongest move because he knows that no reader can deny that he or she arms him- or herself or locks his or her doors, and thus "accuse[s] mankind by his actions" as Hobbes does by his words (Hobbes, I.xiii.10). This statement makes all of Hobbes' previous claims entirely believable and convinces the reader that even he or she has the capacity to become a monster in a state of anarchy.

After having made the reader fear the thought of what he or she would become in an ungoverned state, Hobbes slows down his argument and proves that an absolute monarchy is the best form of government with ease. Because anarchy and absolute monarchy are essentially opposites, anarchy becomes the reader's nightmare while ab-

solute monarchy becomes desirable. Hobbes expands on equality and explains how in order to escape the state of war, each person must equally sacrifice his or her rights and consent to a single ruler to receive security in return. The people achieve freedom from fear by giving away all of their rights and allowing the ruler to rule with force. Once they have given this consent, they no longer have to fear conflict with another person, because the ruler is present to oversee arguments and pacify. Hobbes has played with the reader's fear so that he or she becomes convinced that without an absolute sovereign he or she is naturally "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short" (I.xiii.9).

Because Hobbes starts with an intricate study of the individual and then shows how each person's thought process leads him or her to desire the same end, an absolute monarchy becomes not only a seemingly logical government to rule the people but also a seemingly necessary one. Hobbes' cleverness in influencing the reader to think about his or her own nature subtly coerces the reader to place his or herself in a hypothetical situation and realize that in a state of war he or she would probably act exactly how Hobbes describes. Essentially, Hobbes utilizes logic to appeal to the reader's innate emotions and to make him or her feel the uneasiness that the author experienced throughout his entire life. By carefully segmenting his argument into pieces with different degrees of emotional emphasis, Hobbes plays puppeteer while the reader is helplessly forced to confront the darker side of humanity. Fortunately, the power to escape this doomed reality is in the hand of the reader—all he or she has to do is sacrifice everything to the sovereign. ■

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PROF. BRIAN JORGENSEN

Divinity & the Far Side of the Mind: On William James's *Varieties of Religious Experience*

transcript of a Core lecture delivered in CC II2 on April 7th, 2016

Introduction: Concerning Personal Religious Experience

What you may have heard coming in to the lecture today—did anyone recognize it? Dante, *Paradiso* XXXIII, the very end of the *Divine Comedy*, beautifully read by Professor Gabriella Sims. In these lines, Dante is seeing God directly. If we don't know Italian but feel the language, we may get a distant sense of something profound and beautiful, meaningful but beyond understanding. This has some relevance to our subject today.

Herodotus, you recall, says that “All men know equally about the gods,” an astounding and thought-provoking statement which Professor Samons interprets as meaning “equally little.” As Herodotus tells it, the gods speak to men through ambiguous or symbolic oracles which need careful interpretation. In the book we are reading this week, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, the American biologist, physiologist, medical doctor, psychologist, and philosopher William James (1842-1907) finds that all men aren't equal, that some men know more about God than others—in the sense that they have a direct unmediated *experience* of God: In the way that our ordinary minds perceive what our senses bring before us, in such fashion that we trust our senses perhaps before all else, certain minds, in non-ordinary states of consciousness, perceive God—or the Absolute, or Divinity, or The One, or the Atman—with the same sense of certainty and reality, or perhaps a greater one, than that which our senses give us. James says, “[T]hese feelings of reality . . . are as convincing to those who have them as any direct sensible experience can be, and they are, as a rule, much more convincing than results established by mere logic ever are” (p. 62). Just as certainly as you accept the reality of a tree, or this room, these people experience God—not as a hallucination, but as the perception of a higher kind of consciousness—one which does not last. Such experiences change these people's lives, change, one can say, who they are. Although the direct experience does not last, often the change is permanent, and very often for

the better. Not always, as we will see.

This experience of the divine is at the center of what James is writing about, and is, for him, at the center of religion as he defines it. All religions, he thinks—and he includes eastern as well as western religions—Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Sufism, as well as Catholicism and Protestantism—come from someone who has had this experience. James's goal is to invent a scientific method for studying these experiences. He seeks to classify and interpret them, and to see in what theoretical directions they point—so that, eventually, all men may know more about God or the gods, if in some fashion such things exist. This, James believes, should lead to social progress—a diminution of sectarianism, anathema, religious war, religiously motivated bad behavior.

This approach to religion is of course different from anything we have seen so far in this course. Up to this point we have seen religion as dogma and as authority; as political tool based on philosophy in Al-Farabi; as theology and history, based in part on the divine revelations of a sacred text, in St. Augustine; as a conviction of the rational mind, as in the dialogue of Father Matteo Ricci. Soon we will be reading Émile Durkheim, one of the great thinkers about religion as a social phenomenon—as essentially a social phenomenon, religion as society worshipping itself, its socialness, its social identity. From CC 102 we have seen religion as story, the *Aeneid*, and as revelation, e.g. Matthew, John, the *Bhagavad-Gita*. We could add, religion as ritual—certain aspects of Confucianism and of Chinese culture in general, implications from the Gospels and the *Gita*, what goes on in churches on Sundays.

For his study, James puts aside dogma and authority, and obedience and the acceptance of authority; he puts aside revelation; he puts aside theology; he very firmly puts aside religion as something invented by philosophers, as Al-Farabi has it; he puts aside religion as community, as church; he puts aside religion as ritual. He is interested in religion as individual—indeed, ineffable—*experience*: experience of the divine by certain people at certain times, in an unsharable form. From such he will draw his conclusions.

It is as a result of their religious experiences, their encounter with the divine, that the founders of religions became outstanding people who changed history—so says James. We are talking about the likes of Jesus, Mohammed, Buddha. And many other people, who did not found religions but had religious experiences, became some of the more admirable people who have ever lived. And some, by the way, did not become better, became evil and dangerous—James acknowledges diabolical experiences, evil religions, killers who hear voices, and so on. In any case, James could not be more different from Durkheim, who says that religion is essentially a social phenomenon. No,

says James, I propose to define it as essentially an *individual* experience of the transcendent, a phenomenon not of society but of solitude. He says, “Religion, therefore, as I now ask you arbitrarily to take it, shall mean for us *the feelings, acts, and experiences of individual men in their solitude, so far as they apprehend themselves to stand in relation to whatever they may consider the divine*” (p. 32).

Why does James focus on this aspect of religion and put aside all others? There are historical reasons, of course—Luther’s challenge, on the basis of his individual conscience, to the Catholic hierarchy/hegemony, and the rise of Protestantism; the horror of religious wars; deep challenges to religious institutions and beliefs from the rationalistic Enlightenment; increasing emphasis on the individual mind and self in literature and philosophy; higher criticism of the Bible, not as revelation but as an historical document; and so on. You will, I hope, be reading about these things in Core next year. For our purposes now, let us note that James believes that the individual is at least as important as society, and is the origin of religious institutions. We will soon see, I hope, further reasons why James bases his method on individual accounts.

James’s Method and Philosophy

I think one of the many admirable and interesting things about William James is his method for studying religious experience. It arises from a philosophical approach, so we will refer some to philosophy in considering it. The method is inductive—that is, proceeding from many instances to generalities, looking for patterns that arise, rather than deducing from fixed principles what the particulars must be. James gathers—the project took many years—accounts of religious experiences, and related experiences, and from these accounts begins to generalize about different types of religious experience. So he is in the line of great generalizers about types of human beings, going back to Hippocrates, Theophrastus, and Galen, and onward—we could mention Carl Jung. James is, in fact, interested in many types of people—the soldier as well as the saint, the uneducated as well as the intellectual, the reformed drunk or highway robber as well as St. Teresa, the useless madman and the tirelessly useful social reformer and charitable woman. Part of what made it hard for me to suggest only 100 pages of this 400-page book is the liveliness of James’s mind and the range of his sympathies and interests. He very often has something fine to say about particular topics related to his larger concerns. These topics may be psychological or social, a great many of them relevant today—*e.g.*, poverty. James loves to put himself into the mind and feelings of other

people. In this book he is often speaking in the voice, with the mind, of another person or type of person. This might suggest that he is scattered, but in fact James is a marvelously organized thinker—this book is a strong tree alive with many leaves. James takes full advantage of his inductive method.

Let me develop his method a little further. He believes that specifically religious experience shades into other kinds of experience, and that these make clearer, shed light on, what religion is. He says, “[P]henomena are best understood when placed in their series, studied in their germ and in their over-ripe decay, and compared with their exaggerated and degenerated kindred” (p. 292). So he studies or refers to states of mental experience which are not specifically religious but on the spectrum. Some of these most of you have surely experienced: feelings brought on by music; or by poetry; the sea, nature, the changes of the sun; love, the kind that makes the world look different; feelings which bring with them intuitions or hints of thought—often, it seems, inexpressible, but along the lines of “The world still is what it is, but more profound than I thought it was.” Using this method of studying an entire range of experiences, James can come to discover and distinguish what is specific about the highest kinds of religious experience, and can show that they are on a continuum with all our experience, which points to their reality.

James’s research is ultimately focused on the highest kinds of religious experience. This is why we have assigned large portions of James’s lectures on mysticism—mysticism being a name for this highest kind of religious experience, oneness with God or the divine, a sudden plunge into insight and knowledge that cannot be easily put into words. So “mysticism” does not mean “vaguely spiritual” or “fuzzily mysterious” or dreamy; the word has a very specific meaning here: direct experience of the divine through and with an altered perspective on self and reality—an experience of knowledge.

Perhaps here might be the place to deal at least briefly with questions that are still very much with us: (1) are such high experiences mere hallucinations whose causes are physical, and (2) isn’t religion an outmoded, misleading, unnecessary thing that causes and has caused a lot of trouble? Such arguments had a very powerful effect on William James. They darkened some of his years, because he took them with complete seriousness. And James, biologist, doctor, psychologist, eventually came to very convincing arguments against such reductive deterministic beliefs, and against the dismissal of religion as archaic. You will be reading them in the *Varieties*. Let me mention them here.

(1) Reductive arguments about mental experience—these are just as much with us

today as they were in James's time. Aren't unusual states of consciousness no more than neurons misfiring? Aren't they ultimately reducible to biological happenings in the brain, electrochemical occurrences? More: Are we in fact not free conscious beings, but complex mechanisms, determined by—well, today, it would be our genes and brain activity? I mean, after all, when someone is thinking about an ethical question, scientists see parts of their brain light up.

James treats these questions in a number of ways. He argues that, if reductive determinism were true (he calls it “medical materialism”), then the scientist would be just as much determined, just as much a meaningless robot, as the visionary, and there would be no such thing as knowledge. He says, “If we adopt this assumption . . . there is not a single one of our states of mind, high or low, healthy or morbid, that has not some organic process as its condition. Scientific theories are organically conditioned just as much as religious emotions are . . . [N]one of our thoughts and feelings, not even our scientific doctrines, not even our *dis*-beliefs, could retain any value as revelations of the truth, for every one of them without exception flows from the state of their possessor's body at the time” (pp. 19–29).

But in fact, James points out, the reductionist scientific method does not account for all the *facts*, all the data. He brings this out when he deals with the second popular assertion, that religion is archaic, unnecessary, a hindrance. “There is a notion in the air about us,” he says, “that religion is probably only an anachronism, a case of ‘survival,’ an atavistic relapse into a mode of thought which humanity in its more enlightened examples has outgrown; and this notion our religious anthropologists at present do little to counteract. . . . The pivot round which the religious life, as we have traced it, revolves, is the interest of the individual in his private personal destiny . . . Science, on the other hand, has ended by utterly repudiating the personal point of view” (p. 372).

So in our time we have the interpretation of everything in terms of genetic evolution. For an egregious example, we have Richard Dawkins writing *The Selfish Gene*, to account for consciousness and morality, and then *The God Delusion*, to argue that religion may have served a genetic purpose, but now is to be gotten rid of, and should be.

James argues that these approaches ignore data, that they embrace the impersonal and reject the personal—but that reality at its most complete includes the personal. He says, “To describe the world with all the various feelings . . . left out . . . would be something like offering a printed bill of fare [a menu] as the equivalent for a solid meal . . . A bill of fare with one real raisin on it instead of the word ‘raisin’ . . . might be an inadequate meal, but it would at least be a commencement of reality” (p. 379).

In another place, James describes our knowledge of reality, in somewhat technical language, as follows: “A conscious field *plus* its object as felt or thought of *plus* an attitude towards the object *plus* the sense of a self to whom the attitude belongs— . . . is of the *kind* to which all realities whatsoever must belong” (p. 378).

James’s search is for reality in the largest and truest sense, with all the data included. So he argues, powerfully, I think, that things should be judged, interpreted, studied, in terms of *their fullest manifestations and development*, not merely in their origins. You may remember similar arguments from Plato and Aristotle. You don’t find out what a *polis* is, or what justice really is, by looking at the City of Pigs, the origins of cities; you don’t find out what a human being is by looking at a baby. Babies are not completely developed human beings. Neither are adolescents. Neither is just anybody—some people are wise, some are great athletes. You don’t find out what a complete human being is by looking only at the individual, nor just the family, nor even the village, but at the completely developed human in the *polis*—so say these wise ancient Greeks. You don’t find out what a human being is until you have studied the highest phases of human development. Similarly, you don’t find out what religious experience is by studying genes or atoms. You find out, says James, by studying religious experience in its most developed form.

In taking this approach, James is, once again, at the opposite pole from Durkheim, another great social scientist you will be reading, who insists that you have to go back to the origins, the earliest, most primitive state of religion if you are to understand what it is. James says, “These lectures expressly avoid earlier religious uses and questions of derivation” (p. 351). There seems to be a basic disagreement here, on an important topic. And it goes further.

James argues that, not only should you *not* take your bearings from origins, but also that you must look at extreme cases, the rare, the exceptional, and take your bearings from them. These might well offer the truest account of what something is—in this case, religious experience. The normal is the enemy of the true. Too often, James thinks, we seek the statistical, the average, the prevalent opinion. Here again, he seems in line with Aristotle, who says that in looking for the essence of something we should look for what it does that nothing else does as well, that which distinguishes it. James says, “It is a good rule in physiology, when we are studying the meaning of an organ, to ask after its most peculiar and characteristic sort of performance, and to seek its office in that one of its functions which no other organ can possibly exert. [Aristotle argues this way] . . . The essence of religious experiences, the thing by which we finally must judge

them, must be that element of quality in them which we can meet nowhere else" (p. 42).

These highest states of consciousness, James says, might well occur when the person is abnormal, when he or she is a bit—or more than bit—different, even not ordinarily sane. Such states may well occur—do occur—in people who are in some way or other pathological. James, by the way, uses the terms "pathological" and "psychopath" in a descriptive, not a merely negative sense—he does not mean an evil person. There may well be something unbalanced about the greatest religious minds which goes with deeper and higher forms of experience than are available to normal minds. James says, "We must search . . . for . . . experiences we can only find in individuals for whom religion exists not as a dull habit, but as an acute fever" (p. 14). "[F]or aught we know to the contrary," he says, "103° or 104° Fahrenheit might be a much more favorable temperature for truths to germinate and sprout in, than the more ordinary blood-heat of 97 or 98 degrees" (p. 21). Think of Dostoyevsky, Nietzsche, Coleridge, Virginia Woolf.

So while James is a scientist, a social scientist, his method is the opposite of a reductive scientist who looks for smaller and smaller areas of concern, and seeks to account for things in their lowest terms. One of James's repeated expressions, for which he sometimes apologizes but never abandons, is "on the whole." Like the philosopher he is, James is deeply interested in the whole in all its aspects—the whole of life, and indeed of the cosmos to the extent we can know it.

But in this philosopher's sense of the whole, James is much less like Plato and much more like Aristotle—and even more like an American. He emphatically does not believe that the whole reduces to one highest idea or set of ideas, as Plato teaches. Ultimately, he believes that there is no single way of seeing the world. This type of thought he calls, as do others, pluralism, or empiricism, or radical empiricism. In the preface to his famous essay, *The Will to Believe*, James says, "There is no possible point of view from which the world can appear an absolutely single fact. Real possibilities, real indeterminations, real beginnings, real ends, real evil, real crises, catastrophes, and escapes, a real God, and a real moral life, just as commonsense conceives these things, may remain in empiricism as conceptions which that philosophy gives up the attempt either to 'overcome' or to reinterpret in monistic form" (WTB, p. ix).

So, unlike both Plato and Aristotle, and Al-Farabi, James does not think the philosopher is the highest type of human being. Indeed, he rejects the idea of there being one highest type of person. James thinks the world necessarily and rightly contains many types of people. Relationships are what matter, and different excellences, not a nonexistent perfection. Many different kinds of experience count, many different facts

count, as we try to see things “on the whole.” It is good and important that the world has saints, people who are truly capable of loving their enemies, and it is good and important that the world has people who are warriors—courageous, disciplined, loyal fighters who dispose of enemies. (It is James who coined the phrase “the moral equivalent of war” (picked up by President Jimmy Carter in 1977): that is, a hope that someday the nobility, honor, energy, passion, courage, endurance, even the destructiveness of the soldier might be put into the cause of social betterment rather than destruction of an enemy. James is, ultimately, a man of hope).

James the Man: A Digression

You may, if you have time to savor James a little, be a bit delighted at how American he is. Here, for the first time in Core, it seems, comes the voice of one of our kind of people. Well-intentioned, open-minded, non-dogmatic yet sticking to his guns, searching for truth, sympathetic, humble but not to be pushed around, shrewd as well as genial, arguing for an ultimate hope, very smart and very concerned with all types of people, be they smart or not—but not saying everyone is the same, recognizing and evaluating differences, having mixed judgments. One example: James loves and admires Walt Whitman, whom you will be reading next year in Core, but says, “[Whitman’s] optimism is too voluntary and defiant; his gospel has a touch of bravado and an affected twist,” and yet also says, “[I]n important respects Whitman is of the genuine lineage of the prophets” (p. 74).

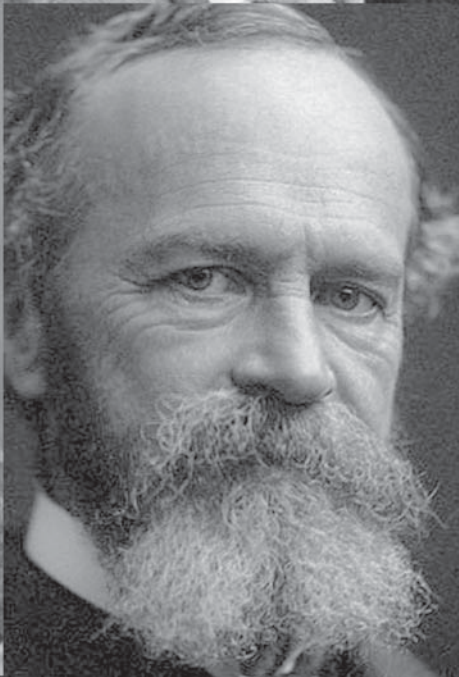
James is one of those people who are deeply knowledgeable, and his knowledge is alive, active—and friendly. Some pictures of him.

