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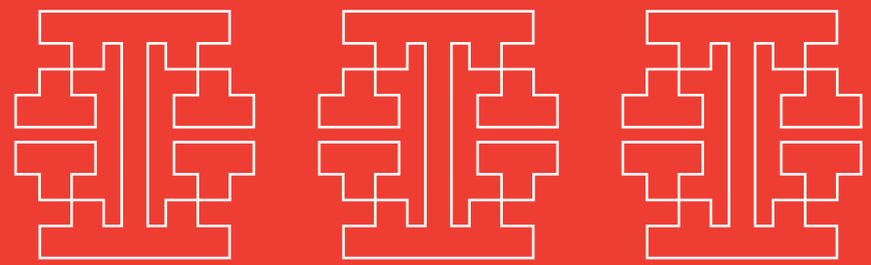

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"Presencing of the Present": The Politics of Refusal as a Spiritual Practice

Lucie Robathan, *McGill University*

This paper is an exploration of refusal. Refusal as a philosophy, a practice, and a politics, is a theme permeating a particular brand of Indigenous thinking (and living) regarding the "impossible but therapeutic fallacy of reconciliation"[1] in what is now Canada. It argues against reducing Indigenous visions of justice to state recognition. From the Eastern Canadian context, it is Audra Simpson's biting analysis of Indigenous-settler relations that offers a way into this enquiry, and it is with her rejection of recognition as "the *sine qua non* if not the end point, the orgasm of justice today,"[2] that this paper will begin. Denying and transgressing the boundaries of settler-colonial logic, by which Indigenous subjects have been placed within certain histories and geographies created and maintained by state power, refusal becomes a new mechanism for "dismantling the systems of colonial domination."[3] Taking seriously Neal McLeod's assertion that Indigenous dispossession through colonial presence is both a "spatial and a spiritual exile,"[4] and Leanne Simpson's insistence that land is "constructed and defined by our intimate spiritual, emotional, and physical relationship with it,"[5] the following discussion will trace the spiritual dimension of refusal, in order to embed refusal in a broader set of spiritual commitments which ultimately tie this radical politics-as-presence both to the past – and to the imagined future.

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1. Audra Simpson, "The Ruse of Consent and the Anatomy of 'Refusal': Cases from Indigenous North America and Australia," *Postcolonial Studies* 20, no. 1 (2017): 23.
2. Simpson, "The Ruse of Consent," 19.
3. Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, in *As We Have Always Done: Indigenous Freedom Through Radical Resistance* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2017), 176.
4. Neal McLeod, *Cree Narrative Memory: From Treaties to Contemporary Times* (Saskatoon, SK: Purich Pub., 2007), 55.
5. Simpson, *As We Have Always Done*, 23.

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The Politics of Refusal

Audra Simpson's *Mohawk Interruptus* details the politics that is lived and embodied by the Kahnawà:ke Mohawk community, through the persistent fact of their existence as Indigenous subjects, defying the colonial logic of exclusion. She sees this way of living as manifesting a *politics of refusal*: by refusing to disappear, or to "stop being themselves,"[6] their lives and bodies themselves become sites that challenge the legitimacy of the Canadian state, and therefore destabilize the discourses and instruments of recognition which have historically been employed to define and delimit the terms of their identity. This is a piece of a broader antagonistic relationship between traditional and settler nationhoods and nationalities, in which the legal parameters of belonging set into motion by the Indian Act are rendered precarious by the "nested sovereignty"[7] presented by Indigenous subjects and societies. This refusal is firstly a presence, and can therefore be understood on a temporal level as an immanent unsettling of what Simpson elsewhere refers to as the "settler present."[8] The logic of settler colonialism demands a certain fictional temporality, she maintains, in which the state both owns time (inasmuch as it neutralizes the present and narrates the past), and dispossesses Indigenous lives of their place in time by determining "what matters, who matters, what pasts are alive and when they die." Living, and presenting themselves, in a powerfully present way, so as to push up against the boundaries of the "settler present," Indigenous peoples become "reminders…of other orders, other authorities, and an earlier time that has not fully passed."[9] An Indigenous "presencing of the present"[10] works to collapse a historical narrative that places injustice in the past, and to puncture the trajectory of any attempts at reconciliation that do not place Indigenous subjects at their centre.

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6. Audra Simpson, *Mohawk Interruptus: Political Life Across the Borders of Settler States* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014), 2.
7. Simpson, *Mohawk Interruptus*, 12. By "nested sovereignty," Simpson means one sovereignty is embedded within another – which for her, entails that "one proliferates at the other's expense."
8. Simpson, "The Ruse of Consent," 22.
9. Simpson, "The Ruse of Consent," 22.
10. This wonderful formulation is from Leanne Simpson, in *As We Have Always Done*, 20.

Reconciliation, Recognition, and Time

The specifically temporal aspect of settler-colonial discourse on belonging is unpacked more precisely in Coulthard's seminal *Red Skin, White Masks*, in which he argues that the project of reconciliation in the Canadian context is entwined with an ongoing and pernicious internal colonizing affected by the notion of recognition. Recognition is implicated in the work of reconciliation both in the *terms* of reconciliation – to the extent that it entrenches a particular power structure between the state and Indigenous communities even as it attempts to ameliorate the relationship – and in the *goal* of reconciliation politics, by which the justice aimed at is a form of state accommodation that amounts to, as Fanon formulates it, "white liberty and white justice: that is, values secreted by [their] masters."[11] Coulthard sees Canada's legal and political employment of the term 'reconciliation' to be essentially about reconciling state sovereignty with Indigenous assertions of nationhood, spinning therefore upon this discourse of recognition. The Canadian situation provides a problematic ground upon which to construct a reconciliation politics, he argues, because from a temporal perspective reconciliation is a mechanism of *transitional justice*, while Canada remains in a *nontransitional* context in which there is no clear transition from past to present relations of settler colonialism.[12] Reconciliation therefore entails a temporal element in Coulthard's figuring, to do with confronting and overcoming a past wrongdoing or event – while the experience of Indigenous peoples in Canada is one of continual, present abuses from the colonial structure itself. We can therefore begin to see how the politics of refusal contains a temporal dimension, confronting a colonial narrative of the past and the present with an immanence and presence that

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11. As quoted in Glen Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014), 39. Coulthard's book builds upon the framework established by Fanon, that exposes the way in which colonialism works to embed power relations to such a degree that the colonized comes to reify and embody the "externally determined and devalued conception of himself" (*Red Skin, White Masks*, 31).

12. Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks,* 108. We are reminded here also of Patrick Wolfe's formulation that settler colonialism is not an event, but a structure. See Patrick Wolfe, "Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native," *Journal of Genocide Research* 8, no. 4 (2006): 387-409.

becomes radical. Leanne Simpson's assertion that "if we want to create a different future, we need to live in a different present…if we want to live in a different present, we have to centre indigeneity and allow it to change us,"[13] demonstrates how living in the present can take on a radical and resistant character.

Indigenous Presence and Spirituality

Asserting Indigenous presence, in the present, can be understood more clearly as a radical move by unpacking the ways in which the spiritual is implicated in time. A common thread running through many Indigenous spiritualities (limited for the purposes of this paper to Anishinaabeg and Cree contexts) is a dynamic engagement with creation stories, which lay out an ontological foundation from which Indigenous communities are impelled towards a continuous re-creation process. Both the content of the creation stories, and the significance of story-telling itself, combine to form a spiritual basis for what Leanne Simpson terms a "radical resurgence:"[14] an embodied process of being present by "returning to ourselves."[15] For the Anishinaabeg, creation stories beget a creative process that permeates all aspects of an individual's life, since just as Creation is an extension of the Creator who compels them to "create life and renew it,"[16] so is all new created life an extension of the self. Creation stories thus become a personal theory for living well, and living well means "re-creating the good life in whatever forms we imagine, vision and live in contemporary times."[17] For Simpson, Nishnaabeg resurgence is imagining and embodying new realities; it is *dancing on our turtle's back*.[18] Wanda Nanibush's account of peaceful disobedience through the *Idle No More* movement[19] also makes this ontological connection between traditional creation stories and the creative

13. Simpson, *As We Have Always Done*, 20.
14. Simpson, *As We Have Always Done*, 17.
15. Simpson, *As We Have Always Done*, 17.
16. Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, *Dancing on Our Turtle's Back: Stories of Nichnaabeg Re-Creation, Resurgence and a New Emergence* (Winnipeg: Arbeiter Ring Pub., 2011), 38.
17. Simpson, *Dancing on Our Turtle's Back*, 68.
18. Simpson, *Dancing on Our Turtle's Back*, 70.
19. *Idle No More* is a grassroots protest movement, founded in 2012, calling all people to "join in a peaceful revolution, to honour Indigenous sovereignty, and to protect the land and water." See http://www.idlenomore.ca/.

act of living, claiming that creation is fundamental to Anishinaabeg identity in part because of the integral and intrinsic relationship between peoples and the earth. Nanibush maintains that creation is an "act of futural imagination,"[20] wherein creative activity sustains both the earth and humanity, coupled as they are by the larger relational cosmology underpinning Anishinaabeg thought.[21] This theme of (re-)creation offers a connecting thread between the past, the present, and the possible future,through the personal resurgent activity of the individual.

Storytelling to Decolonize

It is not just the narratives of the creation stories, but the function of storytelling itself as a decolonizing activity that makes creation stories inspire and drive resurgence. Leanne Simpson and Edna Manitowabi understand storytelling as fundamentally emergent and fluid, thereby transgressing the rigidity of colonial structures of identity and belonging, and as an example of a personal form of theorizing by which each Nishnaabeg communicates and negotiates their own knowledge. Storytelling, they say, "becomes a space where we can escape the gaze and the cage of the empire,"[22] constructing for themselves an alternative narrative – and therefore an alternative future. There seems to be both a political and a legal component to escaping the cage through stories, the creative potential of which we can unearth by

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20. Wanda Nanibush, "Idle No More: Strong Hearts of Indigenous Women's Leadership," in Angela R. Miles, *Women in a Globalizing World: Transforming Equality, Development, Diversity and Peace* (Toronto, ON: Inanna Publications and education Inc., 2013), 343.

21. In *Our Knowledge Is Not Primitive: Decolonizing Botanical Anishinaabe Teachings* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 2009), Wendy Djinn Geniusz insists that the Anishinaabe cosmology is by its nature holistic and deeply relational, and, accordingly, that Indigenous knowledges cannot be understood without understanding the ontological commitments at the core of this cosmology. For example, the Winabojo, a part human, part spirit deity, is said to have helped to create the world and brought the Anishinaabeg many teachings. Without understanding the centrality of this figure, she argues, one cannot access or comprehend Anishinaabeg knowledge. (Note: The term "Anishinaabe" refers to a large cultural group of indigeneous communities, including the Ojibwe. Odawa, and Algonquian peoples. "Anishinaabeg" is plural, and has been used in this paper to connote collectivity).

22. Leanne Betasamosake Simpson and Edna Manitowabi, "Theorizing Resurgence from Within Nishnaabeg Thought," in *Centering Anishinaabeg Studies: Understanding the World Through Stories*, ed. Jill Doerfler, Niigaanwewidam James Sinclair, and Heidi Kiiwetinepinesiik (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2013), 281.

considering the relationship between storytelling and spirituality.

The political possibilities inherent in the act of storytelling are evidenced in Audra Simpson's powerful personal negotiation with her own identity at the end of *Mohawk Interruptus*. Interviewing a Mohawk man from Ahkwesáhsne, Simpson is forced to confront her conception of her Mohawk membership when he asks her, "When you look in the mirror, what do you see?" After faltering in "stupefied silence," she eventually offers him an answer: "I see a nice person, L."[23] This identification as self-narrated, rather than prescribed, spurs Simpson towards the possibility of re-articulating the notions of citizenship and nation through narratives of belonging as they are lived, spoken, and felt. Her political ethnography[24] suggests that there are different workings of citizenship, in the face of and despite the lack of recognition and the imposition of rules from the state. The citizenship she discovers herself living out she calls a "feeling citizenship," wrought through social and political interactions and through the continuous living, desiring, and affirming of "who we are." Feeling citizenships don't have any institutional weight, but they are recognized and understood in everyday community life and represent pieces of narrative knowledge against and beyond "colonial recitations of exclusion."[25]

At a more institutional level, the capacity of storytelling to engender new and alternate understandings of identity and belonging has been used by Cheryl Suzack to argue for the legal significance of the figure of "the Aboriginal-woman-as-feeling-subject,"[26] whose narratives regarding their experience of discrimination under Indian Act amendments present a challenge to the law's epistemic authority. The affective character of the Aboriginal woman, whose subjectivity unsettles the objectivity of legal discourse, demonstrates for Suzack the role that narratives could (and should) play in facilitating new ways of understanding the implications of legal decision-making. John Borrows, in a more all-encompassing move, declares Canada's legal system as incomplete, and argues that the various

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23. Simpson, *Mohawk Interruptus*, 168-169.

24. A project she labels herself as "imagining and writing the political ethnographically." See Simpson, "The Ruse of Consent," 23.

25. Simpson, *Mohawk Interruptus*, 176.

26. Cheryl Suzack, "Emotion Before the Law," in *Indigenous Women and Feminism: Politics, Activism, Culture*, ed. Cheryl Suzack, Shari M. Huhndorf, Jeanne Perrault and Jean Barman (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010), 128.

sources of law within Indigenous legal traditions should be more effectively embraced in order to expand and advance the legal system as a whole. These sources, he argues, include sacred stories and ancient teachings. In fact, for some Indigenous peoples, creation stories underpinned the very treaties that "brought Canada into existence within their territories."[27] This means that according to these peoples, such as the Elders of Treaty Six First Nations, the treaties surrounding Canada's formation were made with "the Creator as well as the Crown,"[28] and it is by paying attention to the function of narratives – including sacred stories and tales emerging from observations of the physical world wherein natural law is "literally being written on the earth"[29] – that we can comprehend and confront the full scope of Indigenous legal traditions.

The role of narrative as a mode of rethinking – and of (re-)creating – is brought to light most powerfully in Neal McLeod's conception of Cree storytelling as a form of critical theory, which also emphasizes how storytelling from his Indigenous perspective has a significantly spiritual component. McLeod explains that storytelling, as a hermeneutical project, is a way of thinking beyond the boundaries of colonial theory – and that stories for the Cree are the embodiment of a spiritual history. Storytellers therefore become the link between a remembered past and an imagined future, and their task one of "narrative imagination."[30] In fact, the telling of the most sacred stories often has a ritual purpose, and as Leanne Simpson reminds us, creation stories in their most epic and detailed form are traditionally told by Elders in particular ceremonial settings, making it ethically inappropriate for her to describe them fully in her own work.[31] One important aspect of

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27. John Borrows, *Canada's Indigenous Constitution* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010), 47. Borrows describes Elder Norman Sunchild of Treaty Six, who said that 'When [Treaty Six First Nations] finally agreed to the treaty, the Commissioner took the promises in his hand and raised them to the skies, placed the treaties in the hands of the Great Spirit."

28. Borrows, *Canada's Indigenous Constitution*, 48.

29. Borrows, *Canada's Indigenous Constitution*, 52. Here Borrows references his own mother's stories about the natural world, and describes what they can teach us about natural law principles.

30. McLeod, *Cree Narrative Memory*, 100.

31. It is mainly for this reason (as well as limited space) that this paper will not be looking in detail at the particularities of any of these sacred stories, and instead draws upon the key themes and insights offered by various Indigenous commentators. For Leanne Simpson's treatment of the matter, see *Dancing on our Turtle's Back*, 35.

sacred stories, as McLeod describes, is their construction of time, which runs counter to a Western linear timeline. Within Cree spiritual histories, beings can persist across long periods of time, rendering relationships between the spiritual and the people as rooted in space rather than history, meaning that it is possible for the storyteller to be in relationship with these beings as the story itself unfolds. The holistic temporality of these stories provides an important hermeneutical tool for the purposes of this discussion, by allowing for an ontological framework in which the re-telling of a story, and the lived activity that it demands, can have a creative and resurgent force.

Indigenous Bodies and the Settler-Colonial State

Running alongside the temporal aspect of the politics of refusal, and in fact an integral connecting piece between the past, present, and future, is the fact of embodiment. Edna Manitowabi's assertion that "we wear our teachings"[32] highlights the crucially embodied aspect of Indigenous experience, and the significance of Indigenous bodies in refusing the structures of settler colonialism. Indeed, for Mishuana Goeman, embodied experiences form the basis of her Native feminism, providing a powerful theoretical counter to settler-colonial theory written upon disciplined Native bodies. Goeman argues that the body can disrupt both the vertical and the horizontal scales of colonialism, by emphasizing the connections across history and between peoples that are captured in the body as a geography. While colonial logic requires such bodies to be either displaced or absent, for Goeman the assertion of an undisciplined and resistant body functions as a "living memory."[33] She injects a spiritual element into her argument by presenting Native bodies as "an integral part of creation,"[34] and embodiment therefore as a form of knowledge that places the subject within a web of relations spanning the human and nonhuman world.

This embodiment takes on a particularly politicized character in Indigenous women. Women in the Indigenous contexts addressed in this essay are inextricably tied to the land, making the settling of land

32. Simpson, *Dancing on our Turtle's Back*, 42.
33. Mishuana R. Goeman, "Ongoing Storms and Struggles," in *Critically Sovereign: Indigenous Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Studies*, ed. Joanne Barker (Durham: Duke University Press, 2017), 113.
34. Barker, *Critically Sovereign*, 120.

fundamentally gendered. Rebecca Tsosie elaborates upon the relationship between women and land in her discussion of Native women's leadership, highlighting how the creative impulse of the female body imbues women with the essence of the Creator – they both embody this spiritual essence, wedded to the land, and are assigned the great responsibility of ownership of the land (an ownership that does not imply possession: the opposite of dispossession in Indigenous thinking, as Leanne Simpson clarifies, is not possession but connection).[35] Audra Simpson's impassioned exposition of Canada's response to Theresa Spence's 2012 hunger strike[36] exposes and emphasizes the way that women's bodies and the land are both reduced to "matter to be extracted from, used, sullied, taken from…something that is already violated and violatable."[37] In response to the condemnations and ridiculing from various commentators that Spence's fasting had had little impact on her weight, Simpson argues that the stubborn fleshiness of Spence's body manifests a refusal to disappear, a defiant life in the face of the "sovereign death drive" of the state. Both in her embodiment, and through her fasting as an act of political compassion, Spence represents for Simpson a relationship with the spiritual and the natural world whose excesses spill over the boundaries of "settler statecraft."[38]

Beyond – or Before – Legal Rights

The ways in which land, body, and spirit figure in the politics of refusal also combine to offer an alternative framework for rights discourse amongst some Aboriginal rights theorists. This framework is derived from an extrajudicial commitment to the title of indigeneity itself, the

35. Simpson, *As We Have Always Done*, 185.

36. In December 2012, Theresa Spence declared a hunger strike until the Prime Minister of Canada and the Governor General of Canada met with her to discuss treaties, and to consider the conditions of deprivation and oppression suffered by her community and the communities beyond. She received a negative response from many commentators. As Audra Simpson puts it, "She was drinking fish broth twice a day, and so, was 'fudging' things (so to speak). And in fact, you would think she was actually eating fudge, as irate Canadians 'weighed in' continuously on her insincerity, her avarice, her body, and in particular, her fat." See Audra Simpson, "The State is a Man: Theresa Spence, Loretta Saunders and the Gender of Settler Sovereignty," *Theory and Event* 19, no. 4 (2016) https://muse.jhu.edu/article/633280 (accessed February 15 2019).

37. Simpson, "The State is Man," para. 16.

38. Simpson, "The State is Man," para. 1.

significance of which is woven into the legal framework of Aboriginal citizenship in Canada through the 1973 case *Calder v. A-G (B.C.)*, where the court recognized Aboriginal title as a justiciable right beyond merely moral of political questions. John Borrows describes this recognition as "momentous,"[39] since it suggests that the source of Aboriginal rights might lie beyond constitutional legal structures. We can see the importance of this notion in David Ahenakew's exploration of Aboriginal rights, which he explains spin upon the primary and principle right of self-determination: a right that need not, and should not, be identified and defined in Canadian law since it is a right "the Creator gave to them when he placed them on this land."[40] For Ahenakew, this right is therefore indivisible from the Aboriginal title, and the title cannot be understood as separate from self-determination. Echoing Coulthard's seminal rejection of recognition politics, he grounds his move away from legally recognized rights in the argument that to identify self-determination as an Aboriginal right is to negate the fact that self-determination, rooted in connection with the land, is a pre-existing and inherent aspect of Indigeneity and the spiritual and philosophical traditions embedded in this title.

We see a similar spiritual piece emerge in Patricia Monture-Angus' discussion of the complexity and paradox of the constitutional recognition of Aboriginal rights, although her analysis remains within a recognition paradigm (rather than pushing for a refusal politics). Monture-Angus claims that there is in fact a legal argument for the inherency of the right to self-determination provided by the Charter's "'solemn promise' to '*recognize and affirm*' [such] rights."[41] The words "recognize and affirm" in Section 35.1 suggests, she says, that these rights are pre-existing, rather than granted by the charter. For Monture-Angus, there might therefore be a way constitutionally to protect Aboriginal rights, if this inherency is understood not just as a human rights question, but as a spiritual, uniquely cultural issue

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39. John Borrows, "Uncertain Citizens: Aboriginal Peoples and the Supreme Court," *The Canadian Bar Review* 80, no. 1 (2001): 17-18.

40. David Ahenakew, "Aboriginal Title and Aboriginal Rights: The Impossible and Unnecessary Task of Identification and Definition," in *The Quest for Justice: Aboriginal Peoples and Aboriginal Rights*, ed. Menno Boldt and J. Anthony Long in association with Leroy Little Bear (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985), 29.

41. Patricia A. Monture, *Thunder in my Soul: A Mohawk Woman Speaks* (Halifax, Nova Scotia: Fernwood Publishing, 1995), 158.

of "Creator-given rights"[42] independent of the Canadian state. While she does not argue for a refusal of state-sanctioned legitimacy, she does help us understand the extent to which certain Indigenous rights have a pre-existing, extra-legal, spiritual character. More aligned with refusal is Taiaiake Alfred's push to transform and transcend the very notion of Indigenous sovereignty and rights, since for him even when Aboriginal rights are legally recognized they are still subject to state control, by the criteria demanded and identities assumed in the theoretical framework of rights legislation. "Not throwing indigenous people in jail for fishing is certainly a mark of progress," he writes, "but to what extent does that state-regulated 'right' to fish represent justice when you consider that indigenous people have been fishing on their rivers and seas since time began?"[43] Uniting these approaches is an understanding that Indigenous rights, identities, and belonging are more than, and prior to, that which is recognized and legitimized by the state – and that to distinguish between indigeneity and rights to self-determination is to draw a line between body, spirit, and land in a way that is inconsistent with Indigenous subjectivity.

Spiritual Indecipherability: The Spirit will not be Colonized

The colonization of land, and simultaneously of bodies, is not the only mode of domination provoking the politics of refusal. Central to this refusal is an assertion that the reach of colonialism extends into the minds of the colonized, via an internalization through which the colonized subject becomes intellectually disciplined according to colonial systems of knowledge production and meaning-making. This is a concept established most powerfully by Linda Tuhiwai Smith, who builds upon the Foucauldian notion of discipline to argue that intellectual disciplines themselves function as sites of enclosure, excluding, compartmentalizing, and essentializing Indigenous ways of knowing and believing. The deciphering of Indigenous knowing is, for Smith, a disciplining and dominating project – and therefore the way to counter domination is to remain, in some ways, indecipherable. This indecipherability she locates in traditional Indigenous spirituality being

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42. Monture, *Thunder in my Soul*, 160.

43. Taiaiake Alfred, "Sovereignty," in *Sovereignty Matters: Locations of Contestation and Possibility in Indigenous Struggles for Self-Determination*, ed. Joanne Barker (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2005), 44.

"one of the few parts of ourselves which the West cannot decipher, cannot understand and cannot control."[44] This is in part because of the way in which spiritual knowledge is figured ontologically in Indigenous thinking. Shawn Wilson argues that since this kind of knowledge is relational, it therefore cannot be gained and possessed so much as shared with "the cosmos…with the animals…with the plants…with the earth."[45] Intellectual colonizing also includes a temporal element, by which Indigenous practices and knowledges are presented as features of the past, meaning for Wilson, and for Wendy Geniusz, that to continue to live by this spiritual knowledge reifies these beliefs, becoming another form of revitalization.[46]

Practicing beliefs as a method of personal and political revitalization entails the everyday living of spiritual commitments, but can also be extended to conceive of ritual as rejection. James (Sákéj) Youngblood Henderson takes the specific example of ghost dancing as a discursive symbol of this idea, arguing that analyses of the ghost dance as a messianic ritual among North American Indians misunderstand the normative element of ghost dancing as resistance to colonialism. Ronald Niezen offers a reading of the ritual as messianic in his discussion of the Ghost Dance movement in 1890, the practitioners of which in South Dakota were victims of the Wounded Knee massacre.[47] The Ghost Dance ritual itself, he argues, surrounded a prophetic understanding that the whites were a spiritual punishment, but that deliverance was nigh – it was a source, therefore, of strength in the face of insecurity and oppression – but was taken by non-Aboriginal military forces and "Indian agents" as an act of insurgence. Henderson maintains that a description like this one is mistaken, grounding his analysis in a place of refusal that reads this ritual in terms of colonial struggle. He suggests that this ritual was in fact a move to release ceremonial spirits back into the safety of the Earth, removed from colonizing techniques, in order that they could revive the ecological forces capable of restoring traditional consciousness. Identifying within this hermeneutical gap the opportunity for resistance

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44. Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (London: Zed Books, 2012), 143.

45. Shawn Wilson, "What is an Indigenous Research Methodology?" *Canadian Journal of Native Education* 25, no. 2 (2001): 178.

46. Geniusz, *Our Knowledge is Not Primitive*, 96.

47. See Ronald Niezen, *Spirit Wars: Native North American Religions in the Age of Nation Building* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 135-136.

and renewal, Henderson understands "postcolonial ghost dancing"[48] as any restoration of Indigenous knowledge systems and processes, and his own diagnosis of Eurocentrism as a reflection of this dance.

This move to politicize ritual and ritualize politics resonates throughout the more contemporary example of the *Idle No More* movement, clear even from the title of the book compiled by the Kino-nda-niimi Collective housing voices from the movement, *The Winter We Danced*. As Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs' Grand Chief, Derek Nepinak, explained in an interview transcribed within this book, the natural laws of Indigenous peoples are understood and elucidated through "participation in ceremony" and "acts at a spiritual level."[49] His commitment to *Idle No More* was therefore partly a spiritual obligation to the law of love – and indeed, the closing chapter of this volume begins and ends with Tara Williamson's proclamation that "this is a ceremony."[50] The ceremony of this activist movement is built upon a particular Indigenous ethos, which Nanibush describes as "post-Cartesian,"[51] wherein the spirit is infused and engaged with the mind and body in the act of resistance.

"Grounded Normativity" as an Ethico-Political Framework

To live according to Indigenous practices and knowledge is therefore both always political, and always more than politics.[52] Leanne Simpson and Glen Coulthard insist upon the ethical frameworks that spring from

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48. James (Sákéj) Youngblood Henderson, "Postcolonial Ghost Dancing: Diagnosing European Colonialism," in *Centering Anishinaabeg Studies,* ed. Jill Doerfler, Niigaanwewidam James Sinclair, and Heidi Kiiwetinepinesiik (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2013), 73.

49. Derek Nepinak with Leah Gazan, "Transforming Unity: An Interview with Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs Grand Chief Derek Nepinak," in *The Winter We Danced: Voices From the Past, the Future, and the Idle No More Movement*, ed. Kino-nda-niimi Collective (Winnipeg: ARP Books, 2014), 87.

50. Tara Williamson, "This is a Ceremony," in *The Winter We Danced: Voices From the Past, the Future, and the Idle No More Movement*, ed. Kino-nda-niimi Collective (Winnipeg: ARP Books, 2014), 385.

51. Nanibush, "Idle No More," 342.

52. Ryan McMahon, speaking as an activist involved in *Idle No More*, reminds us of his grandmother's words to him: "Everything you do is political, you're Anishinaabe." See Kino-nda-niimi Collective, *The Winter We Danced*, 138.

a commitment to Indigenous forms of knowledge, rooted as they are in "intimate relationship"[53] both to other human and nonhuman creatures, and to the land from which they are generated and by which they are sustained. They refer to this ethics as "grounded normativity,"[54] seeing the reciprocity and responsibility demanded by Indigenous attachment as a starting point for a political solidarity. The interweaving of the spiritual and the political here is evident in the ethical imperative: grounded normativity entails using Indigenous relationships with the land to develop knowledge through which to practice respectful diplomacy with Indigenous and non-Indigenous nations. Simpson and Coulthard reference by way of example the diplomatic alliances constructed by the Mississauga Nishnaabeg, the Wendat and the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, which they argue demonstrate how each nation's relationship with the "physical and spiritual forces that connect them to…their place of creation"[55] generates a respect for the others' governance. Spirituality as deep relationality therefore engenders cooperation and respect on the level of political relations, and becomes a tool for the reconceiving of nationhood and governance in nonhierarchical terms.

If we consider spirituality as integral to the reciprocity defining Indigenous intellectual and physical processes, we can conceive of it not just as a hermeneutical apparatus for re-conceiving the world, but as a way of living with transformative potential. Leanne Simpson argues that engaging with this way of living is the "how": the process of living itself, in a deeply reciprocal manner, is a "theoretical intervention"[56] into the very notions of identity, belonging, and nationhood. In fact, the Anishinaabeg idea of nationhood as Simpson describes it is as much about inner Anishinaabe identity and spirit as it is about external territory, the two poles being knit together through the relationship with the land. "No matter how we speak it," she asserts, "our nationhood is about land, culture, language, our bodies, minds and spirits….my nationhood doesn't just radiate outwards, it also

53. Glen Coulthard and Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, "Grounded Normativity/ Place-Based Solidarity," *American Quarterly* 68, no. 2 (2016): 254.
54. Coulthard and Simpson, "Grounded Normativity," 254.
55. Coulthard and Simpson, "Grounded Normativity," 249.
56. Simpson, *As We Have Always Done*, 19.

radiates inwards."[57] This means that nation to nation treaties that reflect this notion are understood in terms of friendship, as Wampum Belts seek to represent. For Nanibush, Wampum Belts embody the concept of treaty as friendship and demonstrate how this sort of contract is one that is to be lived, rather than written, in the "spirit and heart."[58] This notion of friendship at the heart of Indigenous political solidarity, it seems, can be best appreciated if we take seriously the conception of Indigenous nationhood as having an inward trajectory.

Towards a "Decolonized Subjectivity"

Using spirituality to connect spirit and body, person and nation, might help us to further unpack the ways in which domination is conceived of within a politics of refusal. Returning to the theoretical framework established by Coulthard, Indigenous consciousness can have a politically transformative power by breaking down internalized colonialism and constructing a "decolonized subjectivity."[59] By insisting upon Indigenous subjects and subjectivity as that which demands repairing, rather than the colonial relationship itself, this framework holds up refusal over reconciliation because the injustices wrought upon Indigenous peoples stretch beyond the socioeconomic into the subjective realm. This stretching of the analysis of injustice can be traced into Monture-Angus' description of the intersectional ways discrimination is suffered by Indigenous peoples beyond that which the legal categories of equality allow. Monture-Angus argues that her experience of discrimination as a Mohawk woman cannot be captured by the terms of the Charter, because it does not make space for the sort of "discrimination within discrimination"[60] she has undergone on an intersectional level. "Who I am as a Mohawk woman does not stop at the end of this little brown nose….my difference is really about who I am inside….it is about what I believe and why."[61] For her, while she might be guaranteed equality *before* the law, the particularity of her experience means

57. Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, "I am Not a Nation-State," accessed May 2018 through https://www.leannesimpson.ca/writings/i-am-not-a-nation-state.
58. Nanibush, "Idle No More," 342.
59. Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks*, 129.
60. Monture-Angus, *Thunder in my Soul*, 137.
61. Monture-Angus, *Thunder in my Soul*, 138-139.

that she does not enjoy equality *under* it. At the heart of this complaint, this discussion would suggest, is the key principle behind the politics of refusal: that seeking recognition from the state is not enough, and that in fact recognition works to perpetuate and reify a particular image of the colonized.

Conclusion: Self-Recognition, Refusal, and Responsibility

By way of tying these threads together, these final comments will consider refusal as self-recognition, and also the way in which this manifests the spiritual claims unearthed by the discussion above. Audra Simpson proposes that self-recognition is a way of denying the authority of the settler-colonial gaze, insisting that it is by refusing the systems and structures through which legitimacy is conferred by the state that new possibilities for citizenship, nationhood, belonging, and identity can evolve. That this is in part a spiritual claim is made evident in Leanne Simpson's analysis of this politics, which introduces the concept of relationality as mirroring. In Nishnaabewin, she argues, to be in relationship is to be a mirror, reflecting back upon another being their "essence and worth."[62] This motion of mirroring is, of course, one of recognition, by which reflecting back upon another means recognizing who they really are. Leanne Simpson unpacks this idea by deconstructing the term *Aaniin*, a method of greeting amongst Michi Saagig Nishnaabeg, which can be used to mean "I see your light/ I see who you really are."[63] She argues that to greet another member of the community in this way is to make (self-)recognition an integral part of living in relationship, and renders the very use of the word *Aaniin* part of the process of this practice. It is recognition – internally, and reciprocally, within Nishnaabewin – that for Leanne Simpson underpins the political and spiritual systems at the core of their worlds. "Reciprocal recognition" both demands and commits to "Indigenous complex, nonlinear constructions of time, space, and place,"[64] embedded in the way they approach the spiritual, natural, and social world.

Tracing the role of the spiritual within the politics of refusal ultimately

62. Simpson, *As We Have Always Done*, 180.
63. Simpson, *As We Have Always Done*, 181.
64. Simpson, *As We Have Always Done*, 182.

grounds refusing in responsibility. Eva Marie Garruotte, attempting to offer a definition of American Indian identities, links it to both being (in relationship) and doing (responsibility to reciprocity) underneath the broader notion of kinship, signifying that the theme of responsibility is foundational to understanding Indigenous ontological and epistemological frameworks.[65] Audra Simpson's exploration of Mohawk citizenship, which formed the starting point for this paper, describes these "theaters"[66] of refusal as reflecting Mohawk responsibility to territory and towards each other, thereby weaving together the themes of refusal and responsibility in her very definition. The notion of responsibility has in fact permeated the above analysis: creation stories, as we have seen, place responsibility on the created to continue the cycle of recreation – a responsibility to listen and to live spiritual narratives as a way to access knowledge.[67] Indigenous rights entail a Creator-given responsibility to the land, while responsibility for the land was labeled as the driving force behind *Idle No More*. This paper has suggested that the link between refusal and responsibility is, ultimately, a spiritual one, with the spiritual being a deep relationality which connects the body with the land, the land with the nation, and the nation with life.

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65. Eva Marie Garruotte, *Real Indians: Identity and the Survival of Native America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 99.

66. Simpson, *Mohawk Interruptus*, 157.

67. Leanne Simpson explains that embodied Indigenous knowledge is ultimately accessed "by watching, listening and reflecting…by the quality of our relationships, and the personalized contexts we collectively create" (*Dancing on Our Turtle's Back,* 42).

Ill and Impaired Bodies in a Ninth-Century Liturgical Commentary: Amalarius' *Liber Officialis* Through the Lens of Disability Studies[1]

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This paper seeks to locate the ninth-century liturgical commentary, the *Liber Officialis* by Amalarius of Metz, in scholarly discourse concerning disability and sickness. By analysing five distinct moments in the text where Amalarius specifically writes about a bodily ailment or impairment and its consequence on the affected person's experience of Mass, I will argue that Amalarius' interpretation of the liturgy is shaped by a desire to normalize and de-stigmatize any medical conditions that might have been seen in a negative light by other members of the congregation. The fact that the celebration of Mass is the context in which everything occurs is particularly important, for, as I will show, certain physical conditions can be considered disabilities therein but would not be construed as such under other circumstances or in different settings. Where applicable and non-anachronistic, I will also draw on terms and concepts developed by scholars of modern disability studies and expand upon them so that we may consider how a text written almost twelve centuries earlier can contribute to our understanding of perceptions of illness and impairment throughout history.

Background Information on the *Liber Officialis* and Existing Scholarship

Amalarius of Metz (d. c. 850 CE) is remembered today for his exceptionally innovative interpretations of the Roman Catholic liturgy. His innovation, unsurprisingly, made him a target for accusations of heresy,

1. I would like to thank Professor Katherine Williams for recommending sources that have been of great value to this essay. Much gratitude also goes to Professor John Haines, out of whose seminar class this essay developed. Finally, I thank my anonymous reviewer for many helpful suggestions and corrections.

and he was forced out of his position as Archbishop of Lyon in 838. As Christopher Jones explains, Amalarius applies methods of biblical exegesis to his analysis of the significance of prayers, songs, physical gestures, and material objects – such as priestly vestments – with the result that "liturgical performance has been abstracted and flattened, as it were, into a page of expoundable text for 'reading'."[2] His treatment of the liturgy as "a kind of alternative scripture"[3] prompted opponents, such as Florus of Lyon, to accuse him of eschewing proper doctrine in favour of his personal, over-active imagination.

The *Liber Officialis*, Amalarius' main work on the liturgy, is comprised of four books the contents of which were finalized around 835.[4] In the broader context of Church history, the *Liber Officialis* was written less than fifty years after Emperor Charlemagne released his *Admonitio Generalis* (789), in which he outlined his plans for standardizing the use of the Roman rite throughout his newly-conquered territories, supplanting local rites, such as the Gallican, as well as converting non-Christians to Christianity. Charlemagne's use of liturgy and religious unity as tools for preserving a coherent and manageable political body was continued by his successor, Louis the Pious. Scholar Yitzhak Hen emphasizes Louis' incorporation of liturgical performances into his agenda of "royal image-building," having litanies recited and hymns sung when celebrating a military triumph, and maintaining the presence of rituals at his court so that his kingship appeared not only legitimate but divinely-sanctioned.[5] As religious spectacle helped bolster regal authority, Louis' reign, during which Amalarius wrote his *Liber Officialis*, was marked by a concern for regularity in liturgical practice. This period saw a surge in commentaries that directly explained how each rite and ceremony was to be performed. Compared to these works of straightforward

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2. Christopher Jones, *A Lost Work by Amalarius of Metz: Interpolations in Salisbury, Cathedral Library, MS. 154* (London: Boydell Press [for the Henry Bradshaw Society], 2001), 4.

3. Jones, *A Lost Work by Amalarius of Metz*, 6.

4. Celia Chazelle, "Amalarius's *Liber Officialis*: Spirit and Vision in Carolingian Liturgical Thought," in *Seeing the Invisible in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Giselle de Nie, Karl F. Morrison, and Marco Mostert (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2005), 327-359.

5. For an in-depth study on the political role that liturgy played in the ninth century, see Yitzhak Hen, *The Royal Patronage of Liturgy in Frankish Gaul to the Death of Charles the Bald (877)* (London: Boydell Press [for the Henry Bradshaw Society], 2001).

exposition, Amalarius' allegorical interpretations were unusual.[6]

Regarding the order of contents in the *Liber Officialis,* the first book is centered on the Easter cycle, starting from Septuagesima, the third week before Lent, all the way through Paschal Time, which ends with the celebrations of Pentecost. The second book discusses the various clerical offices, such as exorcists (2.9), acolytes (2.10), and deacons (2.12), as well as the symbolism of different vestments, like the archbishop's pallium (2.23). The third book, which is the focus of this essay, deals extensively with the Mass. Attached to the end of this book are several letters, out of which I will only be examining one, which is addressed to a man named Guntard and contains a defence of Amalarius' idiosyncratic habit of spitting after ingesting the Eucharist. The fourth book consists of an analysis of the Divine Office – the services that comprise a liturgical day, namely Matins, Lauds, Prime, Terce, Sext, None, Vespers, and Compline – mixed with some miscellaneous items that refer back to those previously expounded in the first three books.

Existing scholarship on the *Liber Officialis* has approached it from a number of different angles. Celia Chazelle accounts for Amalarius' discursive style and recurrent statements that his ideas come from the Holy Spirit or his own mind by making comparisons to the practices of monastic ruminative meditation.[7] Others place the work within discussions of Christian drama and the links between liturgical ceremony and theatrical performance. For example, the bishop, being the vicar of Christ, is seen as a divine actor who plays a role that recalls "the office which Christ performed on earth when incarnate,"[8] while deacons, sub-deacons, and acolytes are actors who fill the parts of prophets, wise-men, and scribes, respectively.[9] Amalarius' downfall at the Council at Quierzy in 838 as it relates to the problem of theatre's perceived associations with paganism is brought up in an article by Donnalee Dox.[10] Amalarius' controversies, notably surrounding his ideas on Christ's *corpus triforme* when writing about the Eucharist, receives attention from

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6. Discussed in Hen, *The Royal Patronage of Liturgy*.

7. Chazelle, "Amalarius's *Liber Officialis*."

8. O.B. Hardison, Jr., *Christian Rite and Christian Drama in the Middle Ages* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins Press, 1965), 48.