[Facing page, top left, James’s self-portrait.] Here he is as a young man, age about 24, making a drawing of himself, interrogating himself, uncertain about his direction in life, thinking he might be an artist, sidelong gaze both shy and anxious and piercing.

[Top right, James in 1869.] Here he is three years later, a recent graduate of Harvard Medical School, back from a naturalist expedition to Brazil, a trip to Germany, and having served a short hospital internship. Subject to depression and illness. The face of a serious person with anxieties and uncertainties, a seeker.

[Bottom left, James in the 1880s.] Now a rising professor at Harvard, moving from psychology to philosophy, married, starting to experience the deaths of those near to him and the birth of his own children.

[Bottom right, James in the 1890s, around age 50.] And here he is as an established



man, somewhere in his fifties. You can see the lines of concern, kindness, sadness, strain, around his eyes. He has lost people close to him, knows melancholy and depression, knows about the evil in the world. By the time of this photograph he has written the most important comprehensive work of his time on psychology, a work that is still valuable, still studied, today; and he has found psychology inadequate to a true study of the mind and has become a Harvard professor not only of psychology but of philosophy. He is known for his generosity and kindness. He lectures not only to university classes and seminars, and to learned societies and distinguished audiences—like the Gifford lectures on which our book of the week is based—but also to student clubs, to teachers, to local societies of all sorts, large and small. His famous piece *The Will to Believe* was addressed to the Philosophy Clubs of Yale and Brown. Professor Nelson could almost certainly have gotten him to talk to Core. An approachable, magnanimous man.

James and Values: Pragmatism

There is one more important thing to say about James's social scientific method: It is not value-free or value-neutral. A fair amount of current social science seeks to be value-free or value-neutral, to describe, to come up with models, but not to judge. James believes some things are better than others, and that it is our *responsibility* to judge. He wants not merely observations but truth, and not just truth, but values, judgments of worth—indeed, he believes words, concepts, things, are never value-free. For him, social science exists to make things better, through recognition of the true and the good.

How are we to judge value or worth? James, quoting the Gospel of Matthew, famously says, “By their fruits ye shall know them,” and he adds, “not by their roots” (p. 24). We are to judge the value of experiences by the effect they have on our lives and on life in general, and not by their origins.

James says there are two types of absolutely basic questions we can ask. He says, “[We can ask of anything] how did it come about? And second, what is its importance, meaning, or significance? [The answer to the second question] is a *proposition of value*, or what we may denominate a *spiritual judgment*” (p. 13). Whatever the origin of something, James says, whether from a normal person or an abnormal one, “[V]alue can only be ascertained by spiritual judgments . . . based on our own immediate feeling primarily, and secondarily on what we can ascertain of . . . experiential relations to our moral needs and to the rest of what we hold as true. *Immediate luminousness*, in

short, *philosophical reasonableness*, and *moral helpfulness* are the only available criteria. St. Teresa might have had the nervous system of the placidest cow, and it would not now save her theology, if the trial of the theology by these other tests should show it to be contemptible” (pp. 22-3). We could spend the rest of our time thinking about what James means or assumes by “moral needs,” and “immediate luminousness,” and his statement that “immediate feeling” is primary. I suggest you do spend some time with those expressions.

But, continuing: This idea, that we must judge things by their effects in our lives and on life, is an example of James’s philosophy of Pragmatism. We judge things ultimately by their effects, good or bad. James once or twice goes so far as to say “even if” religious experience is not a result of something supernatural (he thinks it is, but even if not), it is still important and real, because of its effects, and we have a right to believe in it. Here I think his philosophy may come up short—you may wish to think about why. As a starting point, I suggest the question: How does James know what is good?

James’s Findings

So there we have an abridged account of James’s method and the philosophic assumptions behind it. These are developed in his Lectures I and II, and also later, as you will see. Let me briefly look at what he finds in studying religious experience this way.

As I mentioned, James works toward the central lectures on mystical experience, and does so by looking at a wide range of experiences related to that. Let me very briefly fill in the path, touching only on the largest categories. In doing so, I will be doing scant justice to the richness of James’s writing. The very fine and detailed Table of Contents of our book will show you the layout of James’s many sub-topics.

James begins with what he calls “The Religion of Healthy-Mindedness.” People of this sort experience life as something happy and good; they experience evil as something that can be overcome or ignored or taken lightly. They cultivate these attitudes. They preach them. Call it religion, call it self-help, call it mind-control, discovering your joyful inner self, whatever. James takes these attitudes seriously, as he does those of almost everyone he presents to us. The healthy-minded are people of positive faith, cheerfulness, optimism, who orient their minds toward happiness, and are able to do so. Being happy and optimistic, they often make others so. They are valuable individuals. Such people are able to worship nature and the world as ultimately good, to see evil as something to be overcome, taken care of, brushed aside. Let’s ignore or get rid of

evil. Go for it. “Don’t Worry, Be Happy.”

But then James turns to what he calls “The Sick Soul,” by which he means both people who are by nature melancholy, and people who find the evil in the world not easily overcome—and not easily or rightfully ignored: people for whom the insecurity of the world, the inevitability of death, the prevalence of evil and degradation in human nature, and indeed the violence of nature itself, rob life of much or all of its zest. He describes and quotes gripping examples of these attitudes toward life, toward one’s own life.

James calls the healthy-minded people “once-born.” They are at one with themselves, and have no need of rebirth or a deep change of attitude. The sick souls—who, James seems to say, are more perceptive than the healthy-minded, good as the latter may be—he calls “twice-born,” meaning they need a deep change, a rebirth, a new attitude, a new feeling about the world, a new way of looking at life. For them, James says, a “profounder view” may open up.

Once-born and twice-born are, James says, “two different conceptions of the universe of our experience” (p. 132). (This implies that there is no single conception of the universe of our experience. Here is James’s Pluralism.) Dante, of course, is twice-born: He begins in the Dark Forest, blocked by the three beasts, and says that, to see the good, you must know evil.

William James then goes on to consider “The Divided Self,” which is, he says, the common type of the twice-born person. In such people, the actual and the ideal, the higher and lower, are at war. They have a notion of what things should be, and what they themselves should be, but that notion is often or everywhere contradicted. One of James’s examples is St. Augustine, who in his autobiography portrays himself as wanting to turn away from the evil life he is leading but finds himself unable to do so, slipping back, being wrenched back, postponing, and so on. There are many degrees of the divided self; it is very common and sometimes merely whimsical, James says, but also and often serious, tormenting, dulling, darkening. And James offers examples of people who have overcome, but only partially overcome, the divisions in themselves—he mentions John Bunyan and Leo Tolstoy.

This overcoming of the divisions in oneself is what James thinks of as conversion, the subject of his next lecture. James lived in a time when religion was being thought of more and more as an inner conversion rather than adherence to a doctrine. In 19th-century Amherst, Emily Dickinson found people all around her claiming to have been converted, and noted that she could not make the same claim—though she did have

moments that James could recognize as mystical.

Conversion: James brings forward example after example of people who have become spiritually healed, in a religious sense or simply psychologically. In accounting for this, James uses a number of different metaphors and models of the mind or soul. Unlike, say, Freud, who is determined to reduce psychology to a single model, James believes—here again is his Pluralism—that we must use a number of different models to get even a bit closer to the nature of the mind. James admired Freud, but also said Freud was “too prone to hasty generalizations” (“hasty generalization” being a logical fallacy that goes back to Aristotle). One model, one relationship to explain all? No, says James.

Sometimes the healing of the divided self is gradual—James thinks that during adolescence almost everyone goes through self-division and confusion and gradual reorientation—and sometimes the healing is sudden and overwhelming.

The Subconscious Mind

The particular phenomenon of sudden integration of the personality leads James to one of his most profound topics—the nature of consciousness, and the conscious and subconscious mind. James invented the term “stream of consciousness”: the flow of thoughts and feelings and perceptions of which we are only incompletely aware. Writers such as James Joyce and Virginia Woolf seek to render this stream, to write out how our minds really work.

James also uses the term “field of consciousness” to talk about how wide this flow, this stream, might be: If we think about our consciousness, there is at any given moment a focus, perhaps narrow, perhaps not so narrow, and a hard-to-determine area around that focus. In geniuses, James says, the focus itself is very wide—a genius can relate many things at once, and any human, not just a philosopher or artist, loves those moments when the field of consciousness is wide. Alcohol sometimes gives us hints of this before turning us into slobs and worse. But always, the margin of our field of consciousness is uncertain—but it *is* certain that beyond the margin is something huge and active, mental goings-on and feelings, vast, multifarious, powerful, beyond our focus—the subconscious. James says that the research of his time has revealed “whole systems of underground life” in human minds (p. 184).

James notes that mental and emotional things happening in the subconscious may gradually come into focus, into consciousness, as our lives go on, or they may not—or

they may do so suddenly. We have all had types of this experience—you are having difficulty writing, and suddenly it comes easy—the subconscious has been at work. A memory or an image pops up. Where was it? You suddenly discover, looking back, what you have been doing for the past month or year or decade. (“Better ask somebody if you don’t know what you’re doing,” says the song “It’s a Rockin’ Good Way” (Dinah Washington and Brook Benton, 1960).) Love bursts on some people like this—Jane Austen does a fine job of presenting this in *Pride and Prejudice*. You discover larger feelings toward life which you didn’t know you had. Where are the feelings you suppress that suddenly show up? Why can’t you do the things you want to do? Today, of course, advertisers, political consultants, etc., take aim at the subconscious in low-grade ways.

A major point of this lecture: James is one of the scientists of the subconscious mind, one of the best, and he believes that among other things the subconscious has a good deal to do with religious conversion. Sudden and profound conversion may be the irruption, the breaking-in, of long-developing subconscious experience, perception, even understanding—into consciousness. And then the world appears different, and a person becomes different. James mentions a loss of chronic worry, a sense of peace, a passion of will, a deepened understanding, the world appearing more new and beautiful (pp. 193–8).

James moves from a study of conversion to the extreme religious convert, the saint, with lectures on saintliness—and then, a very Jamesian move, a long lecture interrogating the *value* of saintliness. This is to be expected, right? We judge not by roots, origins, but by fruits. Pragmatism. James looks at the character of different saints, and at the huge influence they have had on history, on society. He finds some saints useless, inhumane, self-obsessed, and some of them splendid people. He contrasts the saint with other human types.

Mysticism

And so we come to the lectures on mysticism, James quoting, thinking about, interrogating persons who have had an experience of oneness with God or the divine or the cosmos. He begins with a definition of what he means by mystical experience, and offers four characteristics or marks:

A. The first is **Ineffability**: The experience cannot be put into words, cannot be transmitted verbally to someone else. It is like trying to describe color to a man born blind. It goes further: one cannot describe it, reduce it to words, to *oneself* when the

experience is gone. One has seen things in a way not available to normal consciousness. Dante is one of the best at evoking the ineffable, saying, toward the end of *Paradiso*, “I think I saw . . . I think I saw.”

B. The second mark of mystical experience, James says, is **Noetic** quality (from the Greek, *noesis*, knowledge): These are experiences of knowledge, “insight into depths of truth unplumbed by the discursive intellect,” he says (p. 291). Not just feelings, then, but insights which have the same authority, the same conviction of truth and reality, as our senses give us. James says, “Mystical truth . . . resembles the knowledge given to us in sensations more than that given by conceptual thought” (p. 309). Immediate knowledge that is ineffable.

C. The third characteristic or mark: **Transiency**: The mystical states do not last. However, they can recur, and they can develop as they recur. The experience can be sought, and it becomes deeper and deeper.

D. The fourth mark James calls **Passivity**: The mystic feels, James says, “as if his own will were in abeyance, and indeed sometimes as if he were grasped and held by a superior power” (p. 291). These are literally overwhelming experiences. Your will, your intellect, are overwhelmed. They experience being part of something much larger than themselves in a way that is utterly convincing.

James goes on to say that these states make a difference in a person’s life. They aren’t just interruptions. “Some memory of their content always remains,” he says, “and a profound sense of their importance. They modify the inner life of the subject between the times of their recurrence” (p. 292). Think of Abraham, Moses, the behavior of the master who has experienced the Tao, of Arjuna willing to fight, of Dante, coming back from seeing God to write *The Divine Comedy*.

Next, following his method, James gives a graded series of experiences which lead up to the highest mystical experience. He starts with words or phrases which we suddenly seem to understand in a deeper sense. Then poems or music which trigger something. Later in the chapter he will say of music, “Music gives us ontological messages [messages about existence, or Being itself] which non-musical criticism is unable to contradict, though it may laugh at our foolishness in minding them. There is a verge of mind which these things haunt; and whispers therefrom mingle with the operations of our understanding, even as the waters of the infinite ocean send their waves to break among the pebbles that lie on our shores” (p. 321).

The next type of experience in the series, James says, is what we would call *déjà vu*, double consciousness in a situation—seeing with two minds.

Then James deals with larger trance states brought on by intoxicants, or by sudden unexpected events when the subconscious mind is open to such events. About these, James says, “[O]ur normal waking consciousness as we call it, is but one special type of consciousness, whilst all about it, parted from it by the flimsiest of screens, there lie potential forms of consciousness entirely different. We may go through life without suspecting their existence, but apply the requisite stimulus, and at a touch they are there in all their completeness, definite types of mentality which probably somewhere have their field of application and adaptation. [So, pragmatist that he is, James believes in the possible usefulness of these states.] No account of the universe in its totality [the goal of the philosopher] can be final which leaves these other forms of consciousness quite disregarded” (p. 296).

Then James turns to religious experience proper. First he looks at sudden, unanticipated states—things that can happen in the presence of nature, such as happened to Jean-Jacques Rousseau, to Wordsworth, Walt Whitman, Emily Dickinson, and many others. And then he looks to experiences of something cosmic, beyond nature, embracing all nature.

These types of experiences, James says, may be sporadic, may come out of the blue, out of something developed in the subconscious mind and then erupting into consciousness. But we also find, he says, in Christianity, in Hinduism, in Buddhism, in Daoism, in Sufi mysticism, *cultivation* of such experiences, disciplines which lead to the experience. You have looked at the three yogas, the three disciplines, in the *Bhagavad-Gita*, and may know something about mystics throughout the ages. On the hand-out I have given you a somewhat haphazard and slapdash list of prominent mystics and mystical writers, east and west, throughout history. [*This handout can be found online at <http://www.bu.edu/core/community/the-core-journal/xxvi>. —Eds.*]

“How do we judge such states of consciousness?” is James’s next question, and you will read about this. He begins by restating the case against taking them seriously, saying, “To the medical mind these ecstasies signify nothing but suggested and imitated hypnoid states, on an intellectual basis of superstition, and a corporeal one of degeneration and hysteria” (p. 315). How does James answer this argument, and how does he say we should judge mystical states?

“Undoubtedly . . .,” he says, “pathological conditions have existed in many and possibly in all the cases, but that fact tells us nothing about the value for knowledge of the consciousness which they induce. To pass a spiritual judgment upon these states, we must not content ourselves with superficial medical talk, but inquire into their fruits

for life. Their fruits," he says, "appear to have been various" (p. 315).

In some mystics, James finds, the experience leads to a kind of worldly helplessness. In some, it leads to immense untiring practicality in various areas of life, and a formidable spiritual energy, and a love which negates the self, thereby becoming a greater self. Mystical conditions, James says, "may, therefore, render the soul more energetic in the lines which their inspiration favors" (p. 317).

But is the direction truly good, he asks. What if one is loving something false, doing things not good?

In investigating the truth—and the goodness (for James, truth and values are inseparable)—of energy inspired by mystical experience, James develops what he calls the main drift or consensus of such experience: that the universe is ultimately one, and ultimately good, and that mystical insight conduces to an overcoming of the selfish self, being an experience of oneness with all that is. He concludes, "This overcoming of all the usual barriers between the individual and the Absolute is the great mystic achievement. In mystic states we both become one with the Absolute and we become aware of our oneness. In Hinduism, in Neoplatonism, in Sufism, in Christian mysticism, in Whitmanism, we find the same recurring note, so that there is about mystical utterances an eternal unanimity which ought to make a critic stop and think" (p. 320). An inductive method is at work here, and it discovers a pattern borne out in its predictions.

So, one might well consent to the drift of these experiences. But can they make demands on us? What kind of *authority* do mystical visions have? This is James's final question in the lectures on mysticism. His answer is threefold.

1.) He says that mystical states have a right to authority over the individual who has them, as much right as do our five senses.

2.) However, he says, they impose no duty on someone who has not had such an experience, who stands outside of it. And as an instance, James develops the idea of evil mysticisms, what he calls, and I quote, "diabolical mysticism, a sort of religious mysticism turned upside down. . . . [The region of the subconscious] contains every kind of matter: 'seraph and snake' abide there side by side. To come from thence is no infallible credential. What comes must be sifted and tested, and run the gauntlet of confrontation with the whole of experience, just like what comes from the outer world of sense" (p. 325). Here, once again, we see James's Pragmatism at work.

3.) James's third point about the authority of mystical states is strongly affirmative: "[T]he existence of mystical states," he says, "absolutely overthrows the pretensions of non-mystical states to be the sole and ultimate dictator of what we may believe . . . It

must always remain an open question whether mystical states may not possibly be . . . windows through which the mind looks out upon a more extensive and inclusive world [with] its celestial and infernal regions, its tempting and its saving moments, its valid experiences and its counterfeit ones, just as our world has them . . . Counting in of that wider world of meanings, and the serious dealing with it, might . . . be indispensable stages in our approach to the final fullness of truth" (p. 326).

Over-Beliefs and a Science of Religion

In his next lecture, entitled *Philosophy*, James argues that neither philosophy, nor reason, nor theology can lead us to God, to religion, unless we are already going there. He does not believe anyone ever became truly religious simply because someone argued them into it, offered a proof. The person had to have at least a need or an orientation.

Religious philosophies, and also theologies, James calls "Over-beliefs," which he defines as, "Buildings-out performed by the intellect into directions of which feeling originally supplied the hint" (p. 329). He calls them *over*-beliefs because they go beyond the experiences behind them, and thereby take us further, make the experiences more solid, more useful, more meaningful. So for James, philosophies of religion, theological propositions about God, are secondary, and come from experience—from feelings. They most often wear the garments, he says, of the thinking of their time and place.

They are not definitive, they do not prove things, at least not effectively—but, James says further on, "the most interesting and valuable things about a man are usually his over-beliefs" (p. 389). Over-beliefs are a necessary and deeply helpful approach to life and to better life. They are how we explain, give shape to, our goodness, to our higher self; often they enable these. James believes that we must live by things we can't prove; that yet our minds seek to make the best sense we can of our feelings and experiences; that we must have values to try to live up to; and that over-beliefs supply cogency and values essential for life. It is difficult for James to imagine a life without over-beliefs.

James puts it this way: "Religion opens itself to us as a gift, yet the spiritual excitement in which the gift appears a real one will often fail to be aroused in an individual until certain particular intellectual beliefs or ideas which come home to him, are touched. Over-beliefs in various directions are absolutely indispensable, and we should treat them with tenderness and tolerance so long as they are not intolerant themselves" (p. 389).