9. Hardison, *Christian Rite and Christian Drama*, 49.

10. Donnalee Dox, "The Eyes of the Body and the Veil of Faith," *Theatre Journal* 56, no. 1 (2004): 29-45.

Christopher Jones, who shows that the seemingly unorthodox division of Christ's body results from Amalarius' conflation of ecclesiological language dealing with the body of the Church and christological language used when speaking about the Lord's assumed humanity and substance.[11] Other studies on the text seek to determine how the *Liber Officialis* either reflects or does not reflect actual Church practices during Amalarius' time.[12]

I have yet to find, however, any study that reads the *Liber Officialis* through the lens of disability studies and, it seems to me, there is currently no work of scholarship that links Amalarius to the theme of sickness or impaired bodies. Thus, I would like to make the first step toward putting Amalarius' writings and the critical theories and approaches of disability studies together in an academic forum. At the same time, I hope that this paper will add something useful to the current field of medieval disability studies. Although already encompassing the study of literary texts, legal documents, medical treatises, social history, theology, and hagiography,[13] within this field it is still difficult to find material that deals with liturgy proper – including how the texts are arranged, the musical instruments used, and the external motions of the worshipping body – and with liturgical commentaries.[14]

Edward Wheatley provides an excellent overview of how Christianity and disability intersected in the Middle Ages. In defining the "religious model of disability,"[15] he outlines how "the church's control of the discursive

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11. Jones, *A Lost Work by Amalarius of Metz*, 153-164.

12. See John Gibaut, "Amalarius of Metz and the Laying on of Hands in the Ordination of a Deacon," *The Harvard Theological Review* 82, no. 2 (1989): 233-240.

13. Several books cover a wide range of these fields and genres. For a recent study that focusses on medieval Spain, see Connie L. Scarborough, *Viewing Disability in Medieval Spanish Texts: Disgraced or Graced* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam UP, 2018). Two other recent works include: Sally Crawford and Christina Lee, eds., *Social Dimensions of Medieval Disease and Disability* (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2014), and Christian Krötzl, Kateriina Mustakallio, and Jenni Kuuliala, eds., *Infirmity in Antiquity and the Middle Ages: Social and Cultural Approaches to Health, Weakness, and Care* (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing, 2015).

14. One essay that discusses early-modern English liturgy and cognitive disability is Mardy Philippian, Jr., "The Book of Common Prayer, Theory of Mind, and Autism in Early Modern England," in *Recovering Disability in Early Modern England*, ed. Allison P. Hobgood and David Houston Wood (Columbus: Ohio State University, 2013), 150-167.

15. Edward Wheatley, *Stumbling Blocks Before the Blind: Medieval Constructions of a Disability* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2010), 10.

terrain of illness and disability grew out of New Testament theology,"[16] Christ's miraculous healings, and the idea that bodily nuisances were caused by sin and spiritual defects, although this last point may have been overemphasized by modern historians.[17] Wheatley mentions that, in medieval visual art and narratives about saints, a patient's infirmity is not the object of concern in itself, but a means for a saint to prove his or her holiness by curing it. Simultaneously, the patient's faith in the healer is ultimately more important than the wholeness of the body.[18] The primary form of disability that Wheatley discusses is blindness, and he situates it in a liturgical context when pointing out that, "from the twelfth century through the remainder of the Middle Ages, the laity partook of the Eucharist through only their sense of sight."[19] Healthy members of the congregation who could see the elevation of the host by the priest directed their gaze onto God himself and were able to benefit fully from communion in this way without being required to confess their sins beforehand. On the contrary, confession had to be made before oral ingestion of the Eucharist, for fear of anyone receiving the Lord's body unworthily.[20] Since communion through sight was not an option for the blind, physical impairment put one's spiritual well-being at a disadvantage.

Wheatley cites two miracle narratives – one from Jean Gobi's *Miracles de Saint Marie-Madeleine* and another from *The Life and Gests of S. Thomas Cantilupe* – through which we can see how disability and liturgy coincided in the minds of medieval writers. In the first story, a man who lost his eyesight in the grueling environs of prison enters a church and meditates upon the body of Christ in the host. However, he fervently desires to behold it not only with his spiritual vision but with his literal sight, prizing the latter as more efficacious in producing an intense and immediate experience of sacred materiality. God grants his prayer and he regains the use of his eyes. In the second story, a blind man who was once a servant to Saint Thomas prays to the Virgin Mary for his eyesight, hoping that he could

16. Wheatley, *Stumbling Blocks Before the Blind*, 10.
17. Wheatley, *Stumbling Blocks Before the Blind*, 14.
18. Wheatley, *Stumbling Blocks Before the Blind*, 11.
19. Wheatley, *Stumbling Blocks Before the Blind*, 15.
20. Wheatley, *Stumbling Blocks Before the Blind*, 15.

once again behold the host during Mass. After ten days, he is cured.[21] In both stories, bodily infirmity presents obstacles to the reception of divine goods. Only heavenly intervention can remedy the situation. The liturgy itself only matters in these stories to demonstrate that the disabled cannot participate in it fully. The rituals, as well as those who plan and lead them, are indifferent to those who are physically different. Until divine powers take away the disability altogether, the liturgy is not accommodating to the disabled or capable of incorporating them into the community of physically-sound congregants.

However, a fresher perspective may be shown if we consider how Amalarius interprets the Roman liturgy as an accommodating system of worship and refutes the notion that disabilities are obstacles that block the faithful from God's gifts. Of course, use of the word "accommodating" may appear anachronistic to some, since accommodation is a relatively modern term that presupposes a society's recognition of a disabled community. Medieval scholars have pointed out that "disability," as we understand the term, was not a clearly defined concept in the Middle Ages and that such an over-arching word for the categorization of bodies did not exist. Regarding this subject, Jonathan Hsy writes that "there has always been variation across human bodies and the range of capacities (physical and mental) that individuals can claim, but the meanings associated with various kinds of embodied experience vary by time and place."[22] At the same time, "impairments such as blindness or deafness did not necessarily carry negative connotations."[23]

Although the fully-formed idea of "disability" might not have been in Amalarius' mind as he composed his commentary, his awareness that liturgical performances are just as much physical exercises as spiritual ones leads him to acknowledge the multiplicity of subjective experiences that belong to the variety of bodies engaged in religious celebrations. The spectrum includes those who are missing an entire sensory faculty, as well as those who suffer chronic pain that interferes with their ability to partake in or concentrate on the ceremonies. Amalarius' repeated references to the

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21. Wheatley, *Stumbling Blocks Before the Blind*, 17-18.

22. Jonathan Hsy, "Disability," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Body in Literature*, ed. David Hillman and Ulrika Maude (New York: Cambridge UP, 2015), 33.

23. Hsy, "Disability," 33.

sick, impaired, and physically different in his work show how he considers their experiences at Mass to be no less meaningful than those of people with healthy bodies. Furthermore, by incorporating imagery of those whom we would call "disabled" today into his explications of Church rituals, Amalarius justifies the presence of defective bodies with their special status as essential instruments of exegesis, therefore ascribing to them more sanctity than stigma. While "accommodating" might be a term that is twelve centuries *avant-la-lettre,* Amalarius' vision of the liturgy is one that demonstrates spiritual richness being tied with physical diversity.

Deafness and Its Metaphors

Amalarius considers the presence of deaf persons in the congregation when he interprets the significance of the choir, whose harmonious voices symbolize the unity of the Christian community on earth and in heaven:

> Let the cantors here consider the meaning of their symphony. Through it, they urge people to persist in the unity of the worship of a single God. And even if a deaf person were present, the cantors would make the very same point through their arrangement in the well-ordered choir, such that those who cannot grasp the unity with their ears may grasp it with their sight.[24]

According to this passage, the aurally-impaired would find compensation in visual elements of the liturgy, for the same religious import contained in the choir's singing could be found in its physical layout without any diminishment. Amalarius, thus, optimistically suggests to his deaf readers that they are not as disabled as one might first imagine, since the obstacle comes with its own accommodation. Furthermore, Amalarius opens up the possibility of deaf people possessing a special advantage over their hearing fellows when he quotes a sentence from Saint Augustine's *The City of God*

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24. Amalarius of Metz, *On the Liturgy*, trans. Eric Knibbs (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2014), 3.3.5. Knibbs provides a clear, literal translation of the Latin original. I will be using Knibbs English translation whenever I quote Amalarius, but I will engage with specific Latin words when their nuances are significant to my analysis. For those who wish to read the original Latin, the passage is as follows: "Hinc tractent cantores quid significet simphonia eorum; ea ammonent plebem ut in unitate unius Dei cultus perseverent. Etiamsi aliquis surdus affuerit, idipsum statu illorum in choro ordinatissimo insinuant, ut qui auribus capere non possunt unitatem, visu capiant."

relating to the biblical David, who founded the cantors' office. This occurs just above the already cited passage and reads, "But David was a man skilled in song, who loved musical harmony not with vulgar delight, but with faithful will."[25] This quote reminds the reader that music, although it can be used to praise God and communicate a sense of harmony, can also be improperly enjoyed and abused when the listener has a view to feeling sensual pleasure instead of increasing holy desires. While those with perfect hearing may still be tempted to listen to music with "vulgar delight" and be led astray during Mass, the deaf are free from such temptations and would benefit spiritually from the ceremony by only using their eyes.

Despite all of these positive suggestions, a problem soon arises when deafness is used tropologically, as a metaphor for spiritual dullness and insusceptibility to the reforming powers of liturgical materials that are being read or sung. Amalarius likens those who lack feelings of compunction during the lector's reading to deaf persons who require curing. When cast in a metaphorical light, deafness becomes a crippling disability that could potentially jeopardize one's hope for salvation. After he states that the lector's reading teaches the "law of Moses and the entire ancient record,"[26] which should be understood as the "first principles through which we learn about God … and basic ideas of piety,"[27] he turns his attention to those who remain unmoved by it. He writes, "but if there is yet someone who is deaf, and grows listless with the ears of his heart stopped up, let the cantor come to him with his sublime trumpet, in the manner of the prophets, and let him sound a sweet melody in his ears; perhaps he will be stirred."[28] Declaring that music "has a kind of natural power for moving the spirit," Amalarius poses that a song accomplishes through the sweetness of its melody more than what a simple speech can through persuasiveness of prose.[29]

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25. "Erat autem David vir in canticis eruditus, qui armoniam musicam non vulgari voluptate, sed fideli voluntate dilexerit..." (Amalarius of Metz, *On the Liturgy*, 3.3.4).

26. "...lex Moysi et omne vetus instrumentum" (Amalarius of Metz, *On the Liturgy*, 3.11.8-9).

27. "...elementis et religionis exordiis, Deum discimus" (Amalarius of Metz, *On the Liturgy*, 3.11.8-9).

28. "At si adhuc aliquis surdus, obturatis auribus cordis, torpescit, veniat cantor cum excelsa tuba, more prophetarum, sonetque in aures eius dulcedinem melodiae; forsan excitabitur" (Amalarius of Metz, *On the Liturgy*, 3.11.8-9).

29. "Musica habet quandam naturalem vim ad flectendum animum..." (Amalarius of Metz, *On the Liturgy*, 3.11.14).

We now run into the following conundrum. Regarding deafness as a real, physical impairment, although different remedies were suggested over the course of the medieval period – some of them religio-magical – general opinion was that the condition could not be reversed.[30] When deployed as a religious metaphor, though, deafness both can and ought to be cured over time in order to attain spiritual and moral edification. Since the act of listening is a prerequisite for such edification, it requires a person to possess unimpaired hearing, and those who are physically deaf are automatically barred from the benefits of song. Amalarius' metaphor, besides being inapplicable to the deaf, has the dangerous effect of depicting the deaf as incapable of spiritual improvement. If a deaf individual happens to be hardhearted, and only the music of the cantor has the power to reverse the situation, then he or she will always remain so. Despite this, Amalarius has a solution for this problem and it lies in his use of synaesthetic rhetoric, which I will explain below.

When describing how the cantor's song is supposed to move listeners to compunction, Amalarius writes the following:

> We said that those who are in some way deaf to the epistle are stirred by the responsory; let us explain how the obedient should benefit from the responsory at that moment. During the reading the listener is fed, in a certain sense, like an ox; for the ox is fed to do the work of husbandry…. And the cantor is like the plowman who calls out to the oxen to drag the plow more cheerfully. The cantor is one of those whom Paul speaks about: 'We are God's helpers.' The oxen are those who respond to the head cantor. Again, Paul speaks of them: 'You are God's husbandry.' The earth is furrowed as the oxen drag the plow when the cantors, drawing their innermost breath, drag forth a sweet voice and present it to the people. Through this voice they goad their own heart, as well as the hearts of others, to tears and to the confession of sins, as if laying bare the hidden parts of the earth.[31]

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30. Irina Metzler, *Disability in Medieval Europe: Thinking About Physical Impairment During the High Middle Ages, c.1100-1400* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2006), 102.

31. "Diximus quod excitentur per responsorium qui sunt quodammodo surdi ad epistolam; dicamus qualiter oboedientes ilico proficiant per responsorium. In lectione pascitur auditor, quasi quodammodo bos; ad hoc enim pascitur bos, ut in eo exerceatur opus agriculturae.... Cantor enim est quasi bubulcus, qui iubilat bubus, ut hilarius trahant aratrum. Cantor est de his de quibus dicit Paulus: 'Dei adiutores sumus' [1 Cor 3:9]. Boves sunt qui respondent primo cantori. De quibus iterum dicit: 'Dei agricultura estis' [1 Cor 3:9]. Trahentibus bobus aratrum, scinditur terra, quando cantores, intimos anhelitus commoventes, trahunt dulcem vocem et proferunt

Those who are deaf to the epistle are clearly meant to be understood metaphorically as insensible to the lessons contained in the reading, but given Amalarius' awareness of those who are literally deaf, when expounding the visual significance of the choir, it is likely that he, in this passage, has not forgotten about those who are unable to process aurally the epistle or responsory. In fact, Amalarius transforms the experience of hearing music into one of seeing visual images. The cantor's voice ceases to resemble sound and takes on the shape of a plow-line in the ground, which a deaf person would be able to envision and recognize. The extended metaphor of agricultural activities is highly graphic, illustrating the progress of the soul as a rich mental spectacle that anyone who is familiar with scenes of farm work would easily recall to mind. Those who are unable to hear the music can, by reading Amalarius' text, picture the roughness of ox hooves dragging along the earth and the cutting of the plow into the soil, and imagine this same roughness being used to "goad their hearts." The scene also awakens the olfactory and taste senses, since the people are invited to see themselves as oxen given food in preparation for labouring for divine reward. Amalarius uses language in such a way that allows the deaf to "hear" the cantor's voice through sight, touch, smell, and taste. Sound is no longer restricted to the ears as a result of Amalarius' synaesthetic interpretation of music.

The emphasis on sight and seeing is made stronger when one considers what Amalarius writes immediately afterward to explain how the responsory is uniquely helpful to the preacher:

> Letters are copied so that, through them, what has been lost by forgetfulness might be committed to memory. Similarly, we recall through an image what can be committed to our memory within. In the same way, the preacher is in some sense admonished, through the responsory, to practice the teaching that preceded in the reading…[32]

Amalarius' multi-layered metaphor, likening the song to written words and to images that ultimately fulfil a moral purpose, fits what could also be

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ad publicum, qua corda suorum sive ceterorum compungunt ad lacrimas, sive ad confitenda peccata, quasi secreta patefaciendo terrae" (Amalarius of Metz, *On the Liturgy*, 3.11.20-22).

32. "Ideo scribuntur litterae, ut per eas memoriae reddatur quod oblivione deletum est. Simili modo ex pictura recordamur quod interius memoriae commendari potest. Ita et responsorio ammonetur praedicator quomodo doctrinam, quae praecessit in lectione, exerceat" (Amalarius of Metz, *On the Liturgy*, 3.11.22-28).

the agenda of a deaf individual who reads this text, which is performative in that it accomplishes exactly what it describes. While it is debatable whether a deaf-born person in the ninth century would have learned to read Amalarius' work well enough to understand its full import,[33] literate individuals who once had good use of their hearing faculties that they later lost due to illness, injury, or age could have read the letters of the passages quoted, remembered their past experiences of hearing sound, and also enjoyed the additional value of the husbandry images so vividly described.

Moreover, the stress that Amalarius lays on recalling and committing images to memory is highly reminiscent of meditative *ruminatio*, an activity during which "biblical verses and ideas that [one's] mind had acquired from other texts elucidating biblical doctrine, such as patristic exegesis, were supposedly 'invented' or recalled to memory."[34] One of the higher purposes of meditation is to arrive at one's personal understanding of divine mysteries and sacred texts after prolonged reflection, guided by the Holy Spirit, and mental synthesis of arguments gleaned from sacred sources. Amalarius' metaphors involving oxen and plowed fields, inspired by the quote he cites from 1 Corinthians 3:9 ("You are God's husbandry"), suggest that his interpretations of the responsory are the product of his own *ruminatio* upon Scripture and, in fact, are exercises of the intellect rather than of any corporeal sense. While the preacher listens to the music of the cantors and has an experience that only resembles that of a person who reads letters to boost one's memory or recalls images to reinforce it, the deaf could read the actual letters of Amalarius' meditations and turn over in their minds the images that he offers to use as fodder for their own *ruminationes*.

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33. Scholars have evidence that monks in Benedictine monasteries often used hand signals instead of audible speech to communicate, as they took vows of silence to avoid the distractions of idle conversation. Jonathan Hsy, writing about the Cistercians – an order founded in the eleventh century, decades after Amalarius lived – comments that they developed a simple sign language "to convey basic needs (signs for items of food or actions like 'pray' or 'read'), but because this code was intended to restrict communication it did not develop a fully expressive grammar" (see Hsy, "Disability," 30). Rosamond McKitterick lists local monasteries and ecclesiastical schools as places of instruction in the Carolingian era, but it would be too great a leap into speculative territory to assume that deaf boys would have learned to read Latin cohesively from those using monastic sign language. For more on Carolingian literacy, see McKitterick, *Carolingians and the Written Word* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1989).

34. Chazelle, "Amalarius's *Liber Officialis*," 334.

Amalarius' synthesizing of Pauline epistles and his theories on music are an example for the deaf, who could rely on reason, memory, and inspiration to form similar enlightening conclusions. The deaf are no longer to be seen as being at a disadvantage, since they can achieve, via the spiritual act of meditation upon music and with the help of images supplied by the Bible, what perfectly healthy individuals can achieve from physically hearing.

The Spitting Priest and Problems of Excess

Deafness is not the only physical condition that Amalarius destigmatizes in the *Liber Officialis*, for in his letter to a young man named Guntard, he defends his own phlegmatic constitution and habit of spitting immediately after consuming the Eucharist. He begins his letter with the following lines:

> My son, I remember that you asked me, with your considerable ability, why I do not govern myself with greater caution to avoid spitting directly after I have consumed the sacrifice. You added that you have not seen other priests doing this – that is, spitting right after they have eaten the Eucharist…. Now that I am travelling, I have become worried about your affection and that some false suspicion remains in your heart – as if I were acting wantonly and contrary to our standards of piety, and as if you were not persisting in an error of ignorance.[35]

From this passage, one can see two kinds of bodies being compared and contrasted: the individual body with its own idiosyncrasies, and the collective body of the priesthood that is bound together by uniformity of action and behaviour. Guntard accuses Amalarius of violating the pious image that priests ought to bear in their bodies, for when he spits, he momentarily represents only the image of his ailing body. Guntard reveals in his objection that he both subconsciously does not see and consciously does not wish to see the sick body for what it is. By objecting that he has not seen other priests spitting, he automatically connects spitting to the roles and functions

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35. "Fili mi, recordatus sum percontasse pollens ingenium tuum, quare non me cum maiore cautela custodirem ne ilico post consumptum sacrificium spuerem. Addidisti quod non videres ceteros sacerdotes hoc facere – id est statim spuere post comestam Eucharistiam.... Iam in itinere degens, aporiatus sum tua dilectione, ne aliqua suspicio remaneret tibi falsa in pectore – quasi ergo proterve hoc agerem contra nostram religionem et neque remaneres in aliquo errore ignorantiae" (Amalarius of Metz, "Letters," in *On the Liturgy*, 6.1-2).

of the priest. The appropriateness of the action is based on how it fits-in with established forms of priestly decorum. Therefore, sickness becomes invisible as a medical condition and seen only as bad priestly behaviour that he, then, actively stigmatizes. To understand how Amalarius refutes Guntard's accusations of impiety, I will refer to the work of two scholars, Tory Vandeventer Pearman and Roger E. Reynolds, whose respective essays on the grotesque, disabled body and the *imago Dei* contribute to my argument that Amalarius defends his sick body in a paradoxical fashion. On the one hand, he embraces the image of his sick body in order to throw into question his contemporaries' notions of correct priestly behaviour during Mass. On the other hand, he dislocates the grossness of his sickness from his own body and relocates it to the psyche of his accuser, Guntard.

In her essay "'O Sweete Venym Queynte!': Pregnancy and the Disabled Body in the *Merchant's Tale*," Pearman discusses the status of women's bodies in Chaucer's lifetime (c. 1342-1400) as disabled, disabling, and grotesque. Focusing on medieval physiological beliefs, Pearman points out that the female body was perceived as a weaker, incomplete, and mutilated form of the male body.[36] Relying on Aristotelian theories that women lack the warm humours needed for a strong, dominant, masculine constitution, the female body was understood to be disabled from birth. However, Pearson also shows that the same body, driven by its self-insufficiency, possessed a disabling power capable of upsetting male dominance, for writers, such as Pseudo-Albertus Magnus, ascribed to the woman's *pudenda* a voracious hunger that, if not properly contained and controlled, threatened to draw out the vital fluids of a male partner and cause his debilitation.[37] The disabled/disabler status of the female body is epitomized by its grotesqueness when pregnant, evidenced by its corpulent swelling.

Pearman refers to the theory of the grotesque developed by Mikhail Bakhtin:

> Images of the grotesque body concentrate on the lower strata of the body and the mouth – it is through the mouth and out of the bowels that the grotesque body is able to take in and expel other 'bodies,' thus signifying its incompleteness.

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36. Tory Vandeventer Pearman, "'O Sweete Queynte!': Pregnancy and the Disabled Body in the *Merchant's Tale*," in *Disability in the Middle Ages*, ed. Joshua R. Eyler (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing, 2010), 28.
37. Pearman, "'O Sweete Queynte!'" 29.

> Everything about the grotesque centres on excess; as such, images of the grotesque body focus on eating, drinking, defecating, giving birth, and dying. As a result, the fecundity and excess of the grotesque body link the grotesque with the female body.[38]

The link between the grotesque and the disabled has already been suggested by Nicholas Vlahogiannis, who attempts to reconstruct what disability *avant-la-lettre* might have meant in classical antiquity. Drawing on instances where an individual would have been culturally perceived as shameful or weak, he proposes that scholars "incorporate appearance and socially ascribed abnormalities, such as polydactylism, left-handedness, old age, obesity, impotence, and even those who are socially ill-positioned, such as beggars, the poor, the homeless, the ugly and the diseased,"[39] under the heading of disability, in that "the distinction between the able-bodied and the disabled in this broad sense is constructed into what is socially seen as who does and who does not fit into the perceived notion of acceptable community."[40] The wide range of conditions covered indicates that disability is not merely dictated by considerations, such as limited functions of one's body, but one's reduced capacity to be a conforming member of a public body, whether that be an entire city-state or a smaller confraternity that has its own rules concerning what the norm should be. According to this interpretation of disability, the grotesque, maternal body is disabled in as far as it is seen to bear excess and be in constant flux. It thus "undermines all that is static and transgresses all that is defined" when compared to its male counterpart.[41]

While Pearman attributes to the female body the combination of disability, disabling power, and grotesqueness, I suggest that these three concepts can equally be applied to Amalarius' spitting body in the context of the Mass celebration. Of course, it may seem at first like a gross stretch to link Chaucer's sexual, female body with Amalarius' phlegmatic one, but I wish to consider how bodies throughout the medieval period that were seen as inferior, disruptive, or grotesque – either by prevailing scientific theories or by social conventions – can be understood as exceptional in similar ways.

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38. Pearman, "'O Sweete Queynte!'" 29.
39. Nicholas Vlahogiannis, "Disabling Bodies," in *Changing Bodies, Changing Meanings: Studies on the Human Body in Antiquity*, ed. Dominic Montserrat (London: Routledge, 1998), 17.
40. Vlahogiannis, "Disabling Bodies," 18.
41. Pearman, "'O Sweete Queynte!'" 37.

The grotesqueness of Amalarius' body is the reason for his disability, the nature of which I will explain below, yet that same grotesqueness becomes a tool for disabling established norms in the priestly community and asserting the validity of individual imperfections in the clerical context.

The grotesqueness of Amalarius' body lies in his visible excess of phlegm. He himself tells Guntard, "My son, if I were able to avoid spitting long enough to satisfy your objections, … I would certainly do so."[42] Elsewhere in the letter, he describes his physical state as forcing him to "expel noxious and overabundant humours,"[43] reinforcing the image of excess and overflow. At the same time, a parallel can be drawn between the medieval opinion of needing to control the excessive sexuality of the female body and Guntard's opinion, as quoted earlier, that Amalarius ought to control his excess humours and "govern himself with greater caution to avoid spitting." Amalarius' grotesque condition is cast in the light of disability when he considers that one of Guntard's possible objections against his spitting might concern the likelihood of his "ejecting the body [he] has consumed," thereby rendering the benefits of the Eucharist void.[44] Amalarius' excess of phlegm, though inconsequential in situations outside of Mass, hypothetically becomes a disability during communion when it raises the risk of preventing him from receiving the healing properties of Christ's body. Amalarius' supposed disability is therefore situational, in that his condition would only be a disability under a particular circumstance. While Amalarius guesses that the possibility of such a disability forms one of Guntard's concerns, he quickly dispels the notion that he is disabled by his phlegm. Instead, he uses the grotesqueness of his body to empower his own image as a priest, and to challenge the preoccupation that Guntard and his contemporaries have with the outward forms of priestly behaviour.

Guntard's objection, as stated in the beginning of Amalarius' letter, consists in his unfamiliarity with Amalarius' behaviour. No other priest spits after eating the Eucharist. Therefore, Amalarius' gesture is seemingly

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42. "Fili mi, si potuissem me abstinere tamdiu a sputo, quamdiu satisfacerem tuis, … hoc ultro curarem..." (Amalarius of Metz, "Letters," in *On the Liturgy*, 6.9).

43. "humores nocivos et nimium abundantes sepius fore necesse exire ab homine" (Amalarius of Metz, "Letters," in *On the Liturgy*, 6.8).

44. "...quasi sumptum corpus simul cum sputo proiciam" (Amalarius of Metz, "Letters," in *On the Liturgy*, 6.7).

disrespectful and ought to be unacceptable. In his essay, "The Imago Christi in the Bishop, Priest, and Clergy," Reynolds explains that, from as early as the fifth century and extending into the Carolingian period, the specific liturgical roles of each member of the clergy were meant to parallel a specific moment in Christ's life on earth.[45] Texts called "ordinals of Christ" were produced that listed each role, and out of those that Reynolds includes in his study, the majority of them agree with each other about which events in Christ's life are linked with which order of clergy. The role of the doorkeeper was performed by Christ when he beat down the gates of hell, the sub-deacon's duty of preparing the wine and bread used for Mass finds its parallel in Christ's miracle of turning water into wine at the wedding at Cana, and the priest's role of blessing the bread was completed by Christ when he himself blessed and broke bread before his disciples at the Last Supper.[46] One can see that the function of the priest is strictly fixed on the limited scope of what occurred in a particular section of Scripture. The form of priestly behaviour is expected to be a copy of what Christ is supposed to have done in the Bible. As the Gospels never describe Christ expelling phlegm during the Last Supper, Amalarius' gesture is painfully conspicuous and ruins the sacred re-enactment of the biblical event with his grotesqueness. However, Amalarius challenges the contemporary norm of associating priesthood so rigidly with the bread-blessing scene and sanctions the presence of his grotesqueness with proof of Christ's grotesqueness found elsewhere in Scripture.

Amalarius embraces his grotesque, sick body when he tells Guntard that his phlegm has a divine counterpart in the Gospels. He writes:

> Without the rebuke of pious men, we do what Christ did for our salvation, as the Gospel teaches: "The Lord made mud from his spit, and he smeared it over the eyes of the man who had been born blind" [John 9:6]. And again, according to Mark: "He put his fingers into his ears, and spitting, he touched his tongue" [Mark 7:33].[47]

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45. Roger E. Reynolds, "The Imago Christi in the Bishop, Priest, and Clergy," in *A Companion to Priesthood and Holy Orders in the Middle Ages*, ed. Greg Peters and C. Colt Anderson (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 140.

46. Reynolds, "The Imago Christi in the Bishop, Priest, and Clergy," 152.

47. "Sine vituperatione religiosorum hominum, agimus quod Christus egit pro salute nostra, docente Evangelio: 'Lutum fecit Dominus ex sputo, et linivit oculos caeci nati' [John 9:6]. Et iterum secundum Marcum: 'Misit digitos suos in auriculas, et expuens tetigit linguam eius'

In this passage, Amalarius indicates that his condition, far from being worthy of stigma and out of place in the process of Mass, belongs very much to the process of salvation. Christ's spit, which proceeded from his mouth "for our salvation" is just as valuable as the blood that proceeded from his wounds on the cross, which he shed also to the same effect. The grotesque expulsion of excessive humours, which Guntard accuses of being impious, only seems so to him because he has ceased to recognize things associated with Christ's image outside of the forms confirmed in the ordinals. If he would only look past the routinely practiced forms of behaviour, he would remember that not only is spitting compatible with Christ's image, it is associated with his miracles of healing and renewal. Thus, Amalarius challenges the notion that priests can only preserve the image of Christ in their bodies by following one outward form of conduct, while demonstrating how the body marked by sickness is equally capable of mirroring the sacred *imago* in a unique manner that is still supported by Scripture.

Amalarius de-stigmatizes his phlegmatic condition by also relocating the centre of grotesqueness from his own body to the psyche of Guntard. When refuting Guntard's possible objection that spitting would cause him to lose part of the Eucharist and render its healing powers ineffective, Amalarius argues that it is not their business to quibble about how and where the Lord's body moves in the physical world. "It is our responsibility to wish and beg the Lord for a pure heart; it is his responsibility to pour his body through our cavities and vessels unto our eternal salvation…. His body dwells on earth when he wanted it to and when he wants it to."[48] It is better, according to Amalarius, not to probe into the "mysteries of divinity that cannot be grasped by us,"[49] but make one's good disposition and charitable inclinations the foci of one's concern. Guntard's obsession with digestion of the Eucharist and precision as to how the human body engages with Christ's body is in itself a grotesque moment of excess where thoughts of the body overflow past the limits set by human intellect and divine mystery.

[Mark 7:33]" (Amalarius of Metz, "Letters," in *On the Liturgy*, 6.4).

48. "Ita vero vestrum est velle et precari Dominum cor mundum; suum est corpus suum per artus et venas diffundere ad salutem nobis aeternam.... Suum corpus, quando voluit et quando vult, in terra versatur" (Amalarius of Metz, "Letters," in *On the Liturgy*, 6.11).

49. "... mysteria sunt divinitatis quae capi non possunt a nobis..." (Amalarius of Metz, "Letters," in *On the Liturgy*, 6.14).

inclinations the foci of one's concern. Guntard's obsession with digestion of the Eucharist and precision as to how the human body engages with Christ's body is in itself a grotesque moment of excess where thoughts of the body overflow past the limits set by human intellect and divine mystery. Amalarius tells Guntard to rein in and control his physicality-centric mind, just as Guntard previously advised Amalarius to control his urge to spit. The language that Amalarius uses to reprimand Guntard and describe the latter's state of mind also suggests an excess of physicality, as he writes that it is not for them to wonder if the Eucharist "is taken up to heaven or kept in our body until the day of our burial, or is exhaled into the air, or leaves our body with our blood, or is emitted through our orifices."[50] Guntard's concern regarding the cleanliness of the body, which he thinks is threatened by the act of spitting, is also criticized by Amalarius, who tells him that his opinions are the result of his sensibilities being sinfully "puffed up" (inflati),[51] which conveys imagery of excess and grotesqueness.

Guntard's objection to Amalarius' spitting conforms with the reaction readers may have when reading the passage on grotesqueness written by Pearson, in which the entering and exiting of bodies through the mouth, the processes of eating and defecating, as well as the graphic imagery of gross corpulence are enumerated. This passage is particularly apt when applied to the idea of eating, spitting, and digesting the Eucharist. However, Guntard's guilt, as discerned by Amalarius, is much more deserving of repugnance and censure. Amalarius, by shifting grotesqueness onto Guntard's psyche, shows that Guntard is now the one with a disability, as his soul's corpulence prevents him from understanding moral truth and impairs his judgment. Amalarius' phlegmatic sickness, on the other hand, being free from sin and associated with Christ's own healing powers, is freed from stigma.

In direct contrast to Amalarius' excess-marked body being regarded as disabled and defective by Guntard, Amalarius elsewhere shows that the body that is, as a result of malady, incapable of producing excess can also be in danger of stigmatization and, therefore, needs to be defended. This

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ters," in *On the Liturgy*, 6.14).

50. "non est mihi disputandum utrum invisibiliter assumatur in caelum, aut reservetur in corpore nostro usque in diem sepulturae, aut exhaletur in auras, aut exeat de corpore cum sanguine, aut per poros emittatur..." (Amalarius of Metz, "Letters," in *On the Liturgy*, 6.15).

51. Amalarius of Metz, "Letters," in *On the Liturgy*, 6.8.

occurs when he discusses the significance of bowing during prayer:

> The purpose of the bowing of the deacons has been explained, in accordance with the measure of my laborious study – excepting that it is customary for an inner prayer to be expressed through bodily posture. Thus Augustine in his book to Paulinus *On the Care to be Had for the Dead*: "For those who pray arrange their members as befits supplicants, when they kneel, when they extend their hands or even when they lie prostrate on the ground, or whatever else they do that is visible – though their invisible will and the intention of their heart is known to God, and as the human spirit is bent toward him, he does not need these signs. Yet, through these signs, man rouses himself all the more humbly and fervently toward prayer and lamentation…. Nevertheless, if someone should be restrained somehow, or even bound, such that he cannot do these things with his limbs, it does not follow that the interior man does not pray; he is stretched out before God's eyes in that most secret room where he feels compunction."[52]

From this passage, we can see that bowing, stretching, and all other outward actions that Amalarius quotes from Augustine are excessive in the sense that they are not needed by divine eyes to see the state of the supplicant's heart. They are superfluous movements produced by the body to increase or maintain the intensity of one's emotional appeal to God. While Amalarius' grotesque, humoral overflow betrays an unwell body that appears to hinder itself from receiving the nourishment of the Eucharist and looks conspicuous vis-à-vis the healthy priests who show no such excess, the body that is not well enough to exhibit a physical overflow of devotion – prostration and mournful poses assumed in such a way that the body appears grotesque, base, and lowly, in order to emphasize its inferiority when compared to the divine majesty – appears less devout, and is also conspicuous vis-à-vis bodies that are salubriously excessive. Augustine and, by extension, Amalarius do not explicitly use such words as "sick," "weak," or "impaired," but refer to those

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52. "Secundum modulum lucubrationis meae, demonstratum est quid velit inclinatio diaconorum – excepto quod oratio interna solet demonstrari per habitum corporis. Unde Agustinus in libro ad Paulinum De cura agenda pro mortuis: 'Nam et orantes de membris sui corporis faciunt quod supplicantibus congruit, cum genua figunt, cum extendunt manus vel etiam prosternuntur solo, et si quid aliud faciunt visibiliter – quamvis eorum invisibilis voluntas et cordis intentio Deo nota sit, nec ille indigeat his indiciis, ut animus ei pandatur humanus. Sed his magis se ipsum excitat homo ad orandum gemendumque humilius atque ferventius. … Verumtamen, si eo modo quisque teneatur, vel etiam ligetur, ut haec de suis membris facere nequeat, non ideo non orat interior homo; et ante oculos Dei in secretissimo cubili, ubi compungitur, sternitur" (Amalarius of Metz, *On the Liturgy*, 3.28.5-8).

who are unable to bow as "restrained" (teneatur) and "bound" (ligetur) from using their limbs. As one may recall, Guntard objects to Amalarius' spitting by telling him that he ought to control his urges and refrain from ejecting excess phlegm. Here, Augustine's language of being bound and restrained indicates that physical infirmity – whatever condition it may be – is the very bridle that controls the excess of pious physicality. Reacting to the group of people that might regard infirm faithful who cannot kneel as less devoted worshippers, both writers make it clear that no ailment can render them "disabled" from appearing full of compunction before God, since it is the soul and not the body that God examines.

Two instances of excess have now been presented, in which the sick individual is susceptible to censure for showing either too much or too little at a given moment in liturgical celebration. The infirm body, originally seen as an outlier by physically "normal" congregants, is given a place of belonging among worshippers by Amalarius, who interprets excess or lack thereof with an accommodating attitude. He also normalizes the defective body in liturgy when he attributes signs of sickness to the speaker in the offertory, *Vir erat in terra.* The presence of excess is especially relevant to this portion of his commentary:

> The historian's words are contained in the offertory;[53] the words of Job, ailing and sorrowful, are contained in the verses. His ailing breath is neither healthy nor strong, and he is accustomed to repeat his incomplete statements often. The author of the office, to remind us through feigned imitation of the ailing Job, repeated the words frequently, in the manner of those who are sick. In the offertory respon[se], as I said, the words are not repeated, because the historian who wrote the history was not sick.[54]

Amalarius chooses to read sickness into the offertory's form, construing repetition as a symptom of an unwell body. Rather than interpreting

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53. To avoid confusion, when Amalarius says "offertory" in this passage, he is only referring to the first part of the chant that is sung from a third-person perspective. The chant as a whole, which contains the first-person perspective "verses" of Job, is also called an offertory.

54. "Verba historici continentur in offertorio; verba Iob aegroti et dolentis continentur in versibus. Aegrotus cuius anhelitus non est sanus neque fortis, solet verba inperfecta saepius repetere. Officii auctor, ut affectanter nobis ad memoriam reduceret aegrotantem Iob, repetivit saepius verba more aegrotantium. In offertorio, ut dixi, non sunt verba repetita, quia historicus scribens historiam non aegrotabat" (Amalarius of Metz, *On the Liturgy*, 3.39.1-2).

repetition as merely a poetic device that is used to emphasize the gravity of sin – considering that one of the verses being repeated contains, "If only my sins, for which I have merited anger, would be weighed"[55] – and providing more time for the choir and congregation to contemplate and repent their transgressions, Amalarius ignores the moral content to focus on raw physicality, identifying evidence of illness in the text's structure. By infusing the text with medical overtones and implying that the performers of the verses would be simulating and embodying these symptoms as they sing, the body as a sick entity is made both present and familiar to everyone within the church.

The repetition in the verses of this particular offertory is unique, as explained by Willi Apel, who compares *Vir erat* with two other types of offertories. The details of his comparisons are worth repeating here. Apel first establishes the most usual pattern of repetition as that of duplicating the opening part of a text before the rest of it proceeds. A good example would be the following versicle: "Grace is poured out onto your lips, grace is poured out onto your lips: therefore, God has blessed you eternally."[56] The second type of commonly found repetition is the duplication of the opening part at the end of the text, as seen in the response, "From the depths I called to you, Lord: Lord, listen to my prayer: from the depths I called to you, Lord."[57] *Vir erat* contains repetitions that fit neither scheme, with a proliferation of repeats in the fourth versicle: "Since, since, since my eye will not turn back that it might see good things, that it might see good things, that it might see good things, that it might see good things, that it might see good things, that it might see good things, that it might see good things, that it might see good things."[58] Apel notes that Job's sense of longing to behold

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55. "Utinam appenderentur peccata mea quibus iram merui" ("Offertorium-Vir erat in terra," Académie de Chant Grégorien, accessed December 11, 2018. http://www.gregorien.info/chant/id/8670/5/fr). The English translation is my own.

56. "Diffusa est gratia in labiis tuis, diffusa est gratia in labiis tuis: propterea benedixit te Deus in aeternum." (Willi Apel, *Gregorian Chant* [Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1958], 365). All English translations from this source are my own.

57. "De profundis clamavi ad te, Domine: Domine exaudi orationem meam: de profundis clamavi ad te, Domine" (Apel, *Gregorian Chant*, 365).

58. "Quoniam, quoniam, quoniam non revertetur oculus meus, ut videat bona, ut videat bona, ut videat bona, ut videat bona, ut videat bona, ut videat bona, ut videat bona" (Apel, *Gregorian Chant*, 365).

once again good things, made so forcefully by the text's form, is "paralleled and even surpassed by the music which transforms these outcries into a most stirring crescendo of expressiveness."[59]

The extraordinarily high number of repeats in the *Vir erat* is an evocative representation of bodily excess. Job's ill health, characterized by his irregular breathing and increased physical struggle to compensate for the lack of smoothness in his speech with verbosity, is mirrored by the overflow of words that cover the page. In one sense, the offertory's excess seems contained and restrained, due to it being a structured piece of textual and musical composition in which the words and notes are arranged to conform with the overall liturgical programme and sung harmoniously by cantors who exercise control over their voices. However, the sense of unchecked excess is also strong, since almost every other word is repeated in the verses, contrary to the expected patterns of repetition. The sevenfold repetition of "that it might see good things" (ut videat bona), sung in a moving crescendo, would have impressed listeners and evoked strong affective responses that come less easily from hearing readings or chants that lack such formalistic touches.