In addition to over-beliefs, James sees another use for philosophy. He argues in

favor of a Science of Religions, in which philosophy, together with biology and all the sciences, could work toward religious hypotheses that are on more and more solid ground. He says, “Sifting out in this way unworthy formulations . . . [a Science of Religions] can leave a residuum of *hypotheses*, testing them in all manners . . . by which hypotheses are ever tested. . . . I do not see why a critical Science of Religions of this sort might not eventually command as general a public adhesion as is commanded by physical science” (pp. 346–7). Wow. It may interest you to know that this sort of activity is in fact going on now at BU, in the School of Theology, in the *Institute for the Bio-Cultural Study of Religion*, of which Professor Wesley Wildman is co-founder. Professor Wildman is deeply versed in science, and his books and his Institute are engaged in bringing religious experience together with what we know about physics, biology, and a vast range of experiences. You can find him online and by e-mail if you are interested: wwildman@bu.edu, c/o the Institute for the Bio-Cultural Study of Religion.

After considering philosophy, James, in a lecture called “Other Characteristics,” considers aspects of religion which he has not focused on: aesthetics (e.g., an elaborate church and ritual vs. plain ones), communion with the divine through prayer—what he says about prayer is extremely good, I think—, confession, the question of immortality, and inspiration such as the Hebrew prophets experienced.

James's Conclusions

And so we come to James's concluding lectures, which he calls *Conclusions* and *Post-script*. Some of the conclusions won't surprise you:

“Modern physical science is wrong to classify the personal as untrue, and find truth only in the impersonal. (I would add, so is modern social science.)

Religion is a biological and psychological reaction or condition—in other words, something real with real effects.

Religious experience comes to us from the subconscious mind, and we do not know the limits of the subconscious. We do know that it contains ideals that we live by, or try to live by. James says, “The further limits of our being plunge, it seems to me, into an altogether other dimension of existence from the sensible and merely ‘understandable’ world. Most of [our ideal impulses] originate in [that other dimension], for we find them possessing us in a way for which we cannot articulately account. [W]e belong to it in a more intimate sense than that in which we belong to the visible world, for we belong in the most intimate sense wherever our ideals belong. Yet the unseen region is

not merely ideal, for it produces effects in this world. When we commune with it, work is actually done upon our finite personality, for we are turned into new men . . ." (p. 390). Our ideals, what we live by, James says here, go beyond logic and intellect. They may well be beyond logical proof, while remaining of the greatest value.

James goes on to ask, as you will see, what is on the far side of our subconscious. What are we, through our subconscious minds, in touch with? And here, James says, he is stating his own over-beliefs. He affirms that, for him, the most convincing answer is that there is something beyond nature, supernatural, that has real effects on our minds. So James calls himself a "crass supernaturalist" (p. 395), someone who believes there is another dimension which through us acts upon, has effects in, what we call our ordinary world, the five-senses three-dimensions world.

What can we know about this other dimension? James's answer might surprise you. He says: "All that the facts require is that the power should be both other and larger than our conscious selves . . . It need not be infinite, it need not be solitary . . . [T]he universe might conceivably be a collection of such selves, of different degrees of inclusiveness, with no absolute unity realized in it at all. Thus would a sort of polytheism return upon us . . . Upholders of the monistic view will say to such a polytheism (which, by the way, has always been the real religion of common people, and is so still to-day—[think of early modern China and its popular religion vs. higher religion]) that unless there be one all-inclusive God, our guarantee of security is left imperfect. . . . It goes back to what was said on pages 107-108, about the possibility of there being portions of the universe that may irretrievably be lost . . . I think, in fact, that a final philosophy of religion will have to consider the pluralistic hypothesis more seriously than it has hitherto been willing to consider it" (pp. 398-99). For James, religious experience points toward polytheism and a universe where an all-knowing, all-remembering God is less than likely.

James ends his large and challenging book with some words that derive from his Pragmatism and his idea of the will to believe. Life, he says, is a bet, or series of bets, not a certainty: "For practical life at any rate, the *chance* of salvation is enough. No fact in human nature is more characteristic than its willingness to live on a chance. The existence of the chance makes the difference . . . between a life of which the keynote is resignation and a life of which the keynote is hope. But all these statements are unsatisfactory from their brevity, and I can only say that I hope to return to the same questions in another book" (pp. 398-99). He never did write that other book.

Final Thoughts

So James is really studying our innermost lives—where we, each of us, meet life and death, the universe, what we make of good and evil, of reality—or how we ignore these. Is the keynote, the tone of your life, in there where you are most you, resignation or hope? Many, perhaps most of us, confront these matters by following the thoughts and ways of others. We have perhaps some personal experiences which are somewhere on the spectrum James is studying, a spectrum at the height of which are the mystics who experience God, to use one word for it, or the divine, or whatever lies on the far edge of our subconscious minds.

I submit to you that these individual dispositions toward ultimate things are a huge part of the social forces that act on human beings, part of the world of the mind just as real as the world of the senses, and thus are fit to be studied as part of social science. ■

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Abbreviated WTB.



ALEX LO

The Saint, the Sinner, and the Soul

When Augustine of Hippo began work on his *City of God* in the early fifth century AD, he wrote primarily to defend his fledgling religion, Christianity, against claims that it had brought upon the fall of Rome. Augustine's final work evolved into far more than a defense of the Church, becoming a theological guide that offers understanding of both the terrestrial world he inhabited and the heavenly realm he hoped to one day be admitted to.

Though Augustine asks difficult questions of his faith, it is faith itself that he identifies as what separates the blessed belonging to the City of God from those destined to remain in the Earthly City. The dual themes of sin and soul tangle throughout the volume. Sin, Augustine posits, may surround one's flesh-enclosed body, but it may never engulf and contaminate the soul of a pilgrim heading to the City of God. It is not merely their abstinence from sin that separates the citizens of the City of God from those of the Earthly City—instead it is their devotion to the divine, rather than to temporal relationships or aspirations.

To further establish the dichotomy between the two opposing cities, Augustine characterizes various biblical figures and evaluates how their actions, emotions, and thoughts define their citizenship to either city. While Augustine highlights characters such as Cain, Abel, Sarah and Hagar, his work, despite its immense size, is unable to scrutinize every figure in the Bible. By analyzing the traits—faith primary among them—which Augustine suggests belong to the citizens of each city, one may speculate as to which city any biblical figure belongs. Highlighting Genesis' Lot and Jacob through the context of Augustine illuminates each character's potential to end up a citizen of the Heavenly City or the Earthly City, respectively.

Lot, despite the sin that surrounds the world around him, maintains a clear, unwavering faith in God, setting his soul on a pilgrimage towards the City of God. In the thirteenth chapter of Genesis, Lot and his uncle, Abram, must separate their families and herds as the land they currently settle is no longer fertile enough to support both families. Lot looks upon the lands of Canaan and Jordan, and seeing the promising fertile lands of Jordan, "moved his tent as far as Sodom. Now, the men of Sodom were wicked, great sinners against the Lord." (Gen. 13.12-13) While it can be argued that Lot's decision to move towards the "wicked" city of Sodom destines him to remain

on the Earthly City, Augustine argues the following about the City of God: "It is completely irrelevant to the heavenly city what dress is worn or what manner of life is adopted by each person who follows the faith that is the way to God." (Augustine 879) Essentially, in Augustinian theology, what surrounds one's body is irrelevant in terms of citizenship to the Heavenly City, but what surrounds one's soul is of the utmost importance. Despite inhabiting the single most sinful city mentioned in all of the Bible, Lot maintains his faith in God. Lot, for instance, follows God's instructions in not looking back at the destruction of Sodom. Unfortunately, his wife ignores the heavenly warning, "look[ing] back" and becoming "a pillar of salt." (Gen 19.26) Her action of looking back at Sodom may be interpreted as being wistful, as if she is yearning for the possessions and past she had there. Lot, as a pilgrim to the City of God, feels no such remorse at leaving behind the temporal possessions and life he had in Sodom. For Lot, his relationship with God is above all, and his soul is unaffected by any earthly losses. As a result, Lot feels no reason to look back at Sodom, and avoids the misfortune that befell his wife as God "sent Lot out of the overthrow, when he overthrew the cities in which Lot dwelt." (Gen. 19.29)

Lot's belonging to the Heavenly City is further proven through his relationship with his daughters, in which he puts his soul above his terrestrial life. Lot, for example, shelters angels in his home and protects them from a crowd of lustful Sodomites, offering up his own daughters to the crowd in place of his guests. Later in Lot's story, it is his daughters themselves who challenge Lot's purity when they intoxicate him and sleep with him in an attempt to preserve their family's lineage. While "violation of chastity," according to Augustine, is sinful, any "violation [...] without the will's consent, cannot pollute the character" (Augustine 26). The "sufferer" in this context, although they may feel "a sense of shame" is blameless, as the sin belongs only to those who assaulted them. (Augustine 26) As it is Lot's daughters who bear responsibility for the sins committed during this incident, Lot's soul remains virtuous and destined for the City of God.

In contrast with Lot, Jacob, another character from Genesis, harbors deep connections to his terrestrial world that hold back his spirit from being part of the Heavenly City. Jacob's desire for temporal gains begins at a young age, best demonstrated through Jacob's acquisition of his brother's birthright. Jacob's elder brother, Esau, is set to receive his birthright from his dying father, Isaac. Unbeknownst to their father, Esau had traded away his birthright to his younger brother in exchange for a bowl of soup. Disguised as his brother, Jacob approaches his father carrying hunted game that his

father had asked Esau to bring to earn his birthright. When Isaac asks how the game was caught so quickly, Jacob answers that “the Lord your God granted me success.” (Gen. 27.20) Upon learning of his brother’s deceit, Esau asks to receive a blessing from his beloved father, and pledges to kill his brother for his treachery. Although the two brothers eventually reconcile, their conflict has much in common with that of Romulus and Remus, which Augustine references heavily in his work. Augustine suggests that all cities are created in a similar manner to the “archetypal” brotherly conflict between the founders of Rome, and the fact the Jacob and Esau are the eventual progenitors of two nations relates to Augustine’s conclusion. Like Romulus, Jacob is a brother “overcome with envy” and seeking to “glory in the exercise of power.” (Augustine 600) This jealousy and search for both the temporal power provided by his father’s blessing and the earthly possessions given by the birthright are clear evidence of Jacob’s belonging to the Earthly City. Furthermore, Jacob’s use of the Lord’s name for his personal gains when he lies to his father shows the extent Jacob is willing to go to advance in his terrestrial life. Such temporal things have no meaning in Augustinian theology, while God is “unchangeable, the things created changeable have no real existence.” (Augustine 315) Jacob’s earthly life, therefore, has no value compared to the life of his soul, and thus his attempts to advance his earthly life at the expense of his soul condemn him to remain in the temporal world. Jacob’s vision of the ladder ascending to heaven serves as further evidence of this conclusion, as Jacob dreams of “angels ascending and descending on it.” (Gen 28.12) However, Jacob himself does not join the ladder set on the Earth and reaching to heaven. The ladder is portrayed as distant, a heavenly bridge Jacob is permitted to observe in his dreams but never able to reach out to in his earthly existence. Unlike the souls of the citizens of the City of God, Jacob’s soul is no “stranger” to the Earthly City, the City which both his body and spirit commit to fully.

The duality established by Augustine in *City of God* provides a new lens for characterizing biblical characters. But in considering the words of Augustine, one must remember the importance of the soul in heavenly judgement. The citizenship of Lot in the City of God and Jacob in the Earthly City attest to just how powerful the soul is in contrast with all aspects of temporal life. It is the soul that is either tarnished or protected, and a virtuous soul is the price of entry into eternity. ■

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JOY LIN

Reaching for Immortality

不失其所者久,死而不亡者壽 *The one who can follow the path of the sage without getting lost accomplishes immortality.* – Lao-Tzu

Aristotle states in the *Nicomachean Ethics* that the most divine activity of all must be contemplation (1178b). Through intelligence and contemplation “we should try to become immortal as far as this is possible” (1178a). On the other hand, Lao-Tzu in the Tao Te Ching claimed that “non-action,” living quietly with spirit and intelligence, should be the path to which sages are devoted (2,3). These two statements appear to contradict each other since one is busy moving forward and the other seeks to leisurely slow down. However, beneath the surface, Aristotle and Lao-Tzu both have the same aim for the desirable life that sages or philosophers can achieve: moderation. Put Aristotle and Lao-Tzu on different sides of the scales, and we attain equilibrium. This demonstrates that contemplation and non-action are introverted powers that greatly change the world without being noticed.

If we interpret the *Nicomachean Ethics* and the Tao Te Ching in the literal way, paradox and contradictions occur; but if we analyze the meaning behind the words, we can discover more similarities. Aristotle claims that there is “no pleasure without activity” and suggests that the highest pleasure is contemplation (1175a). Therefore, this deduces that contemplation must be performed through action. As a result, this statement appears contrary to Lao-Tzu’s *wu wei* (non-action). However, Aristotle also argues that “production has an end other than itself, but action does not; good action is itself an end” (1110b). Production is like a line; it has a starting point, a path and an end. A good action, on the other hand, is like a dot and it itself is a start, path and end. We cannot see the attempt to draw a dot but only the result. In this case, production is more like an action and good action is more like a non-action.

Similarly, Lao-Tzu stated, “Act without acting/ Serve without serving...Therefore the Sage/ Never attempts great things/ And so accomplish them” (63). He indicates that the sages do not attempt but accomplish; and their non-action contributes to the same end as an action. Hence, what serves as a non-action for Laozi serves a good action for Aristotle. As Lao-Tzu says: “True words resemble their opposites” (78).

Aiming at the same goal of desirable life, Aristotle and Lao-Tzu are both against

extremes and instead claim that moderation, or “the mean,” is the path sages or philosophers should seek. As Aristotle says, “As regards honor and dishonor, the mean is high-mindedness, the excess is what we might call vanity, and the deficiency small-mindedness” (II, 7: 1107b). Therefore, the mean is more favorable than the extreme and thus receiving excessive praise can be detrimental to one’s reputation. This corresponds to Lao-Tzu’s message that the highest virtue (Te) is not a real virtue because chasing after reputation is an overly ambitious act (33). During the 1960s, Mao Zedong, the chairman of the Chinese Cultural Revolution, was praised so excessively by the Red Guards that the revolution brought about a cult of personality. Mao’s followers believed that the purpose of the Cultural Revolution was to bring equality and rights to the poor. Yet the real purpose of the revolution was to regain Mao’s diminished power after the failure of Mao’s previous policy, the Great Leap Forward, a campaign that aimed to boost industrialization but resulted in the breakdown of the economy. For Mao, his previous failure was a grave dishonor which drove his desire for power and success. The Cultural Revolution resulted in a chaotic riot when Mao no longer pursued people’s rights but his own private ambition. Therefore, Lao-Tzu says: “Don’t glorify heroes, / And people will not contend” (3). Being overly praised will lead to the corruption of virtue, and failure to follow the way of moderation will cause high-mindedness to deteriorate into vanity.

Similarly, Aristotle and Lao-Tzu both value the accomplishments achieved through non-action more than any other practical activities. Aristotle indicates that contemplation does not need further action to achieve (1178b). An act without action, contemplation, is therefore a non-action that induces a more powerful impact than other actions. Lady Aung San Suu Kyi devotes her life to the promotion of social democracy for the Burmese. She was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize not because of her action but her “non-action.” When Aung San Suu Kyi was placed under house arrest by the military regime, State Peace and Development Council, she patiently endured rather than appealing against the unreasonable sentence. During the twenty years of her house arrest, Aung San Suu Kyi spent most of her time studying and contemplating. Through “Repelling without opposing, / Wielding without a weapon” (69), Suu Kyi achieved Lao-Tzu’s non-action with nonviolent contemplation. Lao-Tzu suggests that non-action could trigger the transformation of people, and Suu Kyi’s story validates this (57). After twenty years under house arrest, Suu Kyi was finally released and Burma had been transformed into a more democratic country. Compared to a violent riot or a cowardly retreat, the achievement of non-action along with contemplation is moderate

yet mighty.

Thus, both the *Ethics* and the Tao support the idea that contemplation and non-action can have a virtuous impact on the world. Yet this great impact is seldom noticed because it appears in a moderate way. Aristotle states the virtue of contemplation is the most divine and therefore immortal part of us and is above any kind of practical activity (1177b). The example of Lady Aung San Suu Kyi confirms this idea by successfully changing a nation without using force. On the other hand, Mao was unable to follow Lao-Tzu's words, "Maintaining gentleness is called strength" (52), and his extreme actions led to chaos. As Aristotle says, "moderation is the point of excellence" (1119b), so we know that contemplation and non-action follow moderation.

Through the theories and accounts in the *Nicomachean Ethics* and the Tao Te Ching, we realize the serene power of contemplation and non-action upon the world. Just as the Earth rotates without people noticing, this moderate power can be maintained because it will not go towards the extreme. Going to the extremes may result in insufficiencies or extravagances; being moderate is the continuous path that will not perish and, therefore, immortal. Moderation is like resonance, contemplation like plucking the strings. If one string is plucked, the other strings will also vibrate without even being touched. Even though the string we plucked stopped vibrating, the others will keep going. The resonance is subtle but maintains the tune continuously. The way of sages or philosophers resembles resonance, moderate and enduring. Therefore, following the path of moderation through non-action and contemplation will allow for immortality to be achieved. ■

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KYNA HAMILL

Scattering *Solitary Reveries*

Down from the Heights

The sound of the waves

My soul took me by surprise.

There came to mind impressions,

Continuous movement.

Apart, I spent my time.

Brief moments,

Intense,

Scattered

Fleeting,

Short-lived, in constant flux.

Pleasure fills the soul, this state.

Wherever the water took it,

Over the stones.

(based on lines from the Fifth Walk of *Reveries of
a Solitary Walker* by Jean-Jacques Rousseau)



TIFFANY MAKOVIC

Talking to Myself

AN EMPTY STAGE. Three figures sit facing one another under a spotlight on an empty stage. Each embodies a different version of Hamlet: Hamlet as portrayed by MEL Gibson; Hamlet as US—the collective view that society has of Hamlet, which approaches the status of an archetype—and HAMLET as the narrow, nearly-human version written by Shakespeare.

I refer to the collective-view version of Hamlet as “US,” before changing the name of the character, later in the narrative, to “ME.” This new first-person name represents a view of the world from a subjective standpoint. As we, readers, come to understand Hamlet in a more big-picture view, our view of him evolves, becoming narrower, and we are able to attach our understanding to a more specific set of personal experience.

US: “To be, or not to be: that is the question: whether ‘tis nobler in the mind to suffer the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune, or to take arms against a sea of troubles, and by opposing end them...”

MEL: Well, go on then.

US: I seem to have forgotten the rest.

HAMLET: ‘Tis no matter. We will hire you a playwright to spoon-feed the words your clever mind can’t locate.

MEL: (*chortles*) Even then, can we count on his acting not to clash with undirected speech?