Amalarius seeks to rouse affective piety in fellow congregants by stirring their empathy for Job's mental and spiritual turmoil through accessing his tormented physicality. The excessive body that he conjures as part of his liturgical exegesis is also the image that quickens devotion among the faithful. By extension, I suggest that making the sick body a site for self-identification would also make healthy congregants less likely to look down on worshippers with physical deficiencies as people who cannot attain the same level of spiritual fulfilment.

If we look back at the passage containing Amalarius' explanation of the offertory, we see that the author of the office composed the verses with repetition *qua* "feigned imitation of the ailing Job" and "the manner of those who are sick." Although the words of Job are in the first-person and should be imagined as spoken by Job himself, the true speaker is the author, who assumes the role of Job through mimicking the symptoms of his condition. The author's mimesis is an exercise of empathy, for he puts himself in Job's place and reproduces his laments as one who shares the same sick body. The authenticity of his imitation is marked by its excess, which, when put to

59. Apel, *Gregorian Chant*, 367.

music – already established to have the natural power of goading hearts to confession and compunction – would cause listeners to feel vicariously Job's pain and momentarily inhabit his troubled physicality.

Scriptural Prosthesis

My interest in excess and the grotesque now leads me to the last section of this paper, where I first discuss Amalarius' interpretation of the Kyrie eleison. As the part of Mass where everyone involved in the liturgical ceremony asks God for mercy, he writes the following:

> The Lord's mercy must precede each of the priests' private prayers for three reasons that readily occur to me: One is so that the priest's mind may be made calm to attend to those things that he speaks with his mouth; a second is so that he may be worthy to address God, insofar as that is possible for human nature; and a third is so that, if he is afflicted with some bodily nuisance and the breath prays without the mind, the Lord may look down upon him not in anger, but in the judgment of mercy.[60]

Here, a kind of grotesqueness arises that is similar to that of Guntard. While Guntard's excessive consideration for physicality and bodily cleanliness overflows into and impairs his spiritual judgement, the sick priest is distracted from his meditations by excessive sensations caused by his "bodily nuisance." The priest's illness is another example of what I call a situational disability. His physical malady, which might not cause him any trouble in a different context, is a serious hindrance during Mass, since his absence of mind could incur God's wrath. Examined from this point of view, Amalarius interprets the *Kyrie* as a form of accommodation and accessibility service, providing a channel by which divine mercy could reach a person whose bodily state otherwise prevents him from acquiring it. Looking at this passage, I would argue that Amalarius is again trying to de-stigmatize illness in the context of Mass and to give the sick body a legitimate place in the liturgy.

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60. "Ante omnem orationem specialem sacerdotum necesse est praecedere misericordiam Domini, propter tres causas quae mihi in promptu occurrunt. Una est, ut serenetur mens sacerdotis ad ea intendenda quae ore dicit; altera, ut dignus sit loqui Deo, quantum ad naturam humanam pertinet; tertia, quod si, tedio aliquo corporali affectus, spiritus sine mente oraverit, Dominus non in furore suo respiciat super illum, sed in iudicio misericordiae" (Amalarius of Metz, *On the Liturgy*, 3.6.4).

Just as Amalarius de-stigmatizes and even adds glory to his phlegmatic nature by drawing upon scriptural evidence of Christ's own acts of spitting, he also normalizes other forms of sickness by enlisting the help of Scripture. In his original Latin text, Amalarius writes that, if the priest's illness becomes too distracting, his "spiritus sine mente oraverit" (spirit/breath prays without the mind), which is meant, in this context, to be read as a negative consequence. Knibbs' translation of "spiritus" into English as "breath" emphasizes the physicality of respiration and heightens the disconnect between senseless motions of the body and the incorporeal mind with which a person would contemplate and grow closer to God. To pray with only the body and not the mind suggests the repetition of a standard routine that is done simply for the sake of its completion and out of obligation, rather than the development of a deep, personal relationship with God that edifies the individual's soul. However, those who are familiar with Scripture – as Amalarius must have been – would recognize the phrase "spiritus sine mente oraverit" from another context, in which its meaning is a lot less negative.

In 1 Corinthians, the apostle Paul characterizes the speaking of tongues as praying without the mind. He writes, "For, if I pray in a strange tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful" (spiritus meus orat, mens autem mea sine fructu est). He continues, "What then? I will pray with my spirit and I will pray with my mind; I will sing with my spirit and I will sing with my mind."[61] Insofar as teaching and communal learning are concerned, he tells his readers that speaking in tongues is useless, for nobody can benefit from listening to speech that he or she cannot understand. The word "spiritus," which is more appropriately translated here as "spirit" than "breath," signifies the innermost part of an individual that receives divine inspiration from God and is often regarded as antithetical to the gross earthliness of the flesh. For the spirit to pray without the mind suggests that the former's activity transcends the realm of rational thought to which the mental processing and comprehension of language would belong. One might even recall here how Augustine defines prayer as a "continued pious

61. "Nam, si orem lingua, spiritus meus orat, mens autem mea sine fructu est. Quid ergo est? Orabo spiritu, orabo et mente; psallam spiritu, psallam et mente" (1 Cor. 14:14-15 VUL). Translations of this and other Bible passages into English are my own.

emotion towards Him to whom we pray,"[62] placing the nucleus of the action in one's sustained disposition and desire for God, instead of speech and logical articulation. Paul makes it clear that speaking in tongues, although it would not contribute to the intellectual growth of one's peers, does solidify one's private relationship with God. This is evidenced by earlier lines of the letter: "For he who speaks in a strange tongue does not speak to all, but to God,"[63] and "He who speaks in a strange tongue edifies only himself."[64] The speaker of tongues, in the context of private prayer and devotion, still benefits from his activity when he prays solely with his spirit, even though he is encouraged to sing and pray intelligibly in a public setting.

The positive aspect of praying "spiritu sine mente" is emphasized by Rosamond McKitterick, who discusses the retention of the Latin language in the liturgy when vernacular speech would have been much easier for laypeople to understand. The reason for this is stated by Ambrosiaster in his commentary on 1 Corinthians, where he writes that "the spirit, as a result of his baptism still knows what he is praying: that is the spiritual value of a Christian's prayer is not dependent on its intellectual value."[65] Not only does the spirit possess more knowledge than the mind by deriving its knowledge from inner, divine operations brought about by God after the receipt of a sacrament, but this commentary by Ambrosiaster also shows that every layperson who took part in liturgical ceremonies without any familiarity with the Latin language must have prayed with the spirit and without the mind numerous times throughout his or her own lifetime. This form of praying is no longer reserved for private moments of inspiration, but also normalized in public spaces. Hence, praying "spiritu sine mente" is a sure way of establishing closeness with God and engaging in an intensely deep connection with him. Considering his knowledge of the Pauline epistles, which he frequently cites throughout his *Liber Officialis*, Amalarius' decision to use the words "spiritu sine mente" when describing the sick priest's condition suggests that he does not wish to make the danger of God's

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62. Augustine of Hippo, "Letter 130: To Proba," in *Letters of Saint Augustine, Bishop of Hippo*, trans. J.G. Cunningham, ed. Marcus Dods (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1875), 142-166.

63. "qui enim loquitur lingua non omnibus loquitur, sed Deo." (1 Cor. 14:2 VUL).

64. "qui loquitur lingua semetipsum aedificat." (1 Cor. 14:4 VUL).

65. Rosamond McKitterick, *The Frankish Church and the Carolingian Reforms, 789-895* (London: Royal Historical Society, 1977), 147.

wrath appear too great. While the contextual meaning of the phrase is a negative one, implying that the priest's prayers are empty words spoken out of habit and closing him off from God, the scriptural significance of the phrase offers a sense of redemption and hope, evocative of the closeness of the individual to God during a session of speaking in tongues.

Amalarius' method of incorporating biblical allusions in order to remedy what would have been a dismal liturgical situation can be seen as a kind of textual "prosthesis," an idea elaborated upon by scholar Julie Singer in her essay on the fourteenth-century poet Guillaume de Machaut's poem *Voir Dit*.[66] Singer demonstrates how its one-eyed protagonist fills his verse heavily with images of round forms, such as the sun and wheel of Fortune, to create a textually "prosthetic" body-part that resembles the shape of an eye in his attempt to make whole what is lacking in his physical form.[67] This notion of a textual prosthetic can be applied to Amalarius' ninth-century text, since the biblical lines and their context rise immediately into the mind of the reader, who can then compare the priest's absent-minded prayer, rendered so by illness, to a divinely-assisted prayer where the operations of the mind are of secondary importance compared to those of the spirit. The sick priest's apparent lack of spiritual grace is made up for and even made plentiful by the prosthetic attachment of Saint Paul's words and meaning. Thus, Amalarius associates sickness with hope and leniency, as opposed to a fault that deserves punishment.

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66. For a detailed discussion of the concept of textual prosthesis, see David T. Mitchell and Sharon L Snyder, *Narrative Prosthesis: Disability and the Dependencies of Discourse* (Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 2001).

67. Julie Singer, "Playing by Ear: Compensation, Reclamation, and Prosthesis in Fourteenth-Century Song," in *Disability in the Middle Ages*, ed. Joshua R. Eyler (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing, 2010), 50.

What if the Author of the *Mokṣopāya* Were a Woman?

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The *Mokṣopāya* (MU) is an anonymous text from tenth century Kashmir deemed to have been composed by a single author who has, until now, been assumed by scholars who work on the text to be male.[1] This assumption is made known by the exclusive use of male pronouns when discussing MU authorship. The MU is a unique text for its period, both stylistically and philosophically. Formally, the text is neither exclusively *kāvya* nor *śāstra*; it has passages of poetic verse (*kāvya*), prose (*gadya*), story (*kathā*), and didactic instruction (*śāstra*). While the MU refers to itself as the *sarvasiddhāntasiddhānta* (the definitive philosophical position of all final positions), and the narratives themselves are meant to be *dṛṣṭāntas* – true examples of the philosophy expressed in the text that will guide the hearer to experience its teachings first-hand – the philosophy of the MU does not align with any known tradition. The MU has Buddhist elements, but no overt Buddhist content. Likewise, there are tantric traces and some tantric content, but the text has none of the formal qualities of a tantra. The MU is intertextual, like the epics and purāṇas, but it is not an epic, nor is it a purāṇa. Like the *Mahābhārata,* the MU consists of a central narrative with sub-tales woven throughout, but, unlike that epic, the MU has a consistency that provides convincing evidence of single authorship.[2]

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1. This paper engages with the Sanskrit text of the *Mokṣopāya*, utilizing the critical edition of the MU edited by scholars of the Mokṣopāya Project in Halle and Marburg under the direction of Walter Slaje and published in six volumes (Walter Slaje, ed., *Mokṣopāya*: *historisch-kritische Gesamtausgabe*, *Teil 1-7* [Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2011-2018]). From this critical edition, I specifically draw upon: *Mokṣopāya: Das Dritte Buch. Utpattiprakaraṇa,* ed. Jürgen Hanneder, Peter Stephan, and Stanislav Jager (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2011), and *Mokṣopāya: Das Sechste Buch, Nirvāṇaprakaraṇa (1. Teil: Kapitel 1–119)*, ed. Susanne Krause-Stinner and Peter Stephan Jager (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2018).

2. According to Jürgen Hanneder, the indigenous Kashmirian tradition of the text assumes a single authorship. Clues within the MU itself also support this claim, as there is evidence of an overall plan to the work. In other words, intertextual relationships exist between sections

While the *Mahābhārata* was composed through layers of textual accretions over centuries, the MU was conceived as a single cohesive literary work by an unknown author. The MU tells purāṇic stories, but it has neither the structure, the thematic content, nor the stated goals of a purāṇic text. While some of the stories do recount known purāṇic myths, many are new and "without parallel in Indian literature."[3] The MU thus appears to be a new genre construction that has no precedent. It is a blend of philosophy, story, poetry and tantra (both Śaiva and Buddhist), and refers to itself as a *śāstra* that consists of a collection (*saṃhitā*)[4] of ornamented (*nānālaṅkārabhūṣitam*) good sayings (*sūkta, vākya,* or *vacas*)[5] narrated by someone who has attained the supreme goal (*āptoktivarṇitā*).[6] All we know

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of the text. For example, the Līlā story – initially told in the *Utpattiprakaraṇa* (Book 3) – is retold in the *Nirvāṇaprakaraṇa* from the perspective of Līlā's husband, King Sindhu. Many *ākhyānas* rely on philosophical sections for meaning, which indicates that both *ākhyāna* and *śāstra* are part of a planned and interrelated structure. Characters in Daśaratha's *sabhā* are also in the stories, which shows a connectedness between the discourse, story and frame of the text. It is also possible to interpret the entire MU as a representation of Rāma's gradual enlightenment. Early on, Vasiṣṭha tells Rāma that he is not yet ready to receive the answers to some of the questions that he has asked, because he is still *aprabuddha*; later, Rāma is told that he is now *prabuddha*, and the deferred questions are acknowledged and answered. Hanneder also suggests, as does Christopher Key Chapple, that we can read the *prakaraṇas* as stages of Rāma's gradual enlightenment: Rāma first experiences dispassion in the *Vairagyaprakaraṇa*; he desires liberation in *Mumukṣuprakaraṇa*; he begins the path in *Utpattiprakaraṇa*; he is established in *Sthitiprakaraṇa*; he experiences release or tranquility in *Upaśāmaprakaraṇa*; and finally, he attains mokṣa in *Nirvāṇaprakaraṇa*. See: Jürgen Hanneder, "The Mokṣopāya: An Introduction," in *The Mokṣopāya, Yogavāsiṣṭha and Related Texts* (Aachen: Shaker, 2005), 9-19; Hanneder, *Studies on the Mokṣopāya* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2006); Christopher Key Chapple, "The Sevenfold Yoga of the Yogavāsiṣṭha," in *Yoga in Practice*, ed. David Gordon White (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012), 117-132.

3. Hanneder, *Studies,* 71.

4. *mokṣopāyābhidhāneyaṃ saṃhitā sārasammitā |*
triṃśad dve ca sahasrāṇi jñātā nirvāṇadāyinī ‖ 2.17.6 ‖

5. *tvam etayākhaṇḍitayā guṇalakṣmyā samāśritaḥ |*
manomohaharaṃ vākyaṃ vakṣyamāṇam idaṃ śṛṇu ‖ 2.17.3 ‖
pāvanānām udārāṇāṃ parabodhaikadāyinām |
vacasāṃ bhājanaṃ bhūtyai bhavyo bhavati nādhamaḥ ‖ 2.17.5 ‖
yuktiyuktārthavākyāni kalpitāni pṛthak pṛthak |
dṛṣṭāntasārasūktāni cāsyāṃ prakaraṇāni ṣaṭ ‖ 2.17.10 ‖

6. *svayaṃ jñātā śrutā vāpi bhrāntiśāntyaiva saukhyadā |*
āptoktivarṇitā sadyo yathāmṛtataraṅgiṇī ‖ 2.17.8 ‖

for sure, based on internal and external evidence, is that the MU can be approximately dated to the mid-tenth century,[7] right in the middle of the formative period of the *Trika* school of Kashmir Śaivism, which eventually became known as the *Pratyabhijñā* school. And yet, the MU is absolutely not a *Pratyabhijñā* text.[8]

The question that guides the discussion of this paper – *What if the author of the Mokṣopāya were a woman?* – arises out of my own curiosity about the mysterious origins of the MU, along with my interest in particular passages within the text that demonstrate an attitude toward women not often seen in South Asian philosophical and narrative literature. To pursue this line of inquiry, I have broken this overarching question down into three sub-questions: Why hasn't anyone asked this question before? What evidence in the text makes female authorship even possible or

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7. Evidence of the earliest date that the MU could have been composed (950 CE) is based on the mention of King Yaśaskaradeva, who reigned in Kashmir from 939-948 CE, in a story that prophesies his reign. This was first noted by Prahlad C. Divanji (see "The Date and Origin of the Yogavāsiṣṭha," in *Proceedings of the Seventh All India Oriental Conference* [Baroda: 1933], 21-23). Evidence of the latest possible date of the composition of the MU is based on mention of this text in Kṣemendra's *kavikaṇṭhābharaṇa* (ca. 990-1066 CE), where it is cited immediately after the *Rāmāyaṇa* as a requisite text that any aspiring poet must have read. Hanneder speculates that this citation was likely overlooked by previous scholars because a *Mokṣopāya* could just refer to a "means to liberation" rather than the text in question, which "was hardly known" by later scholars who only had access to the *Yogavāsiṣṭha,* the much later and highly redacted recension of the MU (*Studies*, 42). Hanneder also notes that "although the text is not quoted literally, we have here its proper name and its placement within a canon of literature at an appropriate slot, namely immediately after the *Rāmāyaṇa*" (*Studies*, 42). This citation indicates that the MU was well known in Kṣemendra's time, "which narrows the time-span towards the middle of the tenth century" (*Studies*, 42). Furthermore, Hanneder has identified a partial quote from the MU in Utpaladeva's (ca. 925-975 CE) commentary on the *Spandakārikā*, which also appears in Rāmakaṇṭha's Sarvatobhadra (mid-tenth century CE) (*Studies*, 41-46). However, scholars since Divanji have noted the existence of up to three different Kashmiri Rāmakaṇṭha's, so these citations do not contribute to any true accuracy with regard to dating the text.

8. Hanneder notes that key technical terms from Kashmir Śaivism, such as *vimarśa*, do not occur in the MU at all, and, furthermore, that although there are significant resemblances to elements drawn from various streams of Tantric Śaivism, "the tendency we find, as in other instances, is that of a reinterpretation that deconstructs the forms and identities of conventional deities. It seems that quite often research scholars have noted the detailed description of the deities, but not taken into account that they are later reduced to pure consciousness by the author" (*Studies*, 148; 186).

something to consider? Do the social conditions within which our author existed support such a possibility? The first and third of these questions are historical. While the first addresses assumptions that underlie ideas about women and women's history in Indological scholarship, the third prompts an examination of the particular historical context of tenth century Kashmir, as well as a consideration of the most common paradigm of female authorship that existed in medieval north India: that of the wandering female bhakti poet saint. The second question is textual; it is not answered here by means of a thorough philological analysis of the text's deep linguistic structures, but rather is dealt with by examining the work's narrative content and interrogating the recurring themes that can be read to suggest the possibility of female authorship. Overall, this paper presents a discussion prompted by a question that can never be answered definitively. Nonetheless, I think it is an interesting and important discussion to have; a worthwhile thought experiment[9] that highlights and challenges scholarly assumptions as it unfolds.[10]

Why Hasn't Anyone Asked this Question Before?

In a co-authored work entitled "In Search of Our Past: A Review of the Limitations and Possibilities of the Historiography of Women in Early India," Uma Chakravarti and Kumkum Roy outline two vantage points for approaching women's history in India.[11] The first approach they outline is the one taken by early Western scholars, who drew on brahmanical texts and brahmanical informants to reconstruct a historical picture of women in ancient and medieval India. This approach unfolds as a modern-style grand narrative that depicts a pristine golden period in Vedic times, followed by a trajectory of social decline that extends to the present. This position

9. I thank Max Mehener for this useful phrase communicated in a personal text message conversation, January 2019.

10. I am grateful for the many comments and helpful suggestions that I received when I presented this paper at the Department for the Study of Religion at the University of Toronto as part of my Doctoral Candidate Colloquium in January, 2019. Many thanks to Srilata Raman, Reid Locklin, Judith Newman and others. I have also benefitted greatly from suggestions made by John Nemec in personal conversation (March, 2019).

11. Uma Chakravarti and Kumkum Roy, "In Search of Our Past: A Review of the Limitations and Possibilities of the Historiography of Women in Early India," *Economic and Political Weekly* 23, no. 18 (1988): WS2-10.

overlooks the obvious caste and gender bias inherent in relying on texts that denigrate women and which women did not themselves produce.[12] Moreover, Chakravarti and Roy challenge this view, noting that there was no gradual historical decline, but rather an ongoing and compounding trend of treating women and their sexuality as a threat.[13] The Vedic period was not a golden period for women. The Vedas themselves show evidence that women were frequently slaves, that they were considered to be demonic and sexually driven, and also that they were a threat to the purity of Vedic ritual.[14] While evidence shows that women did participate in Vedic rituals,[15] control over their sexuality was held by men – men who created rules to maintain a social hierarchy rooted in concerns over caste purity.[16] This trend of control by means of textual depiction extended from the Vedic period throughout the development of brahmanical literature. There was no gradual historical decline, but rather an ongoing, compounding trend of treating women and their sexuality as a threat.[17]

For instance, during the second urbanization (800-600 BCE) in the *Dharmaśāstra* period, private control over land made inheritance and patrilineal succession important for both kings and brahman priests. While the former wanted to guard legitimate hereditary succession to the throne, the latter wanted to maintain caste purity.[18] The free movement and potential sexual agency of women became a source of concern, and texts produced at this time sought to curb this threat by demonizing women.[19] For example,

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12. Kumkum Roy, "Introduction," in *Women in Early Indian Societies*, ed. Kumkum Roy (New Delhi: Manohar Publishers & Distributors, 1999), 8-9.