HAMLET: Come now—to sharpen your words with intention to murder rather than spur bloodies your weapon and makes waste of a body. We can count on him, for an impressionable man is he, and to say lines with conviction instead of pompousness would at least surpass performances of the clowns hereabouts.

US: Perhaps it begins, “To be or not to be, aye, there’s the point to die, to sleep; is that all? Aye, all.”

MEL: What is your affliction?

US: I have many—ones that trouble us all: life and love and true madness.

MEL: Of madness I’ve heard little from the majority. What is the cause?

US: Lust for thy mother. Or it is prompted by the anger of heinous uncles who act on the jealousy of their brother.

HAMLET: Lust for thy mother? How now, ‘tis a terrible disease, but not a plague.

Even incestuous uncles marry for reasons other than lust, for age tempers hot blood.

MEL: My blood *burns*—and for Ophelia.

HAMLET: Ah, yes, Ophelia. If love were not so detestably womanish, perhaps she would have made a wife. The pain of rejecting desire so tempting still stings me. To a nunnery she should have gone, where at least rivalry with God would have warded off my ill sense.

US: (*lifting skull*) Well, he has her now.

MEL: Only her image haunts us, 'tis preferable to a ghost.

HAMLET: Ay, damned ghosts. They only serve to stir up the past, leaving you to instigate the violence on your own.

US: Right you are. At the sight of our father I found myself incapable of making up my mind, caught between two customs—that of respecting the will of mother along with the order of the monarch, and the other of doing God's work to ensure our father's redemption. If it weren't for Kings and Queens, I surely would have acted sooner.

MEL: Vengeance and the madness that overwhelmed me at the vision of King Hamlet's ghost was enough to incite *me* to kill. Polonius and Laertes were necessary casualties if I was going to have at my prize. His image didn't affect you in this way?

HAMLET: The late Hamlet our father made me feel guilt and sorrow, though there was no incendiary passion. I found my fire through scornful acts: the Mousetrap play and Laertes' rejection of my mourning.

US: But Claudius wasn't killed after watching *the play*.

HAMLET: No. Claudius ended it early—before the Queen could remarry. The Player King was dead for all of two seconds before springing to his feet with spurious poison dripping from his ears. And then I found Claudius on his knees, praying. It diffused my animosity for him, though not his crime. I had to believe that retribution would be invalid if I acted in God's name while he was knocking on His door. Without that justification, I would have been beguiled further into passivity.

US: Then Laertes was the cause?

HAMLET: Only in my fervor—in my desire for a battle. Years of playing taught me too much technical skill to permit those desires to turn to malice. Meanwhile, however, he watched mother die. That incestuous, murderous Dane.

MEL: But Claudius was doomed from the moment we began sparring! I had a sword as well as poison!

US: You forget that our anger wavers. To me, the King's impending death became clear

when Laertes assured me that he was to blame for mother's death. How unnecessary to have spare poison. At least he had faith in my playing skill.

MEL: In the end we killed him twice: in fury and utter madness.

US: Yes, using the blade to pin him and the drink to assure his death. Laertes died by his own sword, and so too should Claudius die by his own poison.

HAMLET: Also, the envenomed sword was taking too long to kill. Mother died instantly, while I was still living. I had to see him dead.

US: To be, or not to be, that is the question:
 Whether 'tis Nobler in the mind to suffer.
 The Slings and Arrows of outrageous Fortune,
 Or to take Arms against a Sea of troubles,
 And by opposing end them: to die, to sleep.

HAMLET: No more—And by a sleep to say we end
 The heartache, and the thousand natural shocks
 That flesh is heir to!
 'Tis a consummation Devoutly to be wished.
 To die, to sleep—To sleep—perchance to dream:
 Ay, there's the rub...

ME: We are all suffering inside our own minds—in our dreams and imaginations. The ghosts that haunt us aren't always recognized by everyone. Though we may still try to reveal them.

MEL: No! As madness consumes us we should recede further into the depths of our mind, where we can endure the pain alone, for no one really understands.

HAMLET: Ho! Barnardo, Marcellus, Horatio! They saw my ghost—they saw his image before me!

ME: But they could only hear and understand his motivations when you had finally came to acknowledge him.

MEL: Even Gertrude didn't understand!

HAMLET: Mother never wanted to. Why would she choose to acknowledge the death of her husband and the torture she inflicted on her son?

ME: She would have raised her own ghost. ■



CAROLINE CUBBAGE

Appreciating Artemisia

The Renaissance is not just a significant period in which great happenings took place. Rather, it represents a heavily sought after, idealized way of life that emulated the great empires of the past and brought their glory and opulence into the present. The themes, techniques, and styles of the Renaissance still inspire countless artists today, just as they did Artemisia Gentileschi. She deeply admired the stories and historical figures that the old masters brought back to life through color, light and depth. She hoped to do the same, in her own way and in her own style. Not only was she a talented painter, she was also a gifted mind who revolutionized the way that females were depicted in art through her heroine portraits. Artemisia became a prominent Renaissance-esque painter in the Baroque period due to how she incorporated realism and naturalism in her heroine feature portraits while still maintaining respect for the traditional aspects of the subject matter she was depicting.

Artemisia Gentileschi was born in Rome in 1593, daughter to Orazio Gentileschi, the famous Baroque artist (Art History Archive). Artemisia was introduced to and trained in painting by her father. She was deeply influenced by his work, as well as other prominent Renaissance masters, specifically Caravaggio. Artemisia quickly came into her own as a talented artist, completing her first commission when she was seventeen years old. In order to further her artistic career, her father hired a private tutor, Agostino Tassi. Not long after she came under his tutelage, Tassi sexually assaulted the young artist. When it became clear that Tassi had no intention of marrying Artemisia, Orazio pressed charges in an attempt to restore his daughter's dignity and reputation. The case was taken to trial and Tassi was sentenced to prison, but he never served time. The experience had a great impact on Artemisia's life and work, and she began to narrow her focus to independent women of mythology and biblical stories.

Shortly after the incident, Artemisia married Pierantonio Stiattesi, an artist from Florence. They moved to Florence and started a family, both engaging in successful careers thanks to the plethora of commissions offered by the Medici and royalty alike. Artemisia was able to shed the shackles of her past and embrace the new life and success that Florence offered. She became a prominent court painter and made influential friends, such as Galileo. It was in Florence that she painted one of her most notable works, "Judith Slaying Holofernes." She was the first woman to be accepted into the

Accademia delle Arti del Disegno del Firenze, the renowned art academy with such illustrious members as Michelangelo and Leonardo da Vinci.

Unfortunately, bliss did not last long for Artemisia and Pierantonio. Soon financial troubles caught up to them, putting stress on their marriage. Artemisia left him, taking herself and her daughter, Prudentia, back to Rome hoping for a fresh start. Alas, her success in Florence did not follow her to Rome, as she found it difficult to live as a female artist with no connections. In reaction to difficult times, her style became less defiant and intense and focused on traditional portraiture.

Artemisia led a tumultuous life compared to other women of her time. Her work and technique reflected the constant changes in her life, which served her well as it displayed a multi-faceted and capable artist. Between her early career, her marriage and divorce, and her constant traveling, Artemisia experienced plenty of events that strongly impacted her life and her work. It is clear when examining her work that Artemisia had a fascination with women and their potential for heroism. After Artemisia's mother died when she was only twelve years old, she spent most of her life around men. She had no real female interaction until her father took in a renter, a woman by the name of Tuzia. The two became fast friends, and Tuzia served as a sort of mentor to Artemisia. Their relationship was shattered, however, when, on the day that Agostino Tassi took advantage of her, Tuzia ignored her calls for help. This abandonment deeply affected Artemisia as it caused her to examine more closely the relationships among women and discover the importance of female solidarity and community (Benedetti 47).

Although the incident had the potential to destroy her life and the possibility of a career, she moved forward and threw herself into a world rarely charted by women. Not only did she survive, she thrived: "The story of Gentileschi's triumph over events that could have condemned her to failure constitutes a kind of positive counterpart to the image of female talent doomed to destruction by a male-dominated world" (Benedetti 45). Artemisia is a woman to be emulated and admired for her grit and her fearlessness for not only pursuing a career commanded by men, but for also expressing her views in a confrontational but beautiful manner. Now seen as a feminist icon since her renewed fame in the 1970's, she is recognized for her great strides in attempting to change the view of women in the seventeenth century. She did so by presenting historical women as strong individuals capable of all things that men are. As Edward L. Goldberg said, "In the years that followed, she produced some of the most compelling images of female heroism and female victimization in art" (547).

Artemisia started her artistic career with full force: "Her earliest known work, the

signed and dated 'Susanna and the Elders' in Pommersfelden, shows her as a talented, self-assured and stylistically independent artist at age seventeen" (Lippincott 444). Having been trained by her father in the techniques and styles of the Renaissance and been heavily focused on Caravaggio, Artemisia was expected to create works identical to her father's and to those of the famous Old Masters of the Renaissance. However, Artemisia managed to find common ground between both her traditional training and her more nuanced ideas. Through "Susanna and the Elders," Artemisia showcases a unique, feminist style while also emulating the classic themes of the past.

Although Artemisia is considered to be a Baroque artist because of her time period, her interest in the Old Masters resulted in a style extremely reminiscent of Renaissance themes and techniques. The Renaissance was all about incorporating the old with the new and bringing the beauty of Greek and Roman classicism into a modern setting. She drew upon all the ancient resources she had, while still developing a style uniquely her own, evocative of the past and the present. As Kristen Lippincott writes,

Her style demonstrated a sophisticated blend of the finest aspects of Italian art spanning the previous century: Caravaggistic realism and dramatic lighting, bold compositions reminiscent of Bolognese classicism and High Renaissance Rome and the sumptuous details of the mid-sixteenth century Tuscan Maneira. (444)

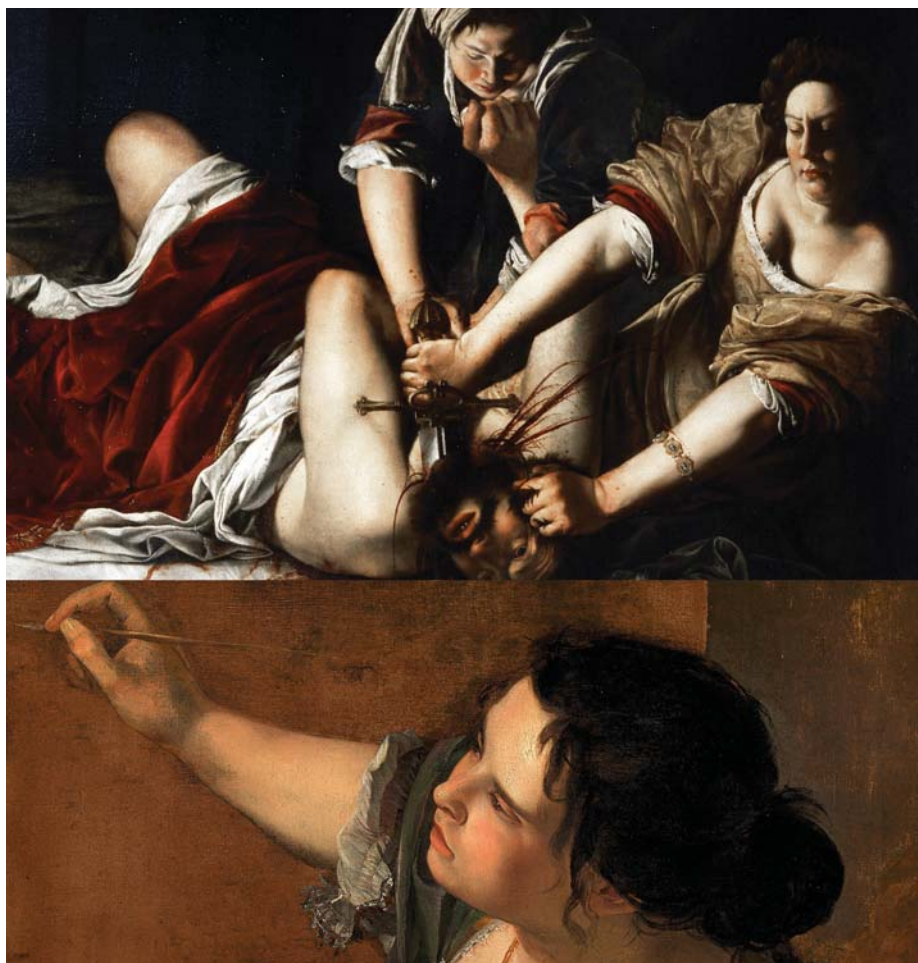
She used techniques like chiaroscuro and tenebrism that were introduced by Caravaggio, but opted for a more realistic and naturalistic depiction of life and people.

Artemisia capitalized on the opportunity that the Renaissance gave her to transform the past. More often than not, female subjects in paintings were depicted as weak, unintelligent and impulsive beings with no character depth in order to highlight the stronger male figures:

In Renaissance and Baroque art... acts of female heroism often suffered an extreme dislocation of the meaning. The staunchly moral Susanna was thus transformed into a lubricious tease, the dutiful and patriotic Judith into a deceitful courtesan, and the virtuous and home-loving Lucretia into a perverse débauché. (Goldberg 547)

In an effort to restore these women's reputations and give them the honor and credit they deserved, Artemisia depicted them as strong, self-sufficient women with no need or want for male intervention.

The quest for redemption Artemisia undertook only furthered her now famous feminist image: “Artemisia as an innovatively protofeminist figure, whose brilliant re-interpretations of traditional subjects produced unprecedented characterizations of women in Italian painting” (Bohn 275). Her ability to weave the stories of the Renaissance with the techniques of the present was intriguing and engaging to art buyers: “Her innovative approach to religious and classical iconography would have pleased those patrons who yearned for a taste of the ‘new’” (Lippincott 444). Nobody was quite



Top: “Judith Slaying Holofernes,” c.1614-20, in the National Museum of Capodimonte. Bottom: “Self-portrait as the Allegory of Painting,” c.1638-9, on display in Buckingham Palace. Both cropped.

ready to let go of the beauty that the Renaissance offered, yet they were still interested in the ever-changing artistic climate, and Artemisia successfully bridged that gap.

One of the finest examples of Artemisia's heroine works is "Judith Beheading Holofernes" from 1620. It is also one of her most famous pieces of art simply because of its gruesome and aggressive nature. It draws the fascinated viewer in with its blood and gore: "Judith is in the act of cutting the head from Holofernes' neck, a work so well realized and expressed with such vivid colors that whoever sees it is filled with revulsion" (Locker 30). Here, Judith and her maidservant are seen decapitating the Assyrian general Holofernes because he and his troops are about to storm Judith's city, Bethulia. Holofernes took a liking to Judith, a widow, and invited her to his tent and got drunk, giving Judith the opportunity to kill him before he could kill her people.

The image is full of physical tension, shown through the sharp angles and twisted movements. The dark colors and intense contrasts give the painting an ominous, sinister feel. The strength of Holofernes is shown by his immense size, making it all the more impressive that the two women were able to overpower him. But the real focus of the painting is the blood exploding from the general's neck, signaling a suspended moment in time. The painting is pure movement, restless energy flowing through it and manifested in the brutal action of slowly separating head from body. The violence of the painting is strictly anti-feminine, which is exactly what Artemisia wanted to achieve (Locker 31). There is a certain formidable aura surrounding Judith, clearly observable in her contorted facial features. The painting is clearly modeled after Caravaggio's own interpretation of the story and draws heavily from his use of deep contrast. She again combines the fantasies and techniques of the Renaissance with the themes of the modern world and woman. Because it is thought that Holofernes took advantage of Judith, many critics believe this is actually a self-portrait (Garrard 98). The story would serve as a perfect opportunity for revenge, fulfilling Artemisia's need for vengeance.

Another integral painting in Artemisia's repertoire is one of her later paintings, "Self-Portrait as the Allegory of Painting" from 1638. In this exquisite work, Artemisia took her crusade for women a step further by putting herself in the spotlight. In mythology, the arts were represented as female figures, Muses or Graces. Painting, too, was represented by a woman, giving Artemisia the perfect vessel to further establish herself as a prominent artist amongst the men around her: "Because of her identity as a woman, Artemisia was in a position to take creative advantage of the allegorical tradition, and to make a statement that was at once more humble and more profound" (Garrard 107). She put herself in a position of which no man was capable, giving herself

immense power and authority as the allegory of painting herself: “The artist emerges forcefully as the living embodiment of the allegory” (Garrard 106). Artemisia successfully presented herself, a woman, not only proficient in her profession, but flourishing in it. She seamlessly combined her womanhood with her trade, “uniting in a single image two themes that male artists has been obliged to treat separately, even though these themes often carried the same basic message” (Garrard 97).

While Artemisia Gentileschi may not be as world-renowned today as some other male artists equal in talent and exposure, she deeply impacted artists who came after her and their understanding of the Renaissance. She quite literally added a woman’s touch to a profession so dominated by men and to a movement that had the tendency to overshadow the strength of the female figure. Artemisia showed that the female form should not be just admired for its beauty, as it was in the Renaissance, but also for its strength and spirit. She proved that women are more than just beings of grace and propriety, and that they are capable of overcoming any adversity in their way. Artemisia possessed a remarkable capability for emulating and honoring the past while still experimenting with her modern ideas and techniques, truly encapsulating the spirit of the Renaissance. Through her beautiful and eye-opening works, Artemisia Gentileschi joined the legacy of the masters before her and became a true Renaissance woman. ■

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SOFIKO PIPIA

Cartesian Rhapsody

I fear being shaken out of them because I am afraid that my peaceful sleep may be followed by hard labour when I wake, and that I shall have to struggle not in the light but in the imprisoning darkness of the problems I have raised.

Meditations on First Philosophy

A LIVING ROOM. *Standing, DESCARTES watches his body where it sits, slumped, asleep in an armchair before a fire. Two other people sit on the couches nearby—a man, CALLIAS, and a woman, ELIZABETH.*

CALLIAS: Prove to me that this is your dream.

DESCARTES: I know, without a doubt, that I am dreaming because I can see myself sleeping over there. I cannot think of a surer way to prove that one is asleep than seeing oneself without looking into a mirror.

ELIZABETH: But that's not you, is it? That's your body.

DESCARTES: It is the body that belongs to me.

ELIZABETH: It is a body that resembles yours. We do, after all, agree that this is just a dream, do we not?

CALLIAS: And is our only basis for that the two René's?

DESCARTES: Do we need any more? Reality is distorted to the point where it must no longer be reality.

CALLIAS: How do we know this is not the true reality?

DESCARTES: Because I know that I am asleep; reality is the waking world.

ELIZABETH: Would it not simply be whatever your mind experiences? My mind is experiencing this, so why should it be any less real than when I am awake?

DESCARTES: This state is induced by your body being asleep. Your mind is not at its clearest because it is being influenced by bodily needs.

ELIZABETH: But I am not my body, so any reality I experience is a valid one.

CALLIAS: Is it? Don't we have to trust our senses in waking reality? We certainly do not comprehend it through reason. If we are indeed our minds and our thoughts, then reality must lay in reason, like mathematics.

DESCARTES: You are right in a sense; we cannot trust perception. We cannot be

sure that our senses are not being tampered with. Mathematics could also be a forced perception because it is not innate. We cannot trust it unreservedly, but we can tell apart dreams from reality and separate our minds from our bodies.

ELIZABETH: Exactly! I can imagine separating the body from its faculties, but does that make a dream any less real? The mind is separated from the body this way; the soul weighed down by slumber, but not actually distracted by the body's desires at that time.

DESCARTES: But we cannot take that separation to mean independence and perfect sovereignty over our thoughts. We are all still subjects of God and at His mercy.

CALLIAS: Are you saying that even our reason could be contested? What makes us people? Is there no free will?

DESCARTES: You are not people; you are figments of my imagination preventing a good night's rest.

CALLIAS: These doubts are constantly within you and you can only converse on these matters here, in the privacy of a dream in which you watch yourself sleep.

ELIZABETH: I can tell that I am dreaming as well! Why am I not the dreamer? What makes you so special?

DESCARTES: Perhaps you are right. I can only be sure of my own existence and can only extrapolate my state through reason. I do not truly know what state you are in or whether or not you exist but I doubt it.

ELIZABETH: If we are fiction, does that make you God?

CALLIAS: Am I to fear for my existence every time your eyes flutter?

DESCARTES: Certainly not.

ELIZABETH: But if you are responsible for everything in this particular reality then are you not both God and the Demon? Am *I* your God or Demon? I have yet to convince you of something you did not already believe, so I doubt anyone has power over you in this reality.

DESCARTES: This is why, once again, dreams are different from the waking world. God can deceive me in real life, and I can misunderstand reality because he wills it so or because the Demon is tricking me. Dreams are separate, less real, a deception.

CALLIAS: So, I am a deception.

DESCARTES: If we are not one? Certainly. If we are? Probably still.

CALLIAS: Could I not also be the Demon, or even God, since you're so quick to throw the title away?

DESCARTES: I cannot prove the contrary. It is more likely that you are either of

them than another person present in my mind. If you are indeed something other than my imagination, only a being of higher power could interact with my thoughts in this way

CALLIAS: And this “being of higher power” is a liar? If God lies why would anyone follow him?

DESCARTES: Not many people condemn him so. They do not know or think to inquire into the validity of something that seems so self-evident.

ELIZABETH: They do not know about the God that has the power to change perceptions? In seventeenth-century Europe, you truly think anyone is publicly disputing the existence of God?

DESCARTES: Of course, they know about God but they trust Him implicitly, the authority of the church should not have the hold it does over knowledge

ELIZABETH: Yet you claim you are a man of god.

DESCARTES fidgets.

DESCARTES: I most certainly am.

ELIZABETH: Yet all you needed Him for was to create you and the world, what further use is he to you other than a *deus ex machina*? You toss God away in favor of yourself and hide behind pious words.

CALLIAS: Does it matter what he believes if it explains the workings of the world?

ELIZABETH: It does not explain them.

CALLIAS: Yet it is necessary to present them in an agreeable way for a people too long influenced by their church to accept new ideas.

ELIZABETH: These are not new ideas; He has not truly given us anything new. The soul has been conceptually separate from the body since the time of Socrates, the definition of reality contested since before Pythagoras. All he has given us is doubt and if he were a true empiricist you would never have tried to quell it.

CALLIAS: An idea does not have to be completely original to be modern.

DESCARTES: I provided a manual for anyone wishing to learn, from the very, very beginning what we know and what we can know. A method through which we can and will develop sciences.

ELIZABETH: The only merit you should receive is for your connections and status. All your regurgitated ideas could only hold with those too lazy to read previous volumes and simply desire a summary.

DESCARTES: I cast doubt on everything so that we could start at the true beginning of knowledge and be certain of the few things we do know; it had not truly occurred

to people to doubt something so fundamental as existence.

ELIZABETH: You did not invent doubt; Meno did not even believe man could have knowledge.

DESCARTES: Meno was an idiot. No sane person would ever truly doubt their own existence, it is simply the starting point because most other ideas are not so clearly true. Besides, you do not have to be the first to do something in order to do it well, nor do my ideas match up exactly to those of the ancients.

CALLIAS: Some of the ideas may not be new but that does not lessen their impact. The Aristotelian tradition was stagnating our minds, we could not progress if we did not abandon it.

ELIZABETH: It is an impact more dependent on good timing.

CALLIAS: Only marginally, the effect would not have been the same if the people had not been yearning for a change. The emancipation of the self from God and the church was necessary for developing philosophy and the sciences. His phrasing is not radical to the point where people reject it in fear. The mediations take the reader by the hand and try to keep him or her comfortable.

DESCARTES: It is not atheism at all that I want to purport, but a long awaited anthropocentrism. God will not simply hand knowledge over; he may even impede our search for it. The only authority a person can truly have on this matter is his or her own.

CALLIAS: Whether your works get banned in the future or not, you've changed human self-perception. That in itself is an accomplishment few others can claim...

ELIZABETH: ...Though you have left us with more questions than answers. Skepticism, in its very nature, will never be resolved.

CALLIAS: At least it will keep people busy for a couple of centuries to come.

DESCARTES: One can only hope.

ELIZABETH: Awfully self-congratulatory dream you're having here.

A ringing bell noise steadily rises in volume.

CALLIAS: Probably the sanest one in a while.

ELIZABETH: It should be over soon.

CALLIAS: Christina is waiting.

ELIZABETH: Don't keep us waiting.

DESCARTES opens his eyes, he is lying in bed, enveloped completely in darkness. The ringing continues. ■

LYDIA ERICKSON

Malinowski and the Kula: Gift Economy & Social Order Among the Trobriand Islanders

The Kula is a form of exchange, of extensive, inter-tribal character; it is carried on by communities inhabiting a wide ring of islands, which form a closed circuit... Along this route, articles of two kinds, and these two kinds only, are constantly travelling in opposite directions. In the direction of the hands of a clock, moves constantly one of these kinds—long necklaces of red shell, called *soulava*. In the opposite direction moves the other kind—bracelets of white shell called *mwali*. Each of these articles, as it travels in its own direction on the closed circuit, meets on its way articles of the other class, and is constantly being exchanged for them. Every movement of the Kula articles, every detail of the transactions is fixed and regulated by a set of traditional rules and conventions, and some acts of the Kula are accompanied by an elaborate magical ritual and public ceremonies. (Malinowski 81)

The Kula is a system of symbolic exchange in which objects are traded for social prestige. Participants are male and often inherit the role of Kula partner. The Kula items are very different than Western objects of value in that they are apparently not meant to have ornamental value—they are rarely worn—but are instead valued for their “historic sentimentalism” (89). Each item is known by “its individual name, [and] round each there is a sort of history and romance in the traditions of the natives” (89). Possession of Kula items not only brings status to the owner, but also shows “the importance and glory of the village” (89) that they reside in. Despite the appeal of keeping one of these items, certain stigmas surround possessing the object for too long, with one year being the socially acceptable maximum. Malinowski writes, “A man who is in the Kula never keeps any article for longer than, say, a year or two. Even this exposes him to the reproach of being niggardly” (94). Social law keeps the pattern of exchange going and creates a system of relationships and hierarchies among people. A gift cannot be returned too quickly, lest the exchange seem like barter, or “gimwali” (96), nor can it be exchanged too slowly, lest the exchanger come across as tight-fisted.

Malinowski adds that the task of finding “the equivalent [gift] rests with the giver, and cannot be enforced” (98), although the original giver can certainly raise a complaint about the quality of the received gift. The Kula “welds together a considerable number of tribes, and it embraces a vast complex of activities, interconnected, and playing into one another, so as to form one organic whole” (83), which results in the creation of social order among otherwise unrelated islands.

Reimagining Primitive Economies

The view that the native can live in a state of individual search for food, or catering for his own household only, in isolation from any interchange of goods, implies a calculating, cold egotism, the possibility of enjoyment by man of utilities for their sake. This view, and all the previously criticized assumptions, ignore the fundamental human impulse to display, to share, to bestow. They ignore the deep tendency to create social ties through exchange of gifts. (175)

The idea that a person could be happy with objects alone is culturally inspired. People are naturally social beings, as Aristotle asserts. In a turn of phrase, Malinowski adds a social dimension to Adam Smith’s famous proposition that human beings have a propensity to “truck, barter, and exchange,” replacing them with the human impulses revealed by the gift economy to display, share, and bestow.

Critical Perspectives on Malinowski’s Gift Economy

In Markus Giesler’s article “Consumer Gift Systems,” he discusses the work of Mauss and Malinowski on gift economies and comes to the conclusion that “gift giving is viewed as a fundamental social system...[which] affects the economic, legal, political, and religious spheres of society and fulfills important functions in their development and continuity” (Giesler). In societies with gift economies, the act of gift-giving holds these societies together and affects every aspect of the citizens’ lives. These economies contribute to social order through their three key elements: “(1) its social distinctions, (2) its norm of reciprocity, and (3) its rituals and symbolisms” (Giesler). By creating a hierarchy within the system, forming social relationships, and establishing unifying customs, gift-giving creates social order—not only in gift economies, but in our own. Colin Camerer’s article “Gifts as Economic Signals and Social Symbols” reinforces this claim, making mention not only of the Trobriands but of Northwestern Indian potlatches. Camerer’s section on the anthropological interpretation of gift-giving suggests that “[t]he potlatch and similar orgies of gift giving suggests that primi-

tive gift giving helps clarify social roles, wealth, or status” (Camerer). In a gift economy, generosity becomes the highest social good, and fulfills the same psychological and social need for order that money or government would in a capitalist society.

Conclusion

While Western, ‘modern’ societies have long entertained the notion of the social contract as the basis of social order, ‘primitive’ societies have been operating well without the social contract or a government for some time. Through the use of gift economies, primitive societies—such as that of the Trobrianders—are able to create social hierarchies, reciprocal relationships, and cultural rituals which maintain social order in much the same way Western governments do. In fact, one could argue that societies like the Trobrianders maintain social order more efficiently than Western governments, if one considers that the most aggressive action one can take in a gift economy is to throw a bigger party.

In *The Federalist Papers*, James Madison says that the role of government is to counteract the worst in human nature, and that “ambition must be made to counteract ambition.” The Trobrianders’ ‘primitive’ gift economy is able to fulfill this essential role of government as well as, if not better than, our own system. Perhaps instead of trying to learn about ‘savage’ societies, or about ourselves through them, we should try to learn from them. It would be a better world if, instead of invading other countries, we invited them to dinner. ■

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KONRAD HERATH

Masculinity and Homoeroticism in Milton's *Paradise Lost*

Whilst there is much to be said on the subject of masculinity in John Milton's writing and life, there is very little on the Englishman's regard for the homoerotic elements in his epic, *Paradise Lost*. Much is known about Milton's life, including his strong belief in the virtuousness of masculinity and the dominance of men. This stance seems to have had a profound impact on the power dynamic between his Adam and Eve, the accent on which is even stronger than what is found in *Genesis*. Indeed, "Hee for God only, shee for God in Him" (Milton Book IV, 299) is the epic poem's classic example of Milton's affinity for the superiority of Adam and men in general. Most intriguing about this misogyny is that it has made room in the text for certain homoerotic passages that, surprisingly, are not portrayed in a negative light in accordance with Christian doctrine. In fact, in Book VIII, there is even a positive connotation surrounding homosexual acts and relationships. Despite Milton's silence on the subject of sodomy, as with masculinity, aspects of the poet's life can be analyzed to understand the presence of these phenomena in his greatest work.

In many ways, Milton's views on sex and sexuality were exceptionally revolutionary for the day. With regard to the sexual act itself, Milton championed it as a sacred and glorious union, contrary to much of the more conservative and Puritan thinking of the seventeenth century. The most famous example of this in *Paradise Lost* is Satan's reaction to witnessing the pre-Fall lovemaking of Adam and Eve: "Sight hateful, sight tormenting! thus these two / Imparadis't in one another's arms / ... shall enjoy their fill / Of bliss on bliss, while I to Hell am thrust" (Milton Book IV, 505-508). In its pure and proper state, the physical union of man and woman is a beautiful, lust-free act, which is so hateful to the Devil that he is filled with envy and rage. The sight upsets him so that it causes him to bemoan his own fate, craving such divine intimacy. Returning to the life of the author, it should also be noted that he was rather progressive on the subject of divorce. After having left his first wife, Milton published *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* (1643), wherein he provides a moral and Christian basis for divorce, which would (supposedly) be advantageous for both husband and wife. Milton was naturally criticized for the work, accused of being "the deviser of a new and pernicious paradox"

(Parker 244). Even though its purported purpose is egalitarian, Milton's approach to divorce is still heavily influenced by male dominance. Most notably, Milton had a near-violent response to the idea of women having the prerogative to separate: "Palpably uxorious! Who can be ignorant that woman was created for man, and not man for woman" (Turner 220). This statement manifests itself most famously in the aforementioned passage from Book IV of *Paradise Lost* (albeit with less rage). With the exception of this profound misogyny, Milton's stance on sex and divorce brings into question the possibility of a certain liberal worldview. Given his fondness for republicanism, this is worth considering.

Under the umbrella of masculinity, the subject of emasculation arguably, and ironically, receives the most attention in *Paradise Lost*. Specifically, Milton asserts that it was in fact Eve's emasculation of Adam which led to the Fall of Man. After having been punished by God for having eaten of the forbidden fruit, the archangel Michael flies down to Eden to share with Adam visions of the future, so that he may know that all is not lost. During the sequence, Adam comments, "But still I see the tenor of Man's woe / Holds on the same, from Woman to begin," to which Michael replies: "From Man's effeminate slackness it begins" (Milton Book XI, 632-634). The popular belief on the origin of sin, here put forth by Adam, is that it was Woman who brought death into the world, but Milton goes even further by suggesting that it was instead due to a lapse in Adam's masculinity. On the diction of "effeminate," editor Christopher Ricks notes the following connotation: "unmanly, with a suggestion of 'dominated by women.'" The notion of Adam being cuckolded into sinning is an interpretation which suggests that the domination of men by women is nothing short of cataclysmic; Turner goes into this in greater detail. Furthermore, the word "slackness" implies that Man's proper place is that of masculine leadership, in strong accord with Milton's beliefs. Adam's feminization would appear to be logical, as the Father of Mankind cries during his conversation with Michael: "Though not of Woman born; compassion quell'd / His best of Man, and gave him up to tears" (Milton Book XI, 496-497). Although it was the sight of the death of Abel that caused Adam to weep, Milton still uses the opportunity to emphasize the unmanly and feminine nature of being resigned to tears. This suggested weakness comes to be seemingly paradoxical in light of the homoerotic elements in the poem. Concerning the author, it would be too easy to say that his misogyny is merely a product of his time. One interesting point to consider is Milton's nickname during his time at Cambridge: "the Lady" (referring to his feminine frame), which he was rumored to have detested (Parker 43).

The curious link between masculinity and homosexuality occurs in Book X of *Paradise Lost*, after the Fall, the argument between Adam and Eve. During Adam's upbraiding rant on Eve's wickedness, Milton writes:

O why did God,
 Creator wise, that peopl'd highest Heav'n
 With Spirits Masculine, create at last
 This novelty on Earth, this fair defect
 Of Nature, and not fill the World at once
 With Men as Angels without Feminine,
 Or find some other way to generate
 Mankind? (Book X, 888-895)

This is a striking passage. As with previous selections from the poem, Milton's misogyny is highly prominent, here shown by the condescending and sarcastic description of Eve as a "fair defect." The subsequent "Of Nature" takes the accusation even further, suggesting that the female sex is perhaps an abomination. (This could also be interpreted as an example of blasphemy in the text, as it implies that God made a mistake in the creation of Eve.) Furthermore, Adam's frustration with his female counterpart is particularly powerful given his indirect evocation to God, further emphasizing his confounded indignation. However, these sexist overtones should not mask the startling suggestion underneath. Adam's grievances with Eve have led him to have want of not only a world wherein women are not necessary for reproduction, but a world without women. While there is no concrete suggestion of homosexual intimacy, the juxtaposition of lines 894 and 895 with the preceding content begs the question of Adam's and Milton's thoughts on homosexuality. Is this perhaps a blasphemy, a refutation of the God-given human sexuality of male-female relations which Milton passionately celebrates?

While Milton's thoughts on homosexual acts are ambiguous, the standpoint of his Adam is far clearer. At the end of his conversation with the archangel Raphael, Adam innocently asks the celestial being if the angels engage in similar relations as he does with his wife: "Love not the heav'nly Spirits, and how their Love / Express they" (Book VIII, 615-616). Since there is no explicit communication to Adam that all the angels are male, it is evident that he (somehow) knows this to be fact given what he subsequently says to Eve in Book X. Consequently, the implication of this excerpt is fascinating.

Considering Adam was made perfect and ignorant of evil, his musings and meditations on homosexual intercourse among angels therefore cannot be sinful. (Bearing in mind the many logical flaws in the poem, it is entirely possible that this implication was in fact an accident.) This argument may be bold, but it is firmly supported by the response that Raphael gives. After blushing (which alone indicates there is intimacy among the angels), he answers Adam:

we enjoy
 In eminence, and obstacle find none
 Of membrane, joint, or limb, exclusive bars:
 Easier than Air with Air, if Spirits embrace,
 Total they mix, Union of Pure with Pure (Book VIII, 623-627)

Although a certain degree of physical love is depicted by this section, the precise nature of the physicality is not definitive. The connotation of “eminence,” along with the ascribed purity of the contact, could refute the argument that this is a homoerotic image, as the diction suggests that the angels may be above the need for love-making in the sense of sex. However, the connotation of the word “Union” forcefully steers the argument in the direction of a queer theory reading, as the word is often used, particularly in a biblical setting, to refer to the joining and sexual relations of man and woman. Accordingly, the seemingly innocent portrait of the blending of bodiless forms is transformed into an eroticism bordering on ecstatic pleasure. Through the liberation from physical bodies, the angels are able to engage in the ultimate sexual union of complete and utter oneness of being. Should this form of love truly be “Pure,” it appears that Milton believes the union of the angels is even more glorious than that of man and woman.

The question of Milton and homosexuality is hazy and tricky. There is little research on the matter, yet there is some worthwhile biographical information to consider. For example, Milton deplored the actions of bishops who preyed on boys, finding it a gross feminization of the male sex and a theft of manhood. He felt that “true Liberty ‘consists in manly and honest labours, in sobriety and rigorous honour to the Marriage Bed, which in both Sexes should be bred up from chaste hopes to loyal Enjoyments’” (Turner 223). This quote fits in perfectly with Milton’s belief of women’s subordination to men (and his utter repugnance for the reverse) while championing the traditional conjugal and sexual union, with no attention given to what is found at the end of

Book XII of *Paradise Lost*. However, the above does not prove that Milton despised all homosexual behaviors, as the bishop-boy example is one of pedophilia and sexual assault. While this distinction may not have been relevant at the time, Milton's supposed frequenting of brothels does contradict his Puritan standpoint on the definition of "true Liberty." Whether this is true or not, criticisms of Milton's writing having "a deep personal knowledge and experience of illicit sex" (Turner 208) remain.