13. Chakravarti, "Brahmanical Patriarchy," 582.

14. Uma Chakravarti, "Conceptualizing Brahmanical Patriarchy in Early India: Gender, Caste, Class and State," *Economic and Political Weekly* 28, no. 14 (1993): 580.

15. See: Stephanie W. Jamison, *Sacrificed Wife/Sacrificer's Wife: Women, Ritual, and Hospitality in Ancient India* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996).

16. Chakravarti, "Brahmanical Patriarchy," 581; Jayantanuja Bandyopadhyaya, *Class, Caste and Religion in Medieval India: Social History of Transition Failure* (Kolkata: Mitram, 2013), 70.

17. Chakravarti, "Brahmanical Patriarchy," 582.

18. Chakravarti, "Brahmanical Patriarchy," 581-582.

19. Chakravarti finds three levels of control over women's sexuality in the brahmanical tradition. The first, ideological control, frames women's "essential nature" (*strīsvabhāva*) as dirty, sexual, sinful and full of wanton desire. This ideological construct therefore justifies restraining women. It can be seen in early brahmanical texts – such as the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* or the

the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* says that "a woman, a śūdra, a dog and a crow are the embodiments of untruth, sin, and darkness [XIV.11.31]," and the *Manusmṛti* identifies women as lying, deceitful, treacherous and equivalent to poison, snakes, fire and the sharp edge of a razor.[20] This literature does not tell the story of the lived experience of women. It rather tells the story of men's attitudes towards women, attitudes which have somehow served as evidence for women's experience and reality. This, in turn, erases the role of women in social production and marginalizes their experiences within the context of the broader social world[21] – even early social reformers relied on the texts and testimony of upper-class brahman men when selecting female-oriented issues worthy of protest.[22] This approach thus treats all women as if they constitute a single "monolithic, homogeneous, and somewhat passive social category," and ignores the lived reality of women whose life experiences and concerns lie outside the scope and geographical location of

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Manusmṛti – as well as in *smṛti* literature, particularly the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata*, where women are depicted as weak, fickle, disloyal, deceitful, cunning and driven by sexual desire. It is primarily upper caste women who internalize this construct, causing them to adopt a self-imposed self-restraint for the sake of spiritual transcendence. Chakravarti calls this a "theology of subordination." The second means of control relates to community and family, and specifically refers to how wives are compelled to depend on their husbands and their husbands' extended family. This means of control, while rooted in ideologically based notions of *strīdharma* and *pativrata,* is maintained through the threat of violence, abandonment and other forms of family-based punishment. The *Dharmaśāstras*, especially *Manusmṛti*, articulate the laws for this level of control. The third form of control is state-based. Following the *Arthaśāstra*, the state can impose fines, enact force, verbally restrain, or even abuse women in order to control their behaviour, thereby justifying male violence toward women. As Chakravarti notes, while the *strīsvabhāva* of upper caste women is described as inherently sexual and out of control, śūdras are described as having a lowly and subservient nature. While the former are told that their dharma requires them to be the opposite, the latter are told that their dharma requires them to be just that. Chakravarti interprets this discrepancy to mean that controlled sexuality was not originally part of the system, but rather introduced later when "women's sexuality […] had […] become a problem; their essential natures, their maternal power, had to be organised and ordered by paternal power in the emerging class-based societies to serve the new social and political arrangements organised by men of the dominant classes" ("Brahmanical Patriarchy," 582-583).

20. Chakravarti, "Brahmanical Patriarchy," 581.

21. Chakravarti and Roy, "In Search of Our Past," WS-5.

22. Chakravarti and Roy, "In Search of Our Past," WS-3. See also: Lata Mani, "Contentious Traditions: The Debate on Sati in Colonial India," *Cultural Critique* 7 (1987): 119-156.

brahmanical textual authority.[23]

The second approach Chakravarti and Roy outline is the effort to reconstruct the social, political, economic, religious, and gendered contexts of women's past lived experience. This approach draws from a broad range of source materials that exceeds the range delimited by the brahmanical Sanskrit corpus, such as inscriptions, visual art, the archaeological record, and texts in Prakrit, Pali, and local vernacular languages. The focus here is on a recognition of the wider social context of each historical moment.[24] This approach thus recognizes women's experiences and draws upon evidence from their contributions, thereby framing them as social agents who have been present and active in the creation and maintenance of social worlds throughout history. This approach privileges specific historical moments and circumstances, eschewing overarching evolutionary generalizations that frequently only reflect the ideological position of the historian and the source material that s/he has chosen. In other words, this is an approach that recognizes the diverse complexity of each historical moment, and acknowledges that women are social, political and moral agents who work and produce cultural objects within complex social environments. This treatment of women in Indic history thus draws from a diverse range of cultural evidence to highlight instances of female agency and write a history that is more inclusive of women.

Feminist historians and Gender Studies scholars in India have embraced this more nuanced, situated, and local approach to history, acknowledging that women have to "re-create their own histories" by "putting women back into the historical canvas," to "redress historical imbalances and contribute to a more meaningful understanding of the past by restoring women's agency."[25] Vijaya Ramaswamy calls this kind of scholarship "academic activism," and identifies four primary areas of focus:[26] (1) re-examining texts traditionally

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23. Chakravarti and Roy, "In Search of Our Past," WS-3; Kumkum Roy, "Gender Relations During the First Millennium: An Overview," in *The Power of Gender & the Gender of Power: Explorations in Early Indian History* (New Delhi & Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2010), 196.

24. Roy, "Gender Relations," 197.

25. Vijaya Ramaswamy, "Women's Agency in Indian History and Culture," in *Privileging Women Agency in History: Work, Worship, Leisure, and Pleasure*, ed. I. Lakshmi and A. Satyanarayana (New Delhi: Research India Press, 2012), 3.

26. Ramaswamy, "Women's Agency," 3-4. In addition to the following, Ramaswamy also de-

understood to be "male" through a gynocritical lens;[27] (2) documenting women's work in society by emphasizing the work of non-brahman and subaltern women and the interrelationship of caste, class and gender;[28]

lineates a fifth approach that she simply calls "women on women" with no further explanation.

27. Ramaswamy, "Women's Agency," 3. For an example of this focus, see: Padmanabh S. Jaini, *Gender and Salvation: Jaina Debates on the Spiritual Liberation of Women* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991); José Ignacio Cabezón, ed., *Buddhism, Sexuality, and Gender* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1992); Miranda Eberle Shaw, *Passionate Enlightenment: Women in Tantric Buddhism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995); Julia Leslie, ed., *Myth and Mythmaking* (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press, 1996); Stephanie Jamison, *Sacrificed Wife/Sacrificer's Wife*; Kathryn R. Blackstone, *Women in the Footsteps of the Buddha: Struggle for Liberation in the Therīgāthā* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 2000); Laurie L. Patton, ed., *Jewels of Authority: Women and Textual Tradition in Hindu India* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); Tracy Pintchman, ed., *Women's Lives, Women's Rituals in the Hindu Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007); Vinita Chandra, *Gender Relations in Early India* (Jaipur: Rawat Publications, 2010); Karen Muldoon-Hules, *Brides of the Buddha: Nuns' Stories from the Avadanasataka* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2017).

28. See, for instance: Gail Omvedt, "Class, Caste and Land in India: An Introductory Essay," in *Land, Caste, and Politics in Indian States*, ed. Gail Omvedt (Delhi: Authors Guild Publications, 1982); Kumkum Roy, "Defining the Household: Some Aspects of Prescription and Practice in Early India," *Social Scientist* 22, no. 1/2 (1994): 3-18; Anil Kumar Tyagi, *Women Workers in Ancient India* (New Delhi: Radha Publications, 1994); Leslie Orr, "Women's Wealth and Worship," in *Faces of the Feminine in Ancient, Medieval, and Modern India*, ed. M. Bose, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 124-147; Leslie Orr, *Donors, Devotees, and Daughters of God: Temple Women in Medieval Tamilnadu* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000); Leslie Orr, "Domesticity and Difference/Women and Men: Religious Life in Medieval Tamilnadu," in *Women's Lives, Women's Rituals in the Hindu Tradition*, ed. Tracy Pintchman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 109-130; Uma Chakravarti, "A Glance at the Word Jāti in the Vedic Literature," *Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute* 86 (2005): 127-130; K. Ilaiah, *Post-Hindu India: A Discourse on Dalit-Bahujan, Socio-Spiritual and Scientific Revolution* (New Delhi: SAGE Publications, 2009); I. Lakshmi and A. Satyanarayana, eds., *Privileging Women Agency in History: Work, Worship, Leisure, and Pleasure* (New Delhi: Research India Press, 2012); Jayantanuja Bandyopadhyaya, *Class, Caste and Religion in Medieval India: Social History of Transition Failure* (Kolkata: Mitram, 2013); Subhadra Channa, *Gender in South Asia: Social Imagination and Constructed Realities* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2013); Manuela Ciotti, "Dalit Women Between Social and Analytical Alterity: Rethinking the 'Quintessentially Marginal,'" in *Routledge Handbook of Gender in South Asia*, ed. Leela Fernandes (London: Routledge, 2014), 305-317; Nandita Prasad Sahai and Kumkum Roy, eds., *Looking Within, Looking Without: Exploring Households in the Subcontinent Through Time: Essays in Memory of Nandita Prasad Sahai* (New Delhi: Primus Books, 2015); Padma Velaskar, "Theorising the Interaction of Caste, Class and Gender: A Feminist Sociological Approach," *Contributions to Indian Sociology* 50, no. 3 (2016): 389-414; Uma Chakravarti, *Gendering*

(3) critically analyzing women's social movements;[29] (4) interpreting the expressions and writings of women in vernacular languages.[30] This strand

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Caste Through a Feminist Lens (New Delhi: SAGE Publications, 2018).

29. See: Julia Leslie and Mary McGee, eds., *Invented Identities: The Interplay of Gender, Religion, and Politics in India* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2000); K.S. Singh, "Tribal Women: Resurrection, Demystification, and Gender Struggle," in *Breaking out of Invisibility: Women in Indian History*, ed. Aparna Basu and Anup Taneja (New Delhi: Northern Book Centre in association with Indian Council of Historical Research, 2002), 206-231; Vijaya Ramaswamy, "Transition: Gender Politics and Literature in Tamil Nadu," in *Breaking out of Invisibility: Women in Indian History*, ed. Aparna Basu and Anup Taneja (New Delhi: Northern Book Centre in association with Indian Council of Historical Research, 2002), 166-187; Andal Narayanan, *Women and Indian Society: Options and Constraints* (Jaipur: Rawat Publications, 2002); Jasbir Jain, *Indigenous Roots of Feminism: Culture, Subjectivity and Agency* (New Delhi: SAGE Publications, 2011); Smita Agarwal, "The Other Voices: In Search of Justice," in *Privileging Women Agency in History: Work, Worship, Leisure, and Pleasure*, ed. I. Lakshmi and A. Satyanarayana (New Delhi: Research India Press, 2012), 193-215; S. Mahaboob Basha, "Spreading the Fragrance of Sisterhood: Women's Organizations and Consciousness in Colonial Andhra, 1902-1947," in *Privileging Women Agency in History: Work, Worship, Leisure, and Pleasure*, ed. I. Lakshmi and A. Satyanarayana (New Delhi: Research India Press, 2012), 136-192; Rukmini Sen, "Mapping Women's Activism in India: Resistances, Reforms, and (Re)-Creation," in *Routledge Handbook of Gender in South Asia*, ed. Leela Fernandes (London: Routledge, 2014), 333-346.

30. See: Gloria Goodwin Raheja, "Women's Speech Genres, Kinship and Contradiction," in *Women as Subjects: South Asian Histories*, ed. Nita Kumar (New Delhi: Stree in association with the Book Review Literary Trust, 1994), 49-80; Leslie A. Flemmin, "Between Two Worlds: Self-Construction and Self-Identity in the Writings of Three Nineteenth-Century Indian Christian Women," in *Women as Subjects: South Asian Histories*, ed. Nita Kumar (New Delhi: Stree in association with the Book Review Literary Trust, 1994), 49-80; Srabashi Ghosh, "'Birds in a Cage': Changes in Bengali Social Life as Recorded in Autobiographies by Women," in *Ideals, Images, and Real Lives: Women in Literature and History*, ed. Alice Thorner and Maithreyi Krishna Raj (Mumbai: Published for Sameeksha Trust [by] Orient Longman, 2000), 37-67; Meera Kosambi, "Women, Emancipation and Equality: Pandita Ramabai's Contribution to Women's Cause," in *Ideals, Images, and Real Lives: Women in Literature and History*, ed. Alice Thorner and Maithreyi Krishna Raj (Mumbai: Published for Sameeksha Trust [by] Orient Longman, 2000), 104-144; S. Anandhi, "Representing Devadasis: 'Dasigal Mosavalai' as a Radical Text," in *Ideals, Images, and Real Lives: Women in Literature and History*, ed. Alice Thorner and Maithreyi Krishna Raj (Mumbai: Published for Sameeksha Trust [by] Orient Longman, 2000), 233-253; Baisali Hui, "Difficult Daughters: A (Sub) Version of the Woman's Identity," in *Changing Faces of Indian Women*, ed. Anita Bagchi and Sanjay K. Roy (Kolkata: Levant Books, 2009), 147-156; B. Ashok, "Question of Self Identity, Gender, Equality, Struggle and Justice in Bama's 'Karukku'," in *Privileging Women Agency in History: Work, Worship, Leisure, and Pleasure*, ed. I. Lakshmi and A. Satyanarayana (New Delhi: Research India Press,

of feminist scholarship demonstrates that Indian women were never just passive recipients of patriarchal social and religious traditions, but rather have always been active social agents at work in various social worlds. I suggest that it is the lingering influence of the first approach that has kept scholars from inquiring into whether the anonymous author of the MU could be female. However, as this second approach demonstrates, women have always been wise, intelligent, intentional, and purposeful social agents at work in their cultural worlds. Accordingly, there is no reason to assume that this type of authorship – i.e., the successful production of a socially and culturally recognized object of enduring value – could not have been undertaken by a woman. In what follows, I will explore the textual evidence for this alternative reading.

What Evidence in the Text Makes Female Authorship Even Possible or Something to Consider?

In the *Mokṣopāya*, the two longest narratives are stories of queens where the enlightened master is female. Thus, there is a strong feminine voice in the text. The first of these narratives is the Līlā story, which takes place in the third book, *sargas* 3.15 to 3.36. This is the first and longest major narrative in the MU.[31] As the story goes, Līlā, wife of Padma, decides that she wants to prolong her husband's life out of fear of separation, so she performs austerities to gain magic powers (*siddhi*). She also worships the goddess Sarasvatī as *Jñāptī*. In truth, the goddess Sarasvatī is none other than Līlā's own highest wisdom, her own *Jñāptī*. Regardless, Sarasvatī grants Līlā two boons as a reward for her austerities: first, her husband will not leave her room upon death, and second, Sarasvatī will come whenever Līlā calls. When Padma dies, Sarasvatī is called and the goddess counsels Līlā on how to deal with the body. Then the goddess takes the queen on a seemingly lengthy journey (it really only lasts moments) through future and past lifetimes, historically real yet conjured in the imaginations of the travelers at the very same time. During this journey the goddess instructs the queen on the true nature of reality as unreality, the illusoriness of space and time, the nature of consciousness, non-existent emptiness, oneness, life, death,

2012), 17-23.

31. The story is brought back in 6.315.1, but from the perspective of Sindhu, Līlā's husband.

reincarnation, idealist causality, and more. By means of this instruction, Līlā becomes enlightened. The important point to note here is that Līlā, the female protagonist and seeker of higher knowledge in this story, is brought to enlightenment by a feminine power, the goddess Sarasvatī, who is really, ultimately, Līlā's own already existent higher knowing, her *Jñāptī*.

The Cūḍālā story occurs in *sargas* 6.81-114 of the last book of the *Mokṣopāya*, the *Nirvāṇaprakaraṇa*. As noted above, this story is also one of the longest narratives in the *Mokṣopāya*. Cūḍālā is a young queen married to King Śikhidvaja. Cūḍālā attains enlightenment and supernatural powers by means of her own self-initiated contemplations. When she attempts to share her newfound knowledge with her husband, he rebuffs and belittles her. The queen overlooks her husband's disinterest and continues with her own business in an enlightened state for many years, playing with her superpowers and rejoicing in her experience of enlightenment. Eventually, Śikhidvaja becomes disillusioned with material existence, renounces his kingdom against the counsel of his own wife, and escapes to the forest to seek enlightenment by living as an ascetic in an isolated hut far away. Cūḍālā rules the kingdom while the king practices austerities for eighteen years, until he is ready to receive instruction from her. After the eighteen years pass, Cūḍālā uses her spiritual powers to fly to the king's dwelling place. She transforms herself into a male brahman and enlightens Śikhidvaja through her teaching. Then, Śikhidvaja and Cūḍālā in the form of the male Brahman spend time together in the forest as enlightened friends. Eventually, Cūḍālā wants to have sex with her husband, so she tells him that she – the male brahman – has been cursed to become female at night. After only a few days, Cūḍālā (as the male brahman) transforms into a female at night, and she and Śikhidvaja get married, become lovers and spend time as male friends during the day and male-female lovers at night. Śikhidvaja does not recognize his wife until Cūḍālā reveals her true identity to him and convinces him to return to the kingdom with her. Then Śikhidvaja rules as king for ten thousand years.

It is interesting to note that, in this story, in order for her teachings to be heard, Cūḍālā has to change into a man. Furthermore, in order to become a lover, Cūḍālā has to change genders again. Wendy Doniger has noted these gender transfers as well:

> This extraordinary openness to gender bending in ancient India may be an indirect benefit of the rigid social order: Since other social categories are taken for granted, the text can use them as a springboard for gender role-playing. But the roles, when we look closer, revert to the rigid categories in the end. Chudala has to become a man to teach her husband, and she has to become a woman again to sleep with him. In the Hindu view, Chudala is like a man to begin with, aggressive, resourceful, and wise. Moreover, the relationship between Chudala and the king is never the relationship of a real husband and wife. She is a magician; in other times and places she might have been called a witch. She functions like a Yogini (she can fly) or perhaps even a goddess, giving him her grace and leading him up the garden path of enlightenment, setting up a divine illusion and then revealing herself to him as the gods reveal themselves.[32]

Here Doniger tries to find a paradigm to fit Cūḍālā into, but beyond the illusory surface of gender bending, the enlightened teacher in this story is a human woman who has attained superpowers by virtue of her own resources. Within the context of the discussion that guides this paper, it is fascinating to note that the female guru has to disguise herself as a male in order for her knowledge to be accepted by her male student. If the author of the *Mokṣopāya* were a woman, perhaps she would have posed as a male to be heard as a teacher.

Another passage that may support the hypothesis of female authorship can be found prior to Vasiṣṭha's dialogue with Śiva in *sargas* 6.30-46 of the *Nirvāṇaprakaraṇa*, immediately following the Bhusuṇḍa story. Before the philosophical dialogue between Śiva and Vasiṣṭha begins, Śiva approaches Vasiṣṭha holding the hand of his wife Pārvatī. Vasiṣṭha greets Śiva with the usual ritual of foot bathing, and after the honours have been done and accepted, Pārvatī asks after Vasiṣṭha's wife, Arundhatī. It seems that she wants to have girl talk. The two women exchange their own ritual greetings, and then leave their husbands to chat on their own. This minor episode of only four stanzas (6.33.2-5) suggests the divine nature of mundane feminine interactions, which can be read as a validation of women's interpersonal/social experience. Here we see two goddesses portrayed as average women and, conversely, womanhood elevated to the level of goddesses. And yet, the philosophical conversation takes place among the men. The division between speaking philosophically as a man and speaking relationally as a

32. Wendy Doniger, *The Hindus: An Alternative History* (New York: Penguin, 2009), 521.

woman is once again reinforced.[33] But we do not need to take this distinction literally. It is not that only men are philosophers and only women have relationships. Rather, as we have seen through Cūḍālā's example, in this tradition, any one individual is free to take on any gender role at any time for an intended purpose.[34] Thus I wonder, could the author of the *Mokṣopāya* have been a woman?

Do the Social Conditions Within Which our Author Existed Support Such a Possibility?

Here, the question becomes: Is it historically possible that in tenth century Kashmir the author of the *Mokṣopāya* could have been a woman? In other words, what was happening in Kashmir during the time our anonymous author was active? In its early history, Kashmir was a secluded, remote land in the valley of the Vitastā (Jhelum) river, surrounded by mountains that made access to the valley difficult. The inaccessibility of the region served to preserve its ancient culture, and allowed for unique social, economic and religious structures to develop.[35] Kashmir was open to the west rather than the Hindu south, and so it is not surprising that there is little evidence of Hindu activity in the region prior to the end of the Kidarite period in the fifth century CE.[36] The earliest material evidence of pre-Islamic religion

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33. I am grateful to Kashi Gomez for helping me think about these questions via Skype conversation (April, 2019).