The resulting conclusion is an apparent paradox. Milton is undoubtedly a staunch proponent of traditional masculinity, yet he also seems to practice a certain acceptance of homosexual acts. The product is a misogynistic, pro-homosexual worldview, which is seldom found in contemporary sociology and seems absurd in the context of seventeenth-century England. It would be hard to make the case for Milton's liberalism (at least by modern standards), yet his attitudes on sex and its virtues, both heterosexual and homosexual, extend to what many Christians would label as sodomy. John Milton dares to paint homosexual relations as glorious, yet the absence of biographical information on Milton with regards to homoeroticism seems to have convinced Miltonists that these prominent elements in the text are not worth analyzing further. By ignoring these aspects of the poem, it seems perfectly reasonable that Milton would have rejected homosexuality given his belief in the sacredness of traditional marriage. Regardless, these elements remain, and as they are almost certainly not an accident, the derived image of Milton is as perplexing as it is intriguing. ■

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CAT DOSSETT

Many Paths to the Divine:

Earthly Objects, Community Life, and Solitary Devotion

The forces of solitude and community are at times at war with one another within the Christian lifestyle. Although Christ says, “For where two or three have gathered together in My name, I am there in their midst” (Matthew 18:20), He also teaches to “go into your inner room, close your door and pray to your Father who is in secret” (Matthew 6:6). The contemplative life, a life which William James would point to as the truest way to understand the divine, is an example of solitude through abandonment of earthly possessions and a focus on the abstract. By comparison, life in the community, supported by St. Augustine, is more active and perhaps more practical for everyday people in the Saeculum. Indeed, the community retains more of the earthly aspects of life, but utilizes them in a way that most benefits the spiritual lives of the members of the community, whereas the contemplative life is defined by its voluntary poverty. Louis IX of France, meanwhile, uses devotional objects to bridge the gap between individual and communal life, bestowing meaning to seemingly idolatrous objects and using them to draw the community together.

For a “pilgrim and stranger in the world” (Augustine 596), the Earth is a sort of Purgatory by which a person may reform a nature once soiled by original sin and overcome “man’s customary behavior” (Augustine 598). For Augustine, a community that follows the “true religion”—that is, belief in Christ—in turn knows “true virtue,” which exists to serve God and others (Augustine 891). With this established, the individuals within the community may follow Christ’s command to “love one another” (John 13:34), either as the givers or the recipients of good works, usually by use of physical possessions in the form of almsgiving. Meanwhile, devotionals, typically artwork or sculpture with religious themes, draw the community closer as a reminder of a shared faith and as encouragement to persevere or to love one another. For instance, an image of a saint or of Christ may present an example to be emulated by the believer. Interestingly, objects may also serve a kind of Doubting Thomas function, the stigmata by which doubts may be extinguished. In Augustine’s Saeculum, where there is no clear or visible God, and where Christ tells believers, “Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed” (John 20:29), earthly representations fill the gap. They are the reassurance in the face of uncertainty. Additionally, they are a compromise for “the soul of man” that

is “still weak” in its craving for “those inferior goods of this world,” mingling earthly objects with glimpses of “the eternal blessings of that other life” (Augustine 392).

However, the meanings and significance of devotionals teeter on the edge of idolatry. Manmade and rooted in the earthly world, an altarpiece, for example, seems perhaps worthless in its own right. A relic or a painted image may draw the mind towards “evidence of the goodness of God” (Augustine 1073) in the human body or in human skill, respectively, but the connotations associated with the relic or image nonetheless give it the most substance. In other words, without having touched the body of a saint, a relic would mean nothing. The concept hearkens back to Christ’s institution of the Eucharist (Matthew 26:26–28). If Christ had not altered the substance of the bread and wine to become His Body and Blood, the objects would be regarded as normal bread and wine. For a person focused on individual striving towards God or the divine through the abandonment of institutionalized religion, however, this representational function is overlooked, straying too close to idolatry to be a comfortable spiritual aid. This idea is not unfounded; devotional objects, like ritual, may become meaningless and unhelpful to the stagnant believer driven by habit rather than personal faith.

The individual life is defined by personal experience and solitude, often within nature, rather than a link to the material world. William James says that a seeker of the divine senses its “presence” within “the solitude of his room or of the fields” (James 377), but the author makes no mention of devotionals as a contemplative aid. The Hebrew Bible, too, describes God not in awe-inspiring feats of nature, but like a whisper floating on a gentle breeze (1 Kings 19:12), contrasting in the same way that a Gothic cathedral may with a plainer, white-washed church—that is, the bareness of the walls invokes self-examination in relation to the divine, whereas the busyness of the cathedral may become a distraction, inviting reflection on man’s earthly achievements rather than on divinity. For James, the grandiose of the former is almost unnecessary, at least where mystical experiences are involved. Instead, there is a “detachment” of the mind “from outer sensations” (James 310). These experiences affect not the exterior, visible self, but “the inner life of the subject” (James 292). For some, like Walt Whitman or the German author Malwida von Meysenbug, a sense of union with the world stems from the natural environment, not from church architecture (James 302). At times the experiences transcend earthly surroundings altogether, aiming to reach a “higher state of existence” and “knowledge beyond reasoning,” according to those who practice yoga (James 306). With the exception of the written word, manmade aids are almost idolatry to the mystic. Being a true hermit, however, isolated from community and from

possession, may be unhealthy as a permanent lifestyle. Though Christ spent forty days in the desert, even He emerged from the desert hungry (Matthew 4:2). Contemplatives, too, though separated from the world and sometimes taking vows of silence, retain a small community. That loneliness and purposeful self-restraint from the comfort of objects, however, encapsulates the individualist sentiment in its most extreme form.

Devotional objects may serve a purpose in James's examples of the contemplative life, particularly for the twice-born. James's concept of mystical experiences corresponds to an extreme "emotion [that] overcomes temperamental melancholy and imparts endurance to the Subject" (James 382), which raises questions about the amount of time the zeal of religion and, in turn, the stamina of maintaining virtue may remain with an individual. Certainly a spiritual experience as James describes would be life-altering, but the honeymoon period, so to speak, or what is now often referred to as a "spiritual high," can only last for so long. James claims that the change is lasting, but a "melancholic" person—one who suffers from a mental illness, for example—may beg to differ. Pessimism, too, is a difficult habit to break, and for many, a spiritual experience, however memorable, may not be enough to draw a person from years of habit or sustain him or her for long periods of time. For this reason a devotional object may be something to fall back on. During a period of "spiritual dryness," a concept which James touches upon and describes as an impermanent state (James 161-2), a physical item may be comforting when faith feels distant. An earthly object can ground abstraction, a representation of invisible concepts in a tangible, visible form.

Indeed, criticism lies on either side for the opposite lifestyle. Augustine makes it clear that "faith, without works, is dead" (Augustine 892). Contemplation and mystical experiences are not enough if they do not produce fruit. Meanwhile, those who focus on the individual and private relationship with God—a cause typically championed by the Protestant Reformation—may view "the public worship of God" as "the end of religious society" (Locke 4), a diluting of the deep faith of those whom James calls "religious leaders" (James 363) by simplification through ritual and motifs. There is a clear disturbance among the individual-minded believers at the blind observance of ritual and the diminution of devotional objects to idolatrous images worshiped for their own sake. Of course, the decision to use relics, altarpieces, or other materials as aids for worship or contemplation is a personal one, but, should they be included in a person's practice of faith, if their representational element were to dissolve, they would no longer be devotional objects but rather totems on the same level as the divine.

In the midst of this, Louis IX, in his hagiography by Joinville, is the bridge between

the contemplative individual life and the active communal life. His crusades reflect his belief in the importance of relics and physical devotionals. The Holy Land, for him, is a living relic. As the site of Christ's life on Earth, the Holy Land is the most important destination for pilgrims. Through his acquisition of relics, including part of the True Cross (Joinville 328), he conveys the significance of holy objects in the community at home, surrounding them with houses of worship such as Sainte-Chapelle in order to draw the community to them. Louis's actions, on the other hand, reveal his striving to live in *Imitatio Christi*, a deeply personal pursuit with a focus on individual cultivation of virtue. Louis's contemplation leads him to emulate Christ as teacher as well, at times scolding, instructing, or extending advice to Joinville, to his son, and to others (Joinville 149, 330-2). Louis, then, uses the *individual* focus to better direct his community, and the *communal* element to link individuals in a common and serious belief, wherein devotional objects provide a constant reminder of those sharing the same conviction.

Though it may seem that William James's contemplative mystics have no use for material images as spiritual aids, and that Augustine's earthly pilgrims are the only ones who may benefit from them, Joinville proves that this is not strictly true. To designate all devotional objects as merely idolatrous totems of worship would mean casting them in a superficial light. Under the surface they are essential to the community as a means of preservation of the faith that connects the majority. Moreover, they address the needs of an individual relationship with the divine while still maintaining James's basis on mystical experience; here, they provide a prompt for contemplation as a representation of the life one must lead in order to live in imitation of Christ. However, these images, like ritual, may just as easily become habitual and lose importance in a person's life, becoming essentially useless. In the end, the decision to use devotional objects is a personal one, either for an active person in the Saeculum or for a contemplative person who prioritizes an individual relationship with the divine. ■

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NATHANIEL LAWSON

Confucius and Moral “Reasoning”

Confucius considers adherence to ritual a fundamental virtue, while Aristotle makes no mention of ritual in his list of virtues. This difference in attitude reveals the fundamental difference between the ethics of Confucius and Aristotle: Confucius wants to create a list of rules to follow, justified on the grounds of received authority, while Aristotle wants to promote rational understanding of the good.

Confucius places a large emphasis on the importance of ritual in determining one's actions, while Aristotle speaks little about ritual. Neither tradition nor custom are among the dozen virtues Aristotle describes in his *Nicomachean Ethics*. In contrast, the ritual appears in Confucius' *Analects* countless times. Confucius never provides a singular definition for ritual, but comes closest when he states: “Older people, when it comes to rites ... are mere rustics. Younger people, in matters of rites ... are true gentlemen. But when it comes to usage, I follow the older people” (Confucius 11.1). This passage implies that ritual most closely resembles tradition; only the youth deserve praise for following tradition because tradition means the old ways, and so old people follow tradition almost by definition. However, since the elderly have such familiarity with tradition, one should consult them to accurately determine the details of specific rituals.

Confucius sees ritual as a guide for how to act; in Book 2 Section 3, he states “Guide [men] with virtue, regulate them with ritual, and they will ... become upright.” Also, when Yan Yuan asks Confucius how to know what actions are humane, Confucius states “If it is contrary to ritual, don't look at it. If it is contrary to ritual, don't listen to it. If it is contrary to ritual, don't utter it. If it is contrary to ritual, don't do it” (12.1). These two quotes explain that ritual provides a framework for judging the morality of different acts. In fact, when Confucius states that “In rites in general, rather than extravagance, better frugality. In funeral rites, rather than thoroughness, better real grief” (3.4), he implies that the specifics of the ritual matter less than the feelings that they instill. According to Confucius, ritual should be followed not for its own sake, but because straying from tradition involves straying from principles that have lasted for centuries, and therefore not following ritual involves straying from successful principles.

Confucius treats the adherence to tradition as a virtue because his ethics has no logical backing. Aristotle's ethics has its basis in the idea that man must act a certain way to achieve certain ends, and that morality involves explaining the end to strive

for and what means to use to achieve it (Aristotle 1.2). According to Aristotle, people achieve morality only when they train themselves to follow moral behavior until such behavior becomes instinctive, providing the purpose of virtues (Aristotle 2.1). Aristotle further describes the exact nature of the virtues and explains that the virtues are virtuous because they present a mean between two extremes of behavior, and the mean is good (Aristotle 2.1). In this way Aristotle provides a step-by-step rational argument in favor of his moral code. Confucius does none of this. Instead, his ethics simply consists of a hodgepodge of how he acts and statements of how to act without explaining how he deduces his principles. For instance, Confucius declares that “Young people should be filial at home, brotherly with others, circumspect, and trustworthy” (Confucius 1.6) without providing any support for his assertion -- he assumes that people should follow whatever he says. Furthermore, Confucius does not often adequately define the virtues he gives; for example, at one point, Confucius states that he “observes four prohibitions: no willfulness, no obstinacy, no narrow-mindedness, [and] no egotism” (9.4) without explaining what constitutes obstinacy and egoism. Confucius phrases his ethics as commands because he believes that most people are incapable of understanding what makes actions good or bad: “The common people can be made to follow a course, but cannot be made to understand why they should do so” (Confucius 8.9). Confucius states here the belief that one cannot convince people that certain courses of action are right or wrong through rational argument, and so one must appeal to the authority of respected men and religion instead. Since Confucius chooses not to make his case by way of rational argument, he instead appeals to tradition and ritual. Confucius relates his moral doctrine to religion, both through the emphasis on ritual and by frequently calling his code of ethics “The Way” (Confucius 7.6; Confucius 8.13). As religion has significant emotional connotations, connecting his ethics to religion creates an emotional basis for following it. Tradition and ritual provide a code of conduct that has become ingrained into habit through cultural inertia, so through them Confucius can control how people act without justifying his points with logical arguments.

Confucius’ ethics has no rational basis. Aristotle attempts to provide a coherent case for what is good and why it is good. Confucius, on the other hand, simply declares that certain acts are good because he feels they are good or because they have been followed in the past. However, neither authority nor tradition are rational bases for an ethical code, as authorities, even good ones, can and will be wrong on some points, and what people believe to be true does not necessarily correspond to what is true: people practiced slavery without moral qualms for thousands of years, but that did not

make slavery moral. Similarly, George Washington was undoubtedly a great man, but that doesn't mean that slavery is justified because he owned slaves. Actions use means to achieve an end, and ethics determines the ends to achieve and the means that will achieve them; therefore, moral principles are right or wrong based upon the nature of reality. Only reason can discern the nature of reality consistently. Since human beings must achieve certain ends based upon their nature in order to survive and flourish and only reason can deduce what ends those are and how to accomplish them. Any irrational moral code will ultimately lead to death and suffering.

Confucius considers ritual and tradition virtuous, while Aristotle does not. Confucius *needs* people to respect ritual as he does not justify his moral code through reason, and so must justify it on an irrational basis. Aristotle, meanwhile, *does* attempt to justify his morality using reason and so does not need to appeal to tradition or authority. Since only reason can correctly determine what acts are right and wrong, a moral code on the basis of tradition or authority such as Confucius' is no moral code at all. ■

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*"On Wall Street,
only one who knows nothing
knows everything."*

YUN SHI

On True Food

Eating, in both Dante's *Inferno* and the Gospel of John, is rich with metaphorical meaning. In *Inferno*, eating is a symbolic action by the sinners in hell, as exemplified by Ugolino eating Archbishop Ruggieri, one traitor biting the other, and three sinners being eaten by Satan. Alternatively, in John, eating is a symbolic action by the disciples who truly believe in Jesus. Those who "eat the flesh of the son of man and drink his blood" will have life in them (John 6.53). The characters of both books are eating flesh, but people in hell are sinners who are being punished, so eating in the *Inferno* symbolizes physical and psychological punishment and the food symbolizes eternal death. However, the people in the Gospel of John are disciples who truly believe in Jesus and therefore eating represents gaining life and the food they eat is eternal life. Thus, Jesus' "flesh is true food" and his "blood is true drink," but the foods sinners eat are not true (John 6.55).

In *Inferno*, eating symbolizes the physical and psychological punishment of sinners in hell. Eating in Canto 32 shows the image of one sinner biting the other's head. The one being eaten is punished with bodily pain, while the one eating experiences the psychological torture of eating the other's body. In Canto 34 Satan has three mouths that are "like a grinder" that "tore to bits" three sinners: Judas, Brutus and Cassius. These three sinners are all traitors of who are believed to be the most evil sinners in hell; thus, their punishment is to be consumed by the Satan forever and bear that pain.

In Canto 33, the depiction of Ugolino's eating focuses on his psychological punishment. When Dante, the voyager, met Ugolino, he was eating Archbishop Ruggieri who betrayed him. He told Dante about his sad story: that he and his sons were caught in the Hunger Tower and he finally ate his sons after they died because "fasting had more force than grief" in him (Dante 33.22 and 33.75). When he was telling the sad story, he asked Dante to weep, but he "with eye awry, again he gripped the sad skull in his teeth" (Dante 33.76). He wants to grieve over his experience and his sons' death, but he cannot because his hunger overcomes his grief and he cannot control the fierceness of it. His work in hell is eating. Ugolino is punished to being hungry forever and have no capacity to grieve, which is his psychological torture.

As Dante goes further down in hell, the sinners become more evil in lower circles; thus, the punishments become harsher. Eating as a symbol of punishment appears at

the lowest circle, the Ninth Circle, where the sinners are traitors to their kin, homeland, guests and benefactors. These sinners have heavier sins and should bear harsher punishment than sinners at the upper circles. Inside the Ninth Circle, the harshness of eating as punishment increases from one traitor biting the other traitor to traitors being consumed by Satan.

In the Gospel of John, Jesus said: “the bread which I shall give for the life of the world is my flesh,” and only those who eat his flesh and drink his blood will have eternal life (John 6.51 and 6.53). When Jesus said this, many of his disciples interpreted his meaning literally and they doubted that “this is a hard saying; who can listen to it” (John 6.60), so they left him at last. However, only those who truly believe in him can understand his meaning. This eating does not really mean eating flesh and drinking blood; it is a symbol of gaining life. Jesus provides spiritual food for his disciples who truly believe in him. After the disciples “eat” Jesus’ flesh and “drink” his blood, Jesus will be in them and give them eternal life (John 6.54).

While both the *Inferno* and the Gospel of John depict eating, the ways of eating and the images of eating in these two works are different. In John, the words that describe eating are “eat” and “drink” which convey a sense of calmness and kindness. This action indicates that when disciples eat Jesus’s flesh and drink his blood, they should be calm and respectful to Jesus because they are asking him for the “bread of life” (John 6.35). The image generated is one of a holy ritual that disciples respectfully and piously asking Jesus for eternal lives” (John 6.35). In contrast, the eating actions in the *Inferno* appear crueler. In Canto 32, the description is that one traitor “dug his teeth into the other” and “chew[ed]” and “gnawed” the head. Also this eating action is compared to a hungry man who devours his bread (Dante 32.127). For the depiction of Ugolino’s eating, he has a “fierce meal” that he “ripped apart” Archbishop Ruggieri’s head, and “like a dog’s, were strong down to the bone” (Dante 33.1 and 33.78). In Canto 34, Dante as a writer uses “grinder” as a simile for Satan as he “tore” and “bit” sinners. The sinners’ eating in the *Inferno* is like monsters enjoying their prey, which conveys the sense of evilness and harshness in hell.

Although people in both the *Inferno* and the Gospel of John are eating bodies, the food can be either poison or nourishment depending on the eaters and the reasons why they eat. In the *Inferno*, people who eat bodies are sinners in hell who are supposed to be punished with the harshest ways. Eating is an enjoyable action in human lives; thus, when eating turns to punishment, the punishment is the harshest for sinners in both a physical and a psychological way. This harsh feeling is even conveyed to readers.

Reading the *Inferno*, readers have a blood-curdling feeling and their bodies will shiver with the fright of the disgusting eating image. For example, Ugolino “raised his mouth from his fierce meal” and used Ruggieri’s head “that he had ripped apart in back: he wiped his lips upon its hair” (Dante 33.1). In addition, the food for sinners is eternal death in hell and it is not the true food. The foods and the bodies in hell are tools of punishment.

In contrast, the text of John talks about God. Eating Jesus’s flesh and drinking his blood is gaining life and being raised “up at the last day” by him (John 6.54). Reading the Gospel of John, readers will have a comforting feeling because the “bread of life [...] comes down from heaven, that a man may eat of it and not die” (John 6.35 and 6.50). Thus the food Jesus provided is presented as the true food, that is, his nourishment.

In the *Inferno* and the Gospel of John, eating is metaphorical and plays a symbolic role. Eating not only brings physical pain for the sinners in hell but also brings psychological punishment for them in the *Inferno*, while eating symbolizes gaining life in the Gospel of John. Eating for sinners is a form of punishment and the food they consume is eternal death, that is, poison; for disciples, to eat is to gain, and the food they consume is eternal life, that is, nourishment. This contrast in meaning is heightened by the intensity of the language in each text, language supplying the reader with a sumptuous feast of moral and carnal imagery. ■

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ALINA SZREMSKI

Malinowski Before Anthropology: Examining the Significance of His Polish Education

Bronisław Malinowski is widely credited as the father of the functionalist school of anthropology. His contributions resulted in a new paradigm of fieldwork that was more involved and detailed than the ethnographical work of the past. England claims Malinowski had a significant role in developing British social anthropology; American anthropologists also claim his influence, due to his presence at Yale after the start of WWII. While his anthropological impact in other countries was immediate, it wasn't until many years after his death that his work began to influence the social sciences in Poland—the country where he received the bulk of his formative education. The ideological foundations of Malinowski's theories can be traced back to positivist and modernist ideologies. Positivism and modernism often contradict each other, but their contradictions are discarded and their similarities married in Malinowski's work. From positivism, Malinowski evolved his precise, exact, and methodical field work and formed half the foundation of his idea of functionalism; from modernism, Malinowski gained the idea of participant-observation and the rest of his functionalist theory. It has to be understood that this mixture of positivism and modernism comes from the unique character of Polish academia. Malinowski's work must be understood within a distinctly Polish context.

Positivism is a broad term that applies to many fields such as law, politics, international relations, and sociology, though it takes its roots in philosophy. It can be briefly defined as the belief that the only knowledge that has any authority is positive knowledge, drawn exclusively from empirical evidence gathered through observation of the physical world. The emphasis is on knowledge that can be verified empirically—thus, everything derived from introspection, intuition, or other unverifiable methods, is rejected. While positivism was already germinating in schools of Polish liberalism, the theory solidified in the consciousness of the nation after the January Uprising of 1863 against the Russian Empire and the rebellion's subsequent defeat in 1864.

Poland had been sovereign up until the First Partition of Poland in 1772, when the

growing Russian, Austrian, and Prussian empires split up Polish land between themselves in an attempt to regain equilibrium of the power dynamics between the three countries. A second partition happened in 1793, and the final partition in 1975 marked the official end of Polish sovereignty. The country then lived under different spheres of foreign rule for 123 years, during which the three empires tried to crush Polish identity and reestablish their respective identities in Poland. However, the Polish people desired freedom from their oppressors. This resulted in several uprisings, with the two most notable being the November Uprising of 1830–31 and the January Uprising of 1863–64. Both uprisings failed—these defeats and the subsequent repressions they resulted in, coupled with the history of occupation, created a fear within Poland of Polish identity being lost to a stronger country and created a sense of urgency to solidify the Polish character (Corwin 1917).

After their military losses in January, Poland still did not give up trying to win its freedom; instead, Poland changed its focus from liberation through military to liberation through education, and to the significance of its academic and cultural contributions. Here is where positivism comes to the forefront in Poland, largely through the theory of organic work—*praca organiczna*—which Adam Bromke, in his article “The ‘Znak’ Group in Poland” defines as “the internal strengthening of the Polish nation through extensive socio-economic reforms” (Bromke 88). Maciej Janowski explains Ludwik Powidaj and his push towards organic work. Powidaj, following the second Polish defeat in 1864, wrote *Polacy i Indianie* (“Poles and Indians”) as a program outlining this concept of organic work. He urged Poles to engage in trade and industry, to strive to become “co-builders of civilization,” to increase the national wealth, and to revitalize the lower classes. Powidaj places a strong emphasis on practical, pragmatic direction (Janowski 147–8). Organic work resulted from the schools of positivism—just as knowledge holds no weight if it cannot be verified with empirical data, independence cannot be gained unless measurable, practical steps are taken to bolster the foundations of Poland.

Positivism was integral in shaping the ideology of Poland, and was especially important when it came to founding and supporting a national identity in the face of Germanization and Russianization. Hence, schools of positivism were widespread in the Polish intelligentsia, and it is under this academic climate that Branislaw Malinowski was educated. Malinowski attended Jagiellonian University starting in 1902. He originally studied math and natural science, but graduated in 1908 with his doctorate in philosophy. There were three philosophy professors in particular that worked

closely with Malinowski: Maurycy Straszewski, Wladyslaw Heinrich, and Stefan Pawlicki. Andrzej Flis, in his article “Cracow Philosophy and Malinowski’s Scientific Ideas,” gives a brief background for each professor. While each professor has a wealth of accomplishments and a diverse body of work, their scope can be reduced to three main areas relating to philosophy. Pawlicki and Heinrich studied the history of Greek philosophy; Straszewski, Pawlicki, and Heinrich all studied the history of modern philosophy; and Straszewski studied the history of Polish philosophy (Flis 108–13).

The study of the history of modern philosophy and history of Polish philosophy means all three professors had a foundation in positivism. Straszewski was a proponent of empirio-criticism (reducing knowledge to observational experience) and drew from both Ernst Mach and Richard Avenarius for his work. Mach’s work includes logical positivism, and Avenarius’ work includes radical positivism, which developed into empirio-criticism. Heinrich also studied Mach and Avenarius closely—he applied positivism to psychology and rejected the current metaphysical tendencies of psychological experiments. His psychological experiments were based on experience and methodology. Pawlicki’s positivism was probably the most integral to his work as a professor. He definitely started as a positivist, but ended his career as a theologian, though still endeavoring to include scientific findings and the spirit of empiricism within his theological work (Flis 108–13).

This educational framework of positivism can be seen in the foundations of Malinowski’s work. Working so closely with positivism introduced Malinowski to the general positivist disdain towards introspection, the desire for empirical data, and Mach’s ideas of function. These ideas evolved into Malinowski’s anthropological functionalism and the extensive field work that Malinowski details in *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*. Malinowski devotes the first chapter of this book to explaining his observational methods, prefacing this with a section on the importance of having precise records of all observational data—a thought that can be traced back to Malinowski’s positivist roots in Poland. On his methodology, Malinowski writes:

Each phenomenon ought to be studied through the broadest range possible of its concrete manifestations; each studied by an exhaustive survey of detailed examples. If possible, the results ought to be tabulated into some sort of synoptic chart, both to be used as an instrument of study, and to be presented as an ethnological document. With the help of such documents and such study of actualities the clear outline of the framework of the native’s culture in the widest sense of the word, and the

constitution of their society, can be presented. This method could be called *the method of statistic documentation by concrete evidence*. (17)

This insistence on exhaustive research, empirical data, and concrete evidence assorted into charts and documents clearly stems from the positivist view that the knowledge gained through exact studies of the sensory world is the best knowledge. Flis, who studied Malinowski's philosophy dissertation extensively, notes this tendency: "the most 'popular' feature [of positivism], is the disgust with metaphysics (as the least economical knowledge). Malinowski considered the emphasis on this feature to be the best point of departure in his dissertation" (Flis 115). Clearly, Malinowski latched on to this idea of empirical data over metaphysical knowledge and incorporated it into his field work—just as one of Malinowski's professors, Heinrich, dismissed experimental psychology as too metaphysical, and designed psychological experiments that were based on pure experience.

This desire for concrete, objective data seems to stem from another positivist principle which would later be developed into Malinowski's theory of anthropological functionalism—which is defined as culture being created to serve man's biological needs. This functionalism starts in Malinowski's dissertation and his discussion of Mach. Mach proposes that phenomena should be observed in relation to their end. Malinowski rejects this; Flis summarizes Malinowski's view thus:

They [phenomena] should be seen from the viewpoint of their functions. [. . .] function is understood as the manner in which one variable depends on another. So the concept of 'function' which appears in the doctoral dissertation 'On the principle of economy of thought' denotes a certain dependence or interdependence, and not the orientation towards ends. (119)

Malinowski explains this relationship in his philosophy dissertation—he says operations such as thinking or reminding (the first variable) serve to achieve the best position (the second variable) for the individual, and this interdependent relationship is achieved only when reality is reflected as accurately as possible.

Hence the need for objective data. To again point out the previous quote from Malinowski's *Argonauts*, Malinowski is making the case that accurate records of reality in the form of objective data are the best way to draw conclusions and represent the whole of native life and customs. Thus, Malinowski's field work is twice inspired by

positivism—once by the general requirement of verifiable knowledge, and again by the functional nature of knowledge.

However, before these elements of Machian functionalism can evolve fully into Malinowski's anthropological functionalism, Malinowski has to amend this positivist view with a myriad of modernistic influences. A brief outline of modernism in Poland and its effect on Malinowski must first be given.

In opposition to positivism, modernism was another prevalent theory in Polish academics. Modernism, like positivism, is a wide theory that has many branches, but can be reduced to the sentiment that a growing industrial world requires new schools of thought, new art techniques, and general innovation and improvements on past traditions. The modernist movement that influenced Malinowski was known in Poland as the Young Poland movement. The Young Poland movement was primarily aesthetic and centered around the arts and literature—it was largely a response to the widespread positivism in Poland. Jan Jerschina explains that modernism was just as prevalent as positivism in Polish intelligentsia—so the academic circles Malinowski was educated in, as outlined above, would have introduced Malinowski to modernism, as well. Jerschina explains:

Malinowski's process of socialization and acculturation was influenced by the Polish intelligentsia of the 1900-14 period, at the very time when this group had already internalized the ethos appearing as the amalgamation of positivist and modernist ideas. [...] in those years positivism no longer existed as a living cultural movement, but modernism still produced new and interesting intellectual and aesthetic phenomena. (131)

The Young Poland movement brought with it a keen interest and fascination with culture. The intellectuals of this movement were primarily interested in culture as related to a national identity, in light of 123 years of repressed Polish identity.

This led to many academics moving to and living in peasant areas and even marrying peasant women. The fascination with peasantry rises from the notion that the daily life of the peasant holds vital cultural information essential to Polish identity—the emphasis is on what the peasant life can show about the *present* and what it can predict about the *future* of Poland. The modernist involvement with the peasantry is clearly reflected in Malinowski's work with the natives. Timothy J. Cooley, in his article “Theorizing fieldwork impact: Malinowski, peasant-love and friendship,” describes this study

of peasant life. He calls it “peasant-love.”

Stanislaw Witkiewicz, Malinowski's closest friend, built a villa in Zakopane, a village in the Tatra Mountain. This villa, like Zakopane itself, was an artist's colony, a hot bed for modernist ideas to incubate. Tatra Mountain is the scene where “peasant-love” took place. Cooley describes the Young Poland followers and their relations with the peasants of Poland as follows:

Peasant-love ideology is characterized by an emphasis on the present (and hopes for the future) and requires relatively intense relationships with the people whose cultural practices are studied. [. . .] The emphasis on the present rather than history was key to peasant-love ideology and had a profound impact on Malinowski's functionalism, which focused on the ethnographic present. (8)

This is almost an exact mirror of the participant-observation that Malinowski champions in his *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*. On having intense relationships with the subjects of study, Malinowski writes:

It is good for the Ethnographer sometimes to put aside camera, note book and pencil, and to join in himself in what is going on. He can take part in the native's games, he can follow them on their visits and walks, sit down and listen and share in their conversations. [. . .] Out of such plunges into the life of the natives [. . .] I have carried away a distinct feeling that their behavior, their manner of being, in all sorts of tribal transactions, became more transparent and easily understandable than it had been before. (21-2)

Just as the Polish modernists in Zakopane and the Tatra Mountains lived closely with their subjects, so did Malinowski. The influence of Malinowski's participant-observation came directly from his experience with the Polish modernists. Furthermore, this modernist emphasis on experiencing culture coexists perfectly with Malinowski's positivist tendencies of empirical knowledge and data. The precise recordings of tribal life are supplemented and explained by the lived experiences of the ethnographer; the lived experiences are then made sense of through analysis of the charts and data. Malinowski's work is the culmination and blend of both positivism and modernism.

Furthermore, now that modernism has been introduced, Malinowski's idea of anthropological functionalism can be completed. From positivism, Malinowski gets the

generic relationship that one variable is dependent on another; he fleshes this out in his dissertation to say that man's position in society is dependent upon his biological needs. Modernism, then, taught Malinowski the power of the individual. Jan Jerschina gives the example of the modernist treatment of history, writing that modernists greatly attributed the creation of history to the work of the individual. Malinowski agrees with the modernist view of history, and takes it one step further and applies this modernist emphasis on the individual to the creation of culture.

Jerschina writes that Malinowski believes "the real historical agent is an individual human being, with a specific personality, motivated by specific needs and emotions [. . .] The same holds true for cultural communities, tribes and nations. [. . .] Malinowski put forward his concept of man as a free creator of culture" (Jerschina 135). Malinowski is combining the positivist functionalism from Mach with the modernist emphasis on the individual to put forth that culture has been created by man to satisfy biological needs. This concept of anthropological functionalism can be inferred from this passage from *Argonauts*:

Indeed, if we remember that these imponderable yet all important facts of actual life are part of the real substance of the social fabric, that in them are spun the innumerable threads which keep together the family, the clan, the village community, the tribe—their significance becomes clear. (18)

The "imponderable, yet important" facts of life would be man's daily life and the satisfaction of daily needs—the process of fulfilling these needs is what, in turn, creates culture and society.

Malinowski's fieldwork—his zealous recording of it and his immersion in native life—were formed by positivistic and modernistic roots. Malinowski's functionalist school of anthropology was likewise inspired from the same background. The elements of positivism and modernism and Malinowski's subsequent blending of them is a result of the Polish context in which he was educated. Positivism took a strong hold in Poland due to the spread of organic work, which itself sprang from the national desire for freedom from foreign rule. Since freedom couldn't be gained through the military, positivism and organic work were the means to obtain that freedom. Modernism in Poland took the form of the Young Poland movement and was formed as a response to positivism. The modernists took a Romantic approach to life and rejected the empiricism of positivism—but Malinowski was in close contact with both of these theories.

His professors from Krakow were the positivist influence, and the artists he fraternized with at the art haven known as Zakopane were the modernist influence. Thus, we see the essentials of Malinowski's work are deeply rooted in a Polish context. ■

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PROF. BRIAN JORGENSEN

Mr. Anybody-Man

This original song was composed to precede the Spring 2017 Classics & Core co-production of Plautus's play *Pseudolus*, and was performed by Prof. Jorgensen and the other members of the Fish Worship blues group: Professors Jay Samons (Classics), James Uden (Classics), and Wayne Synder (Computer Science); Dr. David Mann (Psychiatry); and Mr. Edmund Jorgensen. The clever slave calls on a consummate con-man for help. He sees his co-conspirator approaching in disguise and becomes uneasy, wondering if the talented and amoral con-man may be conning him.

(Music excited and a bit eerie)

Look, my man is coming
 walking just like someone else
Dressed exactly
 a captain from the citadel
He's the Sultan of Swindle
 He's the living Prince of Pelf
Mr. Anybody-Man, maybe he's your friend
 This afternoon

Slicker than Ulysses
 A one-man Trojan Horse
Member of the Senate
 or good cop of the occupying force
Memory like a Carthage elephant
 He knows your name of course
Mr. Anybody-Man, maybe he's your friend
 This afternoon

(Bridge)

Mr. Anybody-Man
 so quick and slick you chill my spine
 The badder something is
 the more it makes you shine
 What if you decide
 that your goals are not mine?

Mr. Anybody-Man
 he's no one, just got the tools
 Looking at this world
 he sees a stage of fools
 Is he working on my side
 as he operates so cool
 Mr. Anybody-Man, hope you are my friend
 This afternoon

Two thousand years ago and more
 there was a play, he had a part
 Thank you, Professor Sophie Klein and her class
 for transplanting its heart
 Thank you, actors, Classics, Core
 Soon the play will start

(Singer mispronouncing, corrected by a classicist)

Sue-doe-lus
 (No, it's Pseudolus!)
 Sue-doe-lus
 (No, Pseudolus), etc.

Κωνσταντίνος Π. Καβάφης

ΠΡΙΝ ΤΟΥΣ ΑΛΛΑΞΕΙ Ο ΡΟΝΟΣ

Λυπήθηκαν μεγάλως στὸν ἀποχωρισμό των.
Δὲν τῶθελαν αὐτοί· ἦταν ἡ περιστάσεις.
Βιοτικὲς ἀνάγκες ἐκάμνανε τὸν ἕνα
νὰ φύγει μακρὰ— Νέα Ὑόρκη ἢ Καναδᾶ.
Ἡ ἀγάπη των βεβαίως δὲν ἦταν ἴδια ὡς πρὶν·
εἶχεν ἐλαττωθεῖ ἢ ἔλξις βαθμηδόν,
εἶχεν ἐλαττωθεῖ ἢ ἔλξις της πολύ.
Ὅμως νὰ χωρισθοῦν, δὲν τῶθελαν αὐτοί.
Ἦταν ἡ περιστάσεις.— Ἦ μήπως καλλιτέχνις
ἐφάνηκεν ἡ Τύχη χωρίζοντάς τους τώρα
πρὶν σβύσει τὸ αἶσθημά των, πρὶν τοὺς ἀλλάξει ὁ Χρόνος
ὁ ἕνας γιὰ τὸν ἄλλον θὰ εἶναι ὡς νὰ μένει πάντα
τῶν εἴκοσι τεσσάρων ἐτῶν τ' ὠραῖο παιδί.

Source: *Τὰ ποιήματα (1897-1933)*. Published in numerous editions,
including one by Damianos released in 2006.

YANNI METAXAS

Time the Benefactor

Constantine Cavafy commonly toys with the idea of “Time.” To this poet, Time serves as an agent, morphing people’s perceptions of reality. Oftentimes, Cavafy uses Time in his poetry as a method to heal from the injuries of the wretched life Cavafy believes he leads. This becomes apparent only after several readings of Cavafy’s poem “Before They Are Changed by Time.” In this sensual poem, Cavafy employs techniques to mask the poem for what it truly represents—a lamentation of Cavafy’s *own* relationship (with a lover) that fell apart. This harkens back to how Keats, one of the main figures of Romantic poetry, found his relationship with Fanny Brawne to be his muse.