34. Gender fluid identities are a common trope in South Asian mythological literature. For example, see: Wendy Doniger, *Women, Androgynes, and Other Mythical Beasts* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980); Robert P. Goldman, "Transsexualism, Gender, and Anxiety in Traditional India," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 113, no. 3 (July 1993): 374-401; Devdutt Pattanaik, ed., *The Man Who Was a Woman and Other Queer Tales of Hindu Lore,* Haworth Gay & Lesbian Studies (New York: Harrington Park Press, 2002); Geeta Patel, "Home, Homo, Hybrid: Translating Gender," *College Literature* 24, no. 1 (2007): 133-150; Gayatri Reddy, *With Respect to Sex: Negotiating Hijra Identity in South India* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2005); Adnan Hossain, "Beyond Emasculation: Being Muslim and Becoming Hijra in South Asia," *Asian Studies Review* 36, no. 4 (2012): 495-513.

35. Devika Rangachari, *Invisible Women, Visible Histories: Gender, Society, and Polity in North India, Seventh to Twelfth Century AD* (New Delhi: Manohar Publishers & Distributors, 2009), 48.

36. Alexis Sanderson, "Kashmir," in *Brill's Encyclopedia of Hinduism, Volume One: Regions, Pilgrimage, Deities,* ed. Knut A. Jacobsen, Helene Basu, Angelika Malinar, and Vasudha Narayanan (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 100-101.

in Kashmir is Buddhist, and Kashmir was religiously syncretistic prior to the arrival of Islam.[37] Archaeological evidence shows the existence of Buddhist, Vaiṣṇava, Śaiva and Smārta traditions.[38] The second half of the first millennium was a very prolific time for Sanskrit literary production in Kashmir, and works produced during this time cover a wide range of topics, including religious mythology, grammar, literary theory, court poetry, drama, philosophy and tantra.[39]

Political life in first millennium Kashmir readily deviated from the rigid gender proscriptions of the normative Hindu social and political values found in the south. While brahmanical literature expresses blatant hostility toward the idea of female rulership, female agency and power were accepted in medieval Kashmir.[40] Kalhaṇa's *Rājataraṅginī* (ca. 1149 CE) reports that Kashmir had three female rulers by Kalhaṇa's time: Yaśovatī (n.d.) who ruled in the distant mythical Gonanda dynasty, Sugandhā (904-906 CE) of the Utpala dynasty, and Diddā (980/1-1003CE) of the Yaśaskara dynasty. In addition to these three rulers, Kalhaṇa reports that connections to women and their families inspired four out of the six dynastic shifts in Kashmir, in direct contradistinction to the rules for royal succession laid out in the *Mahābhārata*, the *Arthaśāstra,* and the *Dharmaśāstras* of Manu, Nārada, and Yajñavalkya.[41] Frequently, lovers, low caste individuals, women, minor relatives, and so on ascended to the throne through marriage and scheming, and dynasties were created and destroyed by the power of female agency.[42]

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37. Sanderson, "Kashmir," 101-104.

38. Sanderson, "Kashmir," 104.

39. John Nemec suggests that this productivity was due to royal patronage, the relative safety from external military threat due to territorial seclusion, cosmopolitanism brought about by merchants and scholars traveling to and from the valley, trade prosperity derived from proximity to the Silk Road trade route along with agricultural self-sufficiency, open-minded humanistic thinking, sectarian cross-pollination from religious syncretism, and inspiration from the incredible beauty of the land itself (Nemec, "Innovation and Social Change in the Vale of Kashmir, circa 900-1250 CE," in *Śaivism and the Tantric Traditions: Proceedings from A Symposium in Honour of Alexis G. Sanderson*, ed. Dominic Goodall and Shaman Hatley [Brill, Forthcoming], 4-5).

40. As seen in evidence provided by the *Dharmaśāstra* and the *Mahābhārata*. See Rangachari, *Invisible Women*, 84.

41. Rangachari, *Invisible Women*, 92.

42. Rangachari, *Invisible Women*, 93.

The *Kuṭṭanimatam*, dated to the eighth century CE, describes courtesans being invited to attend coronation ceremonies and royal anniversaries, indicating that transgressions and social reversals were commonplace in medieval Kashmir around the time that our anonymous author was active.[43] Rangachari suggests that "the prominence accorded to the [goddess] in the legends of origin seems to be a precedent for, and reflection of, the gender relations in early Kashmir, and seems to set the tone for the acceptance of women rulers."[44] The *Nīlamatapurāṇa*, dated sometime between the seventh and eight centuries, tells that the land of Kashmir is a manifestation of the goddess Pārvatī. This means that the ruler of the land was deemed to be a form of Śiva, the lord of Pārvatī[45] – in other words, no matter what the embodied sex of the sovereign ruler may be, s/he is always Śiva, at least partially.[46] Moreover, as the land and its rivers were known to be manifestations of different goddesses, Rangachari suggests this might "imply the superiority of females over males and, by extension, the possibility of reversing traditional gender equations in actual life."[47] However, it is important to note that the deification of land and rivers as feminine goddesses is actually common in all of India.[48]

Walter Slaje (1996) has speculated that the MU could evidence an oral tradition based on the teachings of an unknown master – teachings which were never formalized and then died out.[49] I ask, why could this master not have been a woman? In today's spiritual landscape, there are many female Hindu and Buddhist spiritual masters whose authority is well accepted. It is unlikely that this acceptance of female power is an exclusively modern phenomenon. Tantric traditions developed and thrived in the

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43. Rangachari, *Invisible Women*, 84, 98-99; As Ray notes in *Early History,* this is also indicated in Kṣemendra's *Deśopadeśa*, *Narmamālā,* and *Samayamātṛkā* (116).

44. Rangachari, *Invisible Women*, 85.

45. Rangachari, *Invisible Women*, 85-86; Sanderson, "Kashmir," 111.

46. An interesting corroboration of this idea comes from the fact that two historical queens, Sugandhā and Diddā, were referred to in inscriptions and coins with the masculine deva rather than the feminine devī (Rangachari, *Invisible Women*, 128, 92).

47. Rangachari, *Invisible Women*, 85 and 117.

48. While India itself is identified as the goddess Bhārat Mātā (Mother India), the land is Bhū Devī, and every river is its own feminine deity. Rivers as a whole are understood to be the manifestation of the one Gaṅgā.

49. Bruno Lo Turco, "Towards a Chronology of the Yogavāsiṣṭha/Mokṣopāya," *Annali* 62 (2002): 44.

isolated syncretic environment of medieval Kashmir, and these traditions consistently advocated for the transgression of brahmanical boundaries of caste and gender purity. For instance, the "post-scriptural" exegetical tradition of Kashmir Śaivism that came to be known as the *Pratyabhijñā* School was in its early stages of development when the *Mokṣopāya* was composed. The first two philosophers of this well-known and influential School of tantric Śaivism – Somānanda (ca. 900-950 CE) and Utpaladeva (ca. 925-975 CE) – were active at the time of the composition of the MU. John Nemec has argued that these authors intentionally sought to create a new tradition, one that both accepted and transgressed Vedic orthodoxy by relying on texts composed by human authors who gained authority by having attained a state of divine gnosis.[50]

The *Pratyabhijñā* is also a śākta or goddess tradition in which all women are seen as manifestations of the supreme feminine power known as Śākti. Madhu Khanna notes that in the later southern *Tripurāsundarī* tradition, which draws on *Pratyabhijñā* philosophy, all women are worshipped as Śakti, and are therefore ideally treated with deference and respect, regardless of caste, age, status, education or ability.[51] Existing evidence therefore shows that women in śākta traditions held key roles as gurus,[52] initiates, and respected members and leaders of spiritual communities.[53] Further evidence shows that women in medieval Kashmir had legal rights and were educated.[54] In addition, tantric revelation in the Śaiva and Śākta

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50. Nemec, "Innovation and Social Change."

51. Madhu Khanna, "The Goddess-Women Equation in Śākta Tantras," in *Faces of the Feminine in Ancient, Medieval, and Modern India*, ed. Mandakranta Bose (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 114.

52. Sanderson identifies some female Krama gurus and disciples in his comprehensive essay called "The Śaiva Exegesis," in *Mélanges tantriques à la mémoire d'Hélène Brunner*, ed. Dominic Goodall and André Padoux, (Pondicherry: Institut français d'indologie/École française d'Extrême-Orient, 2007), 263, 265, 275, 277, and 295. I am grateful to the anonymous reviewer of this essay for suggesting this reference.

53. Khanna, "The Goddess-Women Equation," 120.

54. Ray, *Early History*, 114-118. Evidence shows that women in Kashmir likely had property rights and independent legal status; for example, Dāmodaragupta's *Kuṭṭanimata* shows that women were broadly educated with a liberal education in "the sexual sciences of Vātsyāyana, Dattaka, Viṭaputra and Rājaputra, the *Nāṭyaśāstra* of Bharata, Viśākhila's treatise on art, Dantila's work on music, *vṛkṣāyurveda*, painting, needlework, woodwork, metal work, clay modelling, cookery, and practical training in instrumental music, singing and dancing" (Ray, *Early*

traditions is typically narrated from the mouth of the goddess herself, or by Śiva after having been prompted by a question asked by the goddess who is the *yonīmukha* (the source of knowledge).[55] Likewise, Buddhist tantra – which also emerged in the syncretic religious landscape of medieval Kashmir – notably has women present as initiates and enlightened teachers. Accordingly, within Buddhist tantra spiritual authority is derived from one's state of spiritual attainment rather then one's gender identification.[56] As this collection of evidence establishes, religious traditions in tenth century Kashmir clearly accepted female power and agency on social, religious and political levels. Hence, I suggest that the author of the MU could have been a woman.

The Female Devotional Voice

The most well-known model for female authorship in Medieval North India is that of the wandering female bhakti poet saint. This model of female authorship is the most widely known and accepted by modern Indological scholars.[57] This "female devotional voice"[58] arose out of the phenomenon

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History, 114-118). Biḷhaṇa's *Vikramāṅkadevacarita* (ca. 1080 CE) also tells us that some women were fluent in both Sanskrit and Prākṛt; Ray speculates that women in the royal family must have had administrative training to explain the success of female rulers and other documented diplomatic efforts by women.

55. Khanna, "The Goddess-Women Equation," 120.

56. Miranda Shaw notes that the "social marginality and loose organization of the Tantric movement in medieval India enabled women to participate freely in the revelation process. In the absence of formal barriers to their participation, women had the same access to visionary experience and religious authority as men. Women gained religious experience through their practice of meditation and subtle yogas, and they wielded authority on the basis of that experience rather than through ordination or clerical office. As a result of their unrestricted participation, women helped to create Tantric Buddhism, handing down doctrines, rituals, meditations, and yogic practices that remain prominent in the contemporary practice of Nepalese and Tibetan Buddhism" (Shaw, *Passionate Enlightenment*, 102).

57. Scholarship that focuses on other models of female authorship are relatively new. For examples of this type of work, see the essays published in *Cracow Indological Studies* 20, no.2 (2018). I am grateful to Kashi Gomez for directing me to these essays in a Skype conversation (April, 2019). See also Ke Lalita and Susie J. Tharu, eds., *Women Writing in India: 600 B.C. to the Present* (New York: Feminist Press at the City University of New York: Talman Co, 1991).

58. This is the term used by Kumkum Sangari, "Mirabai and the Spiritual Economy of Bhakti Part I," *Economic and Political Weekly* 25, no. 27 (1990): 1464-1475; Sangari, "Mirabai and

of the wandering female bhakti poet saint, which developed in the mid-first millennium CE in south India. Bhakti itself was not foreign to the brahmanical tradition by that time, however, this was a new model of female devotion free from social constraint, one that combined love for god with a yearning for the kind of personal love first expressed in Tamil Akam poetry. This combination created a new language of desire, one directed toward god yet framed as personal love. These female poet saints abandoned social life and transgressed the restrictive norms of caste and family duty in search of god as their divine beloved husband or lord, reciting devotional oral poetry as they went. By the late medieval period, south Indian bhakti poetry reached north India, merging with more traditional types of bhakti to create both dualistic (*saguṇa*) and nondualistic (*nirguṇa*) traditions, and become a genre of devotional poetic expression that could be taken up by either male or female poet saints.

In an essay entitled "Mirabai and the Spiritual Economy of Bhakti," Kumkum Sangari calls this shared genre of representation "the female devotional voice," because, regardless of the gender identification of the poet, it involves adopting a woman's social position in relationship to the divine. The female devotional voice thus describes a relationship between god and the devotee modeled on *strīsvabhāva,* the nature of women, and *strīdharma,* women's duty in marriage and society. Sangari notes that *strībhāva* and *strīdharma* are subaltern positions within the wider patriarchal brahmanical social order, in which women are equated with the lowest subaltern caste and have no rights. While it appears on the surface that the position of a female wandering bhakti poet allows a woman to have uncontrolled desire outside of a marital relationship, it is important to note that she only has this freedom because she is focused on a benevolent and compassionate god who will not take advantage of her weakness outside of the home.[59] While at first glance this devotional voice appears to provide women with an outlet for desire beyond a marital relationship – and therefore offer an escape from the restrictive bond of married life – in fact, it is merely that the *strīdharma* and *pativrata* (the vow to a husband) have been turned inward. In other words, the external sacrifice to husband and family becomes an internal

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the Spiritual Economy of Bhakti Part II," *Economic and Political Weekly* 25, no. 28 (1990): 1537-1552.

59. Sangari, "Mirabai," 1471.

sacrifice to god and devotion.[60] This is exemplified in the figure of Mirabai, who validates the inequality of the patriarchal structure and reinforces the subalterneity of the female subject even as she seems to challenge, escape or ignore limiting patriarchal bonds and institutions.[61] Put differently, the genre of the female devotional voice continues to restrict women to a lower social position in relation to a dominant lord. As Sangari notes, "when a male bhakta uses the female voice, e.g., Kabir, it is only one voice among other available voices – while a woman must sing as a woman."[62] Thus, while "the female voice offers men the possibility of either renouncing or remaking some aspects of their maleness, it does not necessarily offer women escape from their 'femaleness' or from their own bodies and selves as it were."[63]

Sangari's analysis does not acknowledge the possible subject position of a woman who chooses not to sing in the feminine devotional voice as defined above, nor does it acknowledge the possibility that such a women could have adopted a voice that produced something worthy of lasting historical recognition. I suggest that we consider the possibility of an analogous category, that of the "male śāstric voice." Like Sangari's "female devotional voice," the "male śāstric voice" I am imagining would be gender transferrable. While the female devotional voice may be the only voice that historians have thus far been willing to recognize, if we follow the lead of feminist history and Gender Studies scholarship and look past the focus on upper caste Sanskrit brahmanical texts – and, accordingly, past the brahmanical assumption of male dominance in historical authorship – other interpretive avenues open. Perhaps if the author of the MU were female, she would have adopted the male śāstric voice as a genre of expression, because that is what best suits the content and form of her literary message. It makes no sense to imagine that only a man has a choice – to sing as a woman or to compose as a man when it suits his expressive purpose – while a woman has only one choice, and therefore only one imagined expressive purpose, which is to sing as a woman in devotion to her male lord. Sangari notes that Mirabai's bhakti "negotiates the webbed terrain of oral traditions and overlapping patriarchies, but neither finds nor creates an unsullied space.

60. Sangari, "Mirabai," 1464.
61. Sangari, "Mirabai," 1464.
62. Sangari, "Mirabai," 1539.
63. Sangari, "Mirabai," 1540.

Her bhakti is internally poised to lose the ground it sets out to gain. For us Mira represents a struggle, not a victory."[64]

But the author of the *Mokṣopāya* was not like Mira. Our author did nothing but find and create new and unsullied space. The *Mokṣopāya* breaks new ground in every way. Certainly, a brilliant and spiritually advanced female-sage could have knowingly and intentionally composed a text that broke new philosophical ground while adopting a "male" śāstric authorial voice to do so. Sangari notes that "the combination of the sociality of the female voice, with the signature, whether male or female, implies a personal subject knowingly immersed in an oral collectivity who does not choose to do more than leave a small mark of his/her repetition and innovation on existing expressive modes."[65] In other words, the female devotional voice is not set out for innovation. The female devotional voice seeks to blend in to the tradition, to be meek in front of the divine, and it therefore reinforces patriarchal norms that subjugate women's sexuality to the marital bond. But once again, that is not our author. I argue that this is not the model of authorship the author of the *Mokṣopāya* followed, if she were a woman. Just because the MU is not composed in the female devotional voice of wandering bhakti poet saints – the only female authorial voice recognized by historical scholarship informed by brahmanical patriarchy – does not mean that the author of the *Mokṣopāya* was a male. Let us imagine that powerful women existed beyond the limits of female agency encoded in the textual record of the brahmanical patriarchy, and that such a woman intentionally created a text that also declares itself to be beyond all boundaries.

Conclusion

Who has a voice in Hindu literature? By virtue of their control over authorship in traditional texts, the brahmanical patriarchy has historically sought to control definitions of womanhood while women have been made historically silent.[66] Traditional texts written by men have had the power to define gender norms and to depict women from that vantage point, and

64. Sangari, "Mirabai," 1551.

65. Sangari, "Mirabai," 1550.

66. Eira Patnaik, "Self Image of Indian Women in Ancient and Medieval Literature," *South Asian Review* 17, no. 14 (1993): 55.

history has accepted this as a true depiction of historical reality. Manu, for example, "allots to women a love of bed, seat, ornament, impure desires, wrath, dishonesty, malice and other vices equally reprehensible," and, according to the Ṛgveda, woman is a seductress.[67] However, as Eira Patnaik notes, whether a woman was framed as a goddess or a demon, it was still a male voice that did the framing.[68] So, if a woman were to depict another woman without using the female devotional voice of the bhakti poet saint, without claiming authorship, without adopting female stereotypes created by a patriarchal system that denies her power and agency, we would not know it because our historical categories do not enable such a possibility. This discussion is important, because this scenario is typically not deemed likely or even possible; not because there is evidence to rule it out, but because assumptions and pre-existing expectations guide us to.

Griselda Pollock has rightly noted that there is nothing inherent to femininity that bars women from producing powerful intellectual work.[69] Feminist critical theory asks us to consider not only who has the power to write history, but also by what means and methods it is written.[70] It is not logical to believe that women have merely been passive recipients of philosophical and religious traditions that have denigrated them for thousands of years. But we do not know what a medieval woman's authorship would look like beyond the female devotional voice because we assume it does not exist. However, it is likely that stories have been written by unrecognized women throughout history. How much significant philosophical wisdom has been wrongly attributed to male authorship? Such concerns suggest that we should not be afraid to approach ancient or medieval Indic texts through a feminist lens – there is much to gain and little to loose. For this reason, I argue that we entertain the idea that the author of the *Mokṣopāya* could have been a woman.

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67. Patnaik, "Self Image," 55.

68. Patnaik, "Self Image," 55.

69. Griselda Pollock, *Vision and Difference: Feminism, Femininity and the Histories of Art* (London: Routledge, 2008).

70. For examples of this kind of feminist historical recovery, see Griselda Pollock, *Vision and Difference,* and Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her: A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origins* (New York: Crossroad, 1984).

A Comparative Study of Augustine's *De Trinitate* and Ghazāli's *Kitāb al-maḥabba* on Human Knowledge of and Love for God

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Within the framework of the Islamic and Christian traditions, the "grammar of divinity"[1] at once seeks to affirm intimate relation with a personal God and secure the ontological distinction between Creator and created. Any attempt to construct an account of the human-divine relationship thereby intersects with reflection on divine transcendence and immanence: given that God cannot be rendered another category among worldly categories, how does one formulate the human path of proximity to the divine? In this paper, I examine this paradox of human relationality to the divine as it is elaborated in Augustine's *De Trinitate* (On the Trinity) and al-Ghāzali's *Kitāb al-maḥabba wa'l shawq wa'l uns wa'l riḍā* (Love, Longing, Intimacy and Contentment, Book 36 of Ghazāli's *Iḥyā' 'ulūm al-dīn,* Revival of the Religious Sciences).

By tracing the different ways that these texts render the perfection of self-knowledge and self-love as the knowledge of, and love for, God, I hope to demonstrate that for both Augustine and Ghazāli, the knowledge of God emerges as a dynamic mode of loving,[2] such that the fulfilment of human life lies not in the abolition of desire but in the rightful orienting, through a process of spiritual purification, of that desire to God.[3] Both texts seek to

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1. David B. Burrell, *Knowing the Unknowable God: Ibn-Sina, Maimonides*, *Aquinas* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1986), 2.

2. In outlining a necessary connection between knowledge of, and love for, God, Ghazāli and Augustine present a corrective to the Neoplatonic (and Avicennian) model of a purely intellectualised ascent to God. Moreover, Ghazāli's reflection on the intimate, personal love of God for humanity is in direct contention with Avicenna's notion that God can only apprehend particulars in a "universal" way.

3. Indeed, in his fourth homily on the First Epistle of John, Augustine asserts that the "entire life of a good Christian is a holy desire" (Augustine of Hippo, *Homilies on the First Epistle of John*, trans. Boniface Ramsey [Hyde Park, NY: New City Press, 2008], 69). The language of

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clarify the truthful mode of human love for God: that is always a *conscious* movement of desire, in fulfilment of that end for which human beings were created. This human yearning, in both texts, rests on a particular relation with God's own love – a love that cannot imply any change in God but is that which undergirds, and is the prior condition *for*, humanity's love for God. Through the vocabulary of love as it pertains to the creature and God, Ghazāli and Augustine invite the reader to an inner understanding of what it is to live harmoniously in orientation towards the "One who truly is."[4]

1. Context

1.1 Augustine: The Trinity as Relational Framework for Human Knowing and Loving

Completed some time after 420 CE, Augustine's *De Trinitate* does not appear to have been written for any polemical purpose. Augustine's primary aim in this work is not to offer a systematic exposition of how to reconcile three and one, nor even to present a final trinity in the human mind that can accurately serve as an analogy for the divine Trinity (though there is considerable reflection on mental triads in Books IX-XI).[5] Rather, Augustine's purpose in reflecting on the various lexical conventions that

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desire features pre-eminently in Augustine's *Confessions*: "You have drawn me out of all my most evil ways, that You might become a delight to me above all the allurements which I once pursued; that I may most entirely love You, and clasp Your hand with all my affections" (Saint Augustine, *Confessions,* 1, 15, trans. E.B. Pusey, ed. Tom Griffith [Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Editions Limited, 2016], 15. All following quotations from the *Confessions* will be taken from this translation). Ghazāli also articulates his yearning: "though love afflict me, yet it is not grievous, for death to self means life in Thee, my lover, to suffer thirst, if that shall by thy pleasure, to me, is sweeter far than all refreshment" (quoted in Margaret Smith, *Al-Ghazāli: the Mystic* [London: Luzac & Co.], 84). Both Augustine's *De Trinitate* and Ghazāli's *Kitāb al-maḥabba* employ the language of longing for the "face" of God, or to "gaze" upon the divine Beloved, and the pleasure/delight thereof.

4. Saint Augustine, *De Ordine,* 2, 2, 6, quoted in Emilie Z. Brunn, *St. Augustine: Being and Nothingness* (New York: Paragon House Publishers, 1988), 101.

5. As Rowan Williams states, "Augustine is no less concerned than any Greek theologian to secure the unity and simplicity of the divine nature, but as a *polemical* concern, this appears very rarely in the *De Trinitate.* There is certainly no trace at all of a Neoplatonist interest in the One at work here" (see Rowan Williams, *On Augustine* [London: Bloomsbury Continuum, 2016], 186).

are implied in Trinitarian discourse is to show how the divine tri-unity intelligibly shapes and orients our turning towards God in faith, and what it means to "receive" the activities of the three persons concretely and consciously in an active mode of participation.

What *is* central for Augustine, as regards the coherence of the Trinitarian doctrine, is that the divine substance cannot conceivably be separated from "the life of the divine persons…[thus defining] that substance in such a way that God cannot be other than relational/Trinitarian."[6] In other words, the divine essence is neither "an abstract principle of unity, nor a 'causal' factor over and above the hypostases,"[7] rather to *be* God at all is "to be desirous of and active in giving the divine life."[8] This fact of the inseparability of divinity from the relationality of the triune life, holds primacy for Augustine not as a piece of abstract metaphysical theology but rather as a pointer to the character of human relationality with the divine, who is relationality in and of His very essence. Principally, Augustine correlates the Word with knowledge and the Spirit with love (*caritas*) – and if both are "inseparable in the unity of the Trinity, so…must knowledge be inseparable from [the] love of God."[9] In other words, the inseparability of knowledge and love within the Godhead offers a paradigm for the unitive nature of human knowledge: "who will say there is any wisdom when there is no love?"[10]

1.2 Ghazāli's *Iḥyā' 'ulūm al-dīn*: A Spiritual Path Informed by Love

Just as Augustine takes love to be constitutive of wisdom properly understood, Ghazāli's *Iḥyā' 'ulūm al-dīn* attacks the purveyors of the formal Islamic disciplines[11] whose scholarship, in his view, is driven by the ego

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6. Williams, *On Augustine*, 180. For this reason, the image too must necessarily be triune, in light of Genesis 1:26: "Let us make man in *our* image, in *our* likeness" (emphasis added).

7. Williams, *On Augustine*, 180.

8. Williams, *On Augustine*, 180.

9. A. N Williams, "Contemplation," in *Knowing the Triune God: The Work of the Spirit in the Practices of the Church,* ed. James J. Buckley and David S. Yeago (Michigan & Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2001), 126.

10. Augustine, *De Trinitate,* XV. 12, trans. Edmund Hill (New York: New City Press, 1991). All following quotations from the *De Trinitate* will be taken from this translation.

11. In this regard, Ghazāli's *Iḥyā'* appears to be polemical in a way that the *De Trinitate* is not:

rather than the heart. Setting forth a "revivified" image of Islamic practice, Ghazāli emphasises the inward sincerity that must animate the proper observance of external rituals (such as prayer and charity) – the exoteric forming a "polish" to reconfigure the intention of the heart.

One can situate Ghazāli's concern in the *Iḥyā'* within his epistemological "crisis": in his autobiography, *Munqidh min al-ḍalāl* (The Deliverer from Error), Ghazāli describes his doubts in the deliverances of his own mind, which might be mistaken (and thus subject to a higher authority of "knowing"), just as sense perception is often mistaken in its encounter with external reality. Ghazāli states that he was cured "not by systematic reasoning…but by a light which God the exalted cast into [his] chest."[12] That it is only through God's "casting" of light that Ghazāli overcame his scepticism points forward to a theme that is central to both authors: the human search for truth is grounded in God's grace. For Ghazāli, the encounter with this divine "light" shaped his conviction that the mystics alone could cultivate proximity to God – precisely because the spiritual path demanded a whole-hearted, experiential seeking of the divine: a path of knowing, in other words, shaped by love. Ghazāli's text sets out the path by which that love might take root in the human soul.

2. The Relationship of the Self to Knowing and Loving God

2.1 Augustine: Truthful Self-Knowledge and Self-Love as Knowledge and Love of God

Augustine's notion of the human as oriented towards the divine begins to crystallise in Book VIII, laying the foundation for his account of relationality. Where the first seven books analyse the Trinitarian mystery through scripture and conceptual clarification, in Book VIII, Augustine declares his intention to examine the same territory *modo interiore* (though

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he writes against those who subvert the character of true religion in pursuit of worldly status and prestige, and is in this sense in dialogue with his own former self. He states in his autobiography, "we sought learning for the sake of something other than God, but He would not allow it to be for anything but Himself" (quoted in Joseph Politella, "Al Ghazāli and Meister Eckhart: Two Giants of the Spirit," *The Muslim World* 54, No. 4 [1964]: 243).

12. Abu Hamid al-Ghazāli, *Munqidh min al-ḍalāl*, quoted in Alexander Treiger, *Inspired Knowledge in Islamic Thought: Al-Ghazāli's Theory of Mystical Cognition and its Avicennian Foundation* (London & New York: Routledge, 2012), 20.

never in such as a way as to set scripture aside),[13] grounding the utterances of faith in the human experience of its own interior life. Augustine begins with a reflection on the character of the ordinary beliefs we hold in faith, and how they all, if they are to be intelligible, demand prior categories of knowledge – i.e., one can believe that Jesus was born of a virgin and died on the cross precisely because one has some knowledge of what men/virgins/crosses are and what birth and death signify. Yet, when we turn toward the Trinity, there are no prior conceptual categories to which we can refer, leading to the pivot of Augustine's epistemology: how can one love what one does not know?

If Augustine is committed to asserting that the created self is only truly itself in communion with the triune life, then the knowledge of God must be somehow, even if dimly, accessible to the human being – for it is only in knowing that we can love. Augustine thus frames his search: "what we are asking…is from what likeness or comparison of things known to us we are able to believe, so that we may love the as yet unknown God."[14] Citing the example of our love for the apostle Paul, Augustine affirms that the reason we are able to love his just soul, even if we are not just ourselves, is because justice is present to the soul: not as an abstraction from matter or as a "body reality,"[15] for "it is in ourselves that we have learnt what 'just' is."[16] One need not recall past sensory images or imaginatively construct new ones; justice is simply the "'interior truth' (*veritas interior*) that is a *forma* present to the mind."[17] This unmediated presence alone can account for why the unjust man wishes to be just.

It remains, then, to demonstrate how this innate orientation towards justice is, properly speaking, an innate orientation towards God. When an unjust soul recognises and loves justice in another, "the pattern [one] perceives is [precisely that which one seeks] to realise in [oneself]."[18] If justice itself is loving, since it by nature wills the "good of all,"[19] what our

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13. Augustine, *De Trinitate*, VIII. 1.
14. Augustine, *De Trinitate,* VIII. 8.
15. Augustine, *De Trinitate*, VIII. 9.
16. Augustine, *De Trinitate*, VIII. 9.
17. Lewis Ayres, *Augustine and the Trinity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 282.
18. Williams, *On Augustine*, 159.
19. Williams, *On Augustine*, 160.

moral yearning longs for "is love itself, in that it is directed to persons who are loving…[and] to love loving generosity as the goal and standard of our humanity is to love it as the good, which is to love it as God."[20] Augustine concludes (alluding to 1 John 4:16), "if a man is full of love, what is he full of but God?"[21] Similarly, when we who are not just ourselves love the just man, what we love (even if unconsciously) is the unchanging Good in which all finite goods varyingly participate – the Good "in which we love and move and are."[22]

For Augustine, therefore, inasmuch as the mind moves towards what is finitely good, there is a natural orientation to what is absolutely and unchangingly Good. The central concern, however, for Augustine, is how we step beyond this innate – and possibly unconscious – participation in the Good that is God towards a conscious, integrative movement of *desire*: and it is this task of entering into conscious relation with the ever-present ground of our being that animates the subsequent unfolding of the *De Trinitate.* Though – for Augustine – the human is (ontologically) good on its own, its nature is only fulfilled when it may be called a *good* soul. This happens when the will consciously participates in the triune life, such that "the good the soul turns to [in love] in order to be good is the good from which it gets its being soul at all."[23]

Having identified the fulfilment of the human relation to God as an active, conscious mode of knowing and loving, Augustine settles on the triad of the mind remembering, understanding, and willing itself as the mental activities that most intimately reflect the triune life of God.[24] The pattern of human understanding is framed in terms of an inner "word" prior to the spoken word. In the process of conceiving something in the mind, one produces a mental word that is "either for sinning or for doing good,"[25] either

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20. Williams, *On Augustine*, 161.

21. Augustine, *De Trinitate,* VIII. 12.

22. Acts 17:28.

23. Augustine, *De Trinitate*, VIII. 5.

24. For Augustine, this is because if humanity itself is the image, no part of the triad can be extrinsic to the human being. He thus rejects the faculty of sight as the image in humanity - the triad of sight, the object seen and the will that unites the two relies on an external other (namely, the object) as one of its constituents.

25. Augustine, *De Trinitate*, IX. 13.

in "covetousness"[26] or in "charity."[27] If the generated word is uttered in love for material objects, its satisfaction[28] is contingent on something outside the mind and thus restless until this something is grasped. However, for the one who loves spiritual truths, there is a certain "fullness" or "resting" insofar as the birth of the word is equivalent to its conception, such that "someone who perfectly loves justice is…already just even if no occasion exists for him to do justice externally."[29] The concept of inner "words" means that although the mind is, in some sense, always remembering, understanding and willing itself,[30] this trinity is only truly actualised when an inner word is generated by active thought and is held in being by the will that unites the memory to that word. In short, the mind cannot be understood as an abstract entity independent of its desiring; it images the Trinity only as it is oriented towards the eternal good.

This becomes especially significant by Book XIV, where Augustine recasts his image of the mind's remembering, understanding and loving itself to its remembering, understanding and loving God: "this trinity of the mind is not really the image of God because the mind remembers and understands and loves itself, but because it is able to remember and understand and love him by whom it was made. And when it does this it becomes wise. If it does not do it, *then even though it remembers, understands and loves itself, it is foolish*."[31] Although the elaboration on justice in Book VIII indicates that the human being is always in some sense knowing and loving God insofar as one moves toward the good, if a mental "word" cannot be generated without active thought, only when the "word" or object of human thought is

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26. Augustine, *De Trinitate*, IX. 13.

27. Augustine, *De Trinitate*, IX. 13.

28. Augustine asserts, however, that satisfaction of selfish desires can never bring fulfilment in the truest sense, for the one who acts against God necessarily acts against the self: anyone who "loves himself unjustly [i.e. acts against love]…no longer really loves himself; for 'the man who loves iniquity hates his own soul (Ps 11:5)'" (*De Trinitate,* VIII. 9). Ghazāli too affirms that if a man loves himself, i.e. his own desires, but does not love God, "it is due to his ignorance *both* of himself and of his Lord" (Abu Hamid al-Ghazāli, *Kitāb al-maḥabba wa'l shawq wa'l uns wa'l riḍā*, trans. Eric Ormsby [Cambridge: Islamic Texts Society, 2011], 24, emphasis added). All following quotations from the *Kitāb al-maḥabba* will be taken from this translation.

29. Augustine, *De Trinitate*, IX. 14.

30. Much like a man trained in multiple disciplines can be said to remember, understand and love them all even when he is only engaged in the active thought of one.

31. Augustine, *De Trinitate*, XIV. 15, emphasis added.

God, who is *interior intimo meo* (more inward to me than my most inward part)[32] can one be said to image the triune life and thus be *with* God truly: "it is man's great misfortune not to be with him without whom he cannot be. Obviously he is not without him in whom he is [God's presence to each creature is the very possibility of its existence]; and yet if he fails to remember and understand and love him, he is not with him."[33]

2.2 Ghazāli: God Alone Merits Love

In the *Kitāb al-maḥabba,* Ghazāli employs a rather different technique to present the fulfilment of the human being as a conscious knowing and loving of God. Ghazāli begins his argument by outlining the five causes of love intrinsic to the nature of the human being, which will ultimately converge on God as the true, and most worthy Beloved. The first cause is the "natural inclination of man"[34] to the continuance and perfection of his existence. The second cause of love is the love one has for whoever benefits him (*iḥsan* or benevolence), for this serves the foremost love of one's existence and perfection. Thirdly, one loves the other who is good in himself though "his benefaction does not extend to [one] personally."[35] The fourth cause appears as an extension of the third: there is the love for a thing in virtue of itself, not as a means to an end. Here, Ghazāli cites the "perception of the beautiful,"[36] which occasions pleasure, as that which is quintessentially "loved for itself"[37] (he offers the example of one gazing on flowing waters). The fifth, and final cause of love is a "hidden" or "spiritual" affinity between the lover and beloved.

Ghazāli then turns to demonstrate how these five causes "in their fullest unity and perfection are inconceivable except in the case of God the Exalted."[38] In the first instance, the love one has for one's own existence and perfection is only intelligible as love for the "Self-Subsistent One Himself

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32. Augustine, *Confessions,* 3, 6.
33. Augustine, *De Trinitate*, XIV. 16.
34. Binyamin Abrahamov, *Divine Love in Islamic Mysticism: The Teachings of Al-Ghazālī and Al-Dabbāgh* (London: Routledge Curzon, 2003), 45.
35. Ghazāli, *Kitāb al-maḥabba,* 28.
36. Ghazāli, *Kitāb al-maḥabba,* 16.
37. Ghazāli, *Kitāb al-maḥabba,* 16.
38. Ghazāli, *Kitāb al-maḥabba,* 22.

(*Al-Qayyūm),*"[39] who alone sustains man's existence at every moment of his being, and graciously bestows the perfections of his inner nature: "how can a man love himself and not love his Lord through whom his very subsistence occurs?"[40] On the second cause of love, if one loves another who benefits him, God alone can rightly be said to merit this love in fullness. Ghazāli's Ash'arite cosmology led him to assert that "there is no agent but God the Most High"[41]: although a human agent is moved by considerations of the good, "the real benefactor is He [God]…who gave those driving and impelling motivations power over him so that he might act. *His hand was but the instrument by which God's goodness came to you*."[42] On the third cause of love, the love for another whose goodness does not bring personal benefit, Ghazāli argues that God alone merits this type of love: the divine generosity provides not only what is necessary (internal organs), but extends to what is useful (hands) and beautiful (curve of the eyebrows). This threefold division extends through the depths of the created order, such that God's abundant mercy becomes the very structural fabric of creation itself.

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39. Ghazāli, *Kitāb al-maḥabba,* 24.

40. Ghazāli, *Kitāb al-maḥabba,* 24. For Augustine, the subsistence of one's existence powerfully testifies to the enduring love of God for creation: creatures are only sustained insofar as God imparts existence and life to them, and this "sharing" by which God enables creatures to *have* what he eternally *is,* can only be deemed an act of love.

41. Abu Hamid Al-Ghazāli, *Al Ghazāli on Faith in Divine Unity and Trust in Divine Providence.* Translation of Book 35 of *Iḥyā' 'ulūm al-dīn,* trans. David Burrell (Louisville: Fons Vitae, 2000), 15-16. The Ash'arite school of Islamic theology (*kalām*) affirmed broadly that God alone can be the "creator" of actions, while human beings only "acquire" them at the point of the physical instantiation of the act. This doctrine is known as the theory of acquisition (*kasb*). For more on this, see Neal Robinson, "Ash'ariyya and Mu'tazila," Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy: Islamic Philosophy, accessed on September 2, 2019, http://www.muslimphilosophy.com/ip/rep/H052.

42. Ghazāli, *Kitāb al-maḥabba,* 26, emphasis added. Though a full consideration of Ghazāli's ontology is outside the scope of this paper, it is worth noting that Ghazāli does not deny the "reality" of created existence but affirms that Allah alone possesses being in the true sense. At various points, particularly in his *Mishkāt al-Anwār* (The Niche for Lights), Ghazāli develops the notion that divine existence is "real" (*haqīqi*), while created reality is "figurative" (*majāzi*). To understand God as the sole agent is to see that everything "is in His service, for not even the smallest atom in the worlds of heaven and earth is independent of Him for its movement" (Ghazāli, *On Faith in Divine Unity and Trust in Divine Providence,* 15-16). This is not to negate the existence of the world but is simply to secure the transcendence of God as the only self-subsistent Being, while all else can only be said to exist insofar as it derives from Him.

The fourth cause of love, that for beauty in itself, is elaborated in terms of the beauty of the inward form perceived by the "eye of the heart" (*'ayn al-qalb*) or the "light of insight" (*nūr al-basīra*).[43] The beauty of any external or inward reality is determined by its possession of the perfections "which are possible and befitting"[44] its nature. Just as Augustine sees the just man as naturally beloved to us (based on a recognition of the inward form of goodness), Ghazāli states, "our natures are innately constituted to love the Prophets and Companions, even though they cannot be seen directly with the eyes."[45] In virtue of their beautiful traits, which necessarily prompt love, there is a natural movement of love towards the noble qualities of others: qualities which Ghazāli renders as the knowledge of spiritual matters (God, His angels, His scriptures), performance of virtuous deeds, delivering guidance to others, and refraining from vicious habits.

Again, these perfections in virtue of which we love others can only truly be said of God: God alone possesses knowledge, not just in the sense of knowing quantitatively "more" than human beings, but because the objects of God's knowledge are infinite. (In theory, the knowledge of the most knowing person can be aspired towards and attained by the most ignorant man through his efforts, in a way that cannot be said of the infinite knowledge of God). Though Ghazāli does not employ the language of the unchangeable Good we find in Augustine's work, he nonetheless insists on the radical, ontological difference of God's knowing. On the capacity for virtuous actions and the avoidance of evil, we return to Ghazāli's insistence that God alone bestows these perfections on creatures, and God alone can be said to exemplify these qualities most fully. Thus, the causes of love, for Ghazāli, converge on God in two ways: insofar as we love the perfections/benefits in others, they are bestowed wholly by God (the benefactor moves only through the will of God, so God alone can *truly* be said to act), and because God alone fully possesses those perfections that we love in others (so if we love one who is virtuous, we ought to love God whose virtue surpasses that of any finite being). Concerning the latter, Ghazāli insists that God's possessing of these perfections should not be understood in the same mode of being as creaturely perfections (as in the case of God's

43. Ghazāli, *Kitāb al-maḥabba,* 30.
44. Binyamin Abrahamov, *Divine Love in Islamic Mysticism,* 49.
45. Ghazāli, *Kitāb al-maḥabba,* 19.

infinite knowledge): while the perfection of God is absolute, the perfection of creatures