Firstly, the question “who narrates the poem?” must be examined. The biggest clue to discovering the answer lies in the lines “Necessities of life [] forced one of them to leave/ and travel far away— [] New York or Canada” (Cavafy 3). (*The symbol [] is used to denote an indent in the middle of a line.*) At first glance, these two lines provide no clues as to who narrates the poem. However, one must question why Cavafy chooses to say “New York or Canada.” To which place does the subject go? New York differs greatly from Canada, especially in the early 20th century. If the destination of the subject does not matter, why mention New York or Canada at all? The narrator can just as easily stop at “...travel far away.” The way the narrator talks about these two lovers makes it apparent that one would surely know the destination of the other. Cavafy dwells in Alexandria. For someone in Alexandria, perhaps the difference between New York and Canada differs insignificantly, compared to the difference between them as perceived by someone in Virginia. So, by saying this, the narrator hints at how far “far away” represents, while inadvertently revealing his attempt to distance himself from the subjects of the poem. One can readily discover that Cavafy tries to privatize his homosexuality, but that he also prefers to write about it in his poetry. For these reasons, one can easily argue that Cavafy himself narrates the poem; one can imagine him talking about two people he “knows” when in reality, Cavafy describes himself, watching his lover leave him.

The style of Cavafy’s poem is more colloquial than formal. Two discrepancies arise about three-quarters of the way through the poem. Firstly, the title and the first nine-and-a-half lines of the poem illustrate the story in the past tense. Suddenly, halfway

through line nine, the poem switches to the present tense (and even uses the future at one point) for the rest of the poem: "... Or perhaps Destiny/ appeared like an artist, [] separating them now,/ before their feeling fades, [] before they are changed by Time;" (9). One can imagine a speaker, overcome by emotion (talking about his lover who left him) suddenly switching tenses by accident in speech. Now, as Cavafy "begins to realize" his lack of secrecy, he chooses to employ another technique to hide the fact that this "poem" speaks of his own, personal story.

Cavafy's poetry falls under the categories of sensual, historical, and philosophical, like much of the poetry we read in the Core Curriculum. The beginning of this poem clearly stamps the work as a sensual poem; Cavafy exclaims that the subjects' "love for sure was not [] what it once used to be;/ the sexual attraction [] had gradually waned,/ the sexual attraction [] had been reduced a lot" (5). But by this previously-mentioned point in time, line nine, Cavafy tries to divert attention by switching to a philosophical format. The topic switches from the lovers to the questioning of "Time." Cavafy, to this point, has said twice that "it was circumstances" (lines two and nine) that separated the two lovers. But now, Cavafy segues the poem with the word "or," signaling his desire to change the subject of the discussion: "...perhaps Destiny/ appeared like an artist, [] separating them now,/ before their feeling fades, [] before they are changed by Time;" (9). Cavafy even titles his poem "Before They Are Changed by Time" a reference to the philosophical nature of the last part of the poem. Cavafy uses these two changes, from the sensual to the philosophical, in addition to the clue about New York or Canada, to alert the reader to *something*. This "something" is the fact that, unlike in most of his poetry, Cavafy actually narrates this poem himself to talk about an experience in his life.

The opening nine lines of the poem mirror Cavafy's attempt at normalizing and explaining (to himself) why his lover left him. The formulaic nature of the poem employs simple language in the form of short statements. Many lines begin with "they," "it," "the," or "their." When Cavafy says, "They were so very sad.../ It was not what they wanted; [] it was circumstances./ Necessities of life [] forced one of them to leave/ .../ Their love for sure was not [] what it once used to be;/ .../ .../ Yet to be separated [] was not what they wanted./ It was circumstances" (1), his writing displays itself as undeniable facts. One can imagine Cavafy sitting in his office, or his room, repeating these lines to himself over and over again, to convince himself that circumstances truly separated him from his lover, and nothing else. Perhaps Cavafy fell in love but his lover did not. Or perhaps Cavafy's lover hurt Cavafy, and then subsequently left him

and Cavafy does not know how to compose himself or theorize what happened. But reminding himself, over and over, that they were *both* equally afflicted, enables him to run away from the truth and mitigate his pain.

Lines five through seven further illustrate Cavafy's inability to accurately comprehend why his lover left him: "Their love for sure was not [] what it once used to be;/ the sexual attraction [] had gradually waned,/ the sexual attraction [] had been reduced a lot" (5). In these lines, Cavafy begins to examine and self-reflect on what had changed. Interestingly, Cavafy equates their love solely with sexual attraction. This may be a tactic that allows Cavafy to not think more about their true love—in which case Cavafy is seen running from the truth. Otherwise, Cavafy does not know what he had with his lover—what their love truly *was* (or if it was "love"). Cavafy truly believes that the sexual attraction "had gradually waned." However, since Cavafy chooses to not talk more about why their love was not what it once used to be, he realizes after this statement that the reader will see through him—that sexual attraction "gradually waning" surely cannot be a good enough reason for love not being what it used to be. So, Cavafy amends his statement and boldly exclaims that "the sexual attraction [] had been reduced a lot." (7). Cavafy's tendency to equate love with sexuality shows the reader what his relationships represent.

The last quarter of the poem represents a discovery of temporary solace for Cavafy. When one cannot deal with the circumstances in his life, he can blame it on fate: "... perhaps Destiny/ appeared like an artist, [] separating them now" (9). By portraying Destiny as an artist, Cavafy reminds himself that what happened, happened for a reason and can be interpreted as "art" (beautiful in some sense, even if tragic) if he simply changes his perspective. Destiny separates the two "before their feeling fades, [] before they are changed by Time;" (11). Cavafy connects himself and his lover by talking about their one shared "feeling"—the foundation of a relationship hinges on connection, so using the words: "their feeling" powerfully rejects the notion that the two lovers have separate feelings. This again appears to be an idealization on Cavafy's part. He understands that Time would have easily exposed the existing flaws in their relationship. Unfortunately, it appears as if Cavafy's lover had already been alerted to said flaws. But Cavafy continues to use this explanation as a form of healing. He concludes by saying, "each of them for the other [] will then remain forever/ a twenty-four-year-old [] and beautiful young man" (12). Despite the brevity of their time together, and subsequent separation, Cavafy was left with a strong impression of their relationship.

Cavafy's ability to juxtapose a false sense of healing with having a different perspec-

tive in life allows for a truly interesting reading of Cavafy's poetry. Should the reader feel happy for Cavafy, now that he finds solace? Or should the reader be bothered by the fact that Cavafy is missing the point? Cavafy knows the reader will pick up on this juxtaposition and offers up a simple solution to these naturally-occurring human experiences: Time. Time changes everything and everyone. Lastly, Cavafy utilizes the ability to indent in the middle of every line in this poem to mirror the separation of his lover and himself. But the separation allows for a more dragged-out reading of the poem, which in turn allows a wider breadth of interpretations (and a definite need to read the poem several times). For instance, in the last line, Cavafy says "a twenty-four-year-old [] and beautiful young man" (13). There is no punctuation in the middle of the line, separating the left part from the right, but there is an indentation. Is it to be read with a pause or without? At first, we believe the twenty-four-year-old to be one person, and the beautiful young man to be the other. However, if one sees that the description can represent one person, the reader becomes alerted to the fact that Cavafy, *the narrator*, refers to himself and another man of the same age: "each of them for the other [] will then remain forever" (12). Time gave him (the lover) and will continue to give him (the memories) several beautiful gifts in life. ■

NB: *The essay above was originally written not for a Core class, but for a Modern Greek literature course, taught by Profs. Kelly Polychroniou and Jay Samons, and jointly listed under the Department of Classical Studies (as CL 359) and the Department of World Languages and Literatures (as CG 359). The author persuaded us that his discussion of Cavafy nonetheless has a place in these pages, since Cavafy's work draws so extensively on history—ranging from the Trojan War through the Hellenistic Period to Late Antiquity—and has a central place in the story of literary Modernism, the end-point of the four-semester Core humanities sequence. As Metaxas put it to us: "Cavafy is the Core." – Eds.*

JON HAN

Tithonus

after Tennyson

Dawn slips off the couch, and walks
to where she always holds him, propped
on an armchair. Her rosy fingers split
the blinds, a space not between slats

but stars, two whole worlds—in one,
she pulls out the horizon
and in the other, his eyes evaporate
in the kiln of his sockets.

Dr. Eckleburg

He glanced over as I stripped
into my pyjamas, but only noticed
the tangerines (skinned
and boned), the scarecrow
on the chair, and the carpet
soiled grey by the soles of my feet.



GREGORY KERR

“And Know the Place for the First Time”: Journeys Through Space & Soul in Our Core Curriculum

Over four semesters of Core humanities, we covered, with various degrees of depth, much of the Western tradition, from Gilgamesh to Woolf. The stories we encountered in our two years of Core follow a hero's journey, both external and internal. In the first year, we focused heavily on *Gilgamesh*, *Exodus*, the *Odyssey*, and the *Aeneid*, which all feature grueling physical journeys either to return home or discover a new one. In our second year, we transitioned towards more personal, internal struggles of love and finding home in the works of Petrarch, Machiavelli, and Austen, among others. Though they initially seem quite different, the works in the first and second years of Core map rather well to each other, as, say, Gilgamesh and Petrarch achieve the same goal through vastly different means. Though the devices and narratives change between first and second year Core from external to internal, the fundamental human desires all of these works address do not change. By expanding the definitions of what it is the Core characters want and fulfilling certain desires metaphorically, the modern works in Core's second year narrow the scope of the conflict to the inside of the mind. The turning point and the bridge between external and internal conflicts between Core's first and second years comes at the end of 102 with Dante's *Divine Comedy*. This allegory for an internal conflict to reunite with his lost love Beatrice under the guise of a physical journey through hell, purgatory, and heaven to find his home with God, bridges the gap between these two types of stories by being simultaneously internal and external.

The Hero's Journey story we repeatedly encountered in first-year Core featured Gilgamesh, Moses, Aeneas, and Odysseus engaging in quests that relate to their physical home in some way. Gilgamesh seeks immortality. Moses and Aeneas are both led by divine will and the promise of glory for their people to create a new home in a foreign land. Odysseus simply wants to return home so that he can be with his family. The heroes all face physical and mental trials along their journeys, and they all seek some variation of home.

Gilgamesh journeys to preserve himself and his home after the death of his best friend Enkidu. When someone he loved dies, he loses a fundamental part of his emotional home, sending Gilgamesh into a spiral of depression and paranoia over the thought of his own seemingly impending death. Gilgamesh, uniquely, does not seek a place, but rather a thing: immortality (cf. Joseph Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*). The threat of death prompts Gilgamesh's journey for the secret to immortality because he considers only two absolutes: he becomes immortal, or he dies. The journey did not intimidate Gilgamesh as, to him, dying on the road to immortality is as productive to him as dying of old age however many years later — either way he eventually loses his life, and, since Gilgamesh cannot experience anything in death, he loses his home too. Gilgamesh makes the journey to protect his emotional home from the threat of time and death, and, though he fails and does not become immortal, he better understands the value that arises from the fleeting nature of life.

Moses and Aeneas do not attempt to become gods, but their journeys begin because of them. Commanded by their gods and compelled by duty, Moses and Aeneas leave the ruins of their former homes of Egypt and Troy, respectively, to seek out an unknown land that is to become their new home. On each journey, various divine forces seek to aid or hinder them, whether it is Venus and Juno battling against fate or God having the Hebrews to struggle in the desert for forty years. In both cases, the heroes follow their duties to the prophesies of the gods they worship and the needs of the people they love to find a place to call home. Unlike in *Gilgamesh*, the heroes fight bitterly to gain a home, as they are without one at the start of their journey. Similar to *Gilgamesh*, however, is the idea that home is very fragile. Gilgamesh fears that death will separate him from both his physical and emotional home, but Moses and Aeneas have already experienced the loss of their first home, and are further motivated to complete their journey by the pain of that loss. The heroes are also driven by the wish to create a future for their people. Moses takes the Hebrews to Israel and Aeneas takes the Trojans to Italy — both peoples found lasting civilizations as the result of the determination of Moses and Aeneas.

Finally, Odysseus does not wish to preserve his home through immortality, nor to create new homes in foreign lands; he wants simply to return to the home and family he left and rejoin his wife and son whom he loves dearly. Odysseus demonstrates superhuman levels of perseverance to continue for the ten years he spends journeying home. Odysseus does spend several years on the islands of both Circe and Calypso, but his dissatisfaction with the love afforded him there stems from his desire to find *his*

home. By, perhaps coldheartedly, disregarding the lives of his fellow crewmembers and focusing solely on his personal objective, Odysseus demonstrates his determination to (like Moses and Aeneas) defy the deities that would obstruct his path and return to Ithaca. Like Aeneas, when Odysseus defies all odds and expectations in returning home, he faces the last trial of re-establishing the status of his marriage through direct conflict with the suitors who would deprive Odysseus of Penelope; in Aeneas' case, he fights Turnus to determine who will rightfully have Lavinia.

Despite Virgil's multiple, pointed narratives and thematic reversals of the *Odyssey* in the *Aeneid*, both epics still fundamentally tell the same story: that of a seafaring hero, set against the gods, in search of home. (For more on this point, see William Anderson, "On Vergil's Use of the Odyssey.") Gilgamesh, Moses, Odysseus, and Aeneas may come from vastly different cultures, but the allure of protecting, discovering, and returning home provides these heroes with the motivation they need to undergo their epic journeys; through its unique ability to give purpose to the protagonists of these stories, *home* is the hero of the epic.

Unlike the epic heroes we met in the first year of Core, the characters (and authors) in the second year face largely internal challenges related to their home, facing trials within their own minds rather than adventuring to somewhere far off in search of home. In his *Canzoniere*, Petrarch struggles to reconcile the relationship between himself and his beloved Laura in the constructed home of his poetry. In the *Prince*, Machiavelli laments the state of his home and seeks someone who has the virtù to save it from its splintering. In *Pride and Prejudice*, Austen tells a story of Elizabeth's internal conflict between love and hatred of Mr. Darcy in her quest to find a home and start a family. Two reversals take place in the second year of Core, as the definition of "home" expands from the physical islands and cities of the first year to identity, countrymen, and families, while the scope of the journey narrows in from the vast external world to the intimacy of the mind and heart.

Petrarch's *Canzoniere*, a collection of sonnets regarding his beloved Laura, starts the second year of Core with a very internal matter. Petrarch wrote about himself and the person whom he loved, and his poetry shows his dedication to her, before and after her death. In his fifth sonnet, Petrarch integrates the syllables of Laura's Latin name, Laureta, into the very language of his poetry: "LAUdable", "REgal", "TAcitly", "LAUd", "REvere", "morTAl". Laura's name itself resembles the word for the ancient Roman laurel wreath that winning poets received. The similarity in their names implies a link in Petrarch's mind between his corporeal love and the intangible love of his po-

etry. By linking Laura to poetry, Petrarch can make her immortal, and, like Gilgamesh, keep his home alive forever. As the scene for Petrarch's conflict narrows into his mind, the interpretations for his goals expand; while he cannot grant Laura immortality, his poetry immortalized the two of them more effectively than Gilgamesh ever could.

In *Pride and Prejudice*, Elizabeth, like Odysseus, must journey far to reach her home and her beloved. Her journey is fully internal, as the metaphorical bridge between where she begins and where she ends is the bridge between what Mr. Darcy feels about her and the little which Elizabeth feels about him. The impetus for the stories of Odysseus and Elizabeth, unlike those of Aeneas, Moses, or Gilgamesh, is interpersonal love. Odysseus wants to reunite with Penelope and Telemachus, and Elizabeth ultimately wants to be with Mr. Darcy. Instead of crossing the Mediterranean and facing physical trials, Elizabeth's conflict is between her desire to love and be loved on one side, and, as the title implies, the prejudices and pride of various characters (herself, Mr. Darcy, and Lady Catherine, to name a few). Pemberley, much like Ithaca, is the home in which Elizabeth wishes to live. While *Pride and Prejudice* differs from the *Odyssey* with regard to the theme of returning, the reason Odysseus wants to return home is the same reason Elizabeth wants to start a home: love. Austen adapts the same core theme of building a family to the English aristocratic setting and modernizes the conflict from seafaring adventure to internal discord.

In the *Divine Comedy*, Dante's internal struggles manifest, through the poetry, as external trials. The allegorical construction of his work, and its place in time, bridges the gap between the old and new worlds of literature and the first and second years of Core. As Dante states in the first three lines of the *Inferno's* Canto I: "When I had journeyed half of our life's way/ I found myself within a shadowed forest,/ for I had lost the path that does not stray." Right as the poem begins, Dante alerts the reader that the poem is an allegory for a spiritual and personal crisis. Like Odysseus, Dante seeks his beloved Beatrice, but, as Virgil tells Dante, he is not yet ready to be with her, just as Elizabeth and Mr. Darcy were not initially ready to have each other. Dante repeatedly cites the obstacle of his own arrogance and pride early in the *Inferno*, and by confronting his sins in *Purgatorio*, Dante becomes sufficiently humbled by his extended *katabasis* to enter heaven with Beatrice. He resembles the ancient heroes, albeit allegorically, by undergoing a physical journey, and he specifically resembles Gilgamesh, Aeneas, and Odysseus for going through a land of death, be it the Waters of Death, hell, or the Greco-Roman underworld. In working his way towards Beatrice, Dante gets closer and closer to heaven, which resembles the *Aeneid* and *Exodus* in that it represents a

return to the happy spiritual state which he had lost at the beginning of the *Inferno*.

In the first year of Core, the heroes have clear homeward goals and straightforward, though difficult, paths. In the second year, the protagonists seek more complex ends through the far more complex means of internal toil. Though the stories of these characters may differ greatly in narrative, they all fundamentally want the same things: home, and the love it affords. Similar types of conflicts play out in first and second year core through different means, with the difference being an external or internal orientation. Dante bridges every conceivable gap by being the midpoint between the external ancient world and the internal modern one, and by incorporating elements from all of the stories discussed above. The scope of Dante's work and his ability to both draw from what came before and anticipate what comes after his *Comedy* is simply divine. ■

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Kyna HAMILL received her Ph.D. in Theatre History from Tufts University. She is Assistant Director of the Core and teaches dramatic literature in the School of Theatre. Prof. Hamill specializes in the iconography of the *commedia dell'arte*, theatre and war, and theatre semiotics. Her published scholarship includes articles in *Print Quarterly*, *Theatre Symposium*, and *Performing Violence in Contemporary Ireland*.

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resides in Kilachand Hall, Suite 401, in which playwright Eugene O'Neill expired. O'Neill's spirit was conspicuously uncooperative in assisting with the composition of this paper.

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Τῆς παιδείας ἔφη τὰς μὲν ρίζας εἶναι πικράς, τὸν δὲ καρπὸν γλυκύν.

“The roots of education are bitter, but the fruit is sweet.”

- attributed to Aristotle by Diogenes Laertius; translation by R.D. Hicks.



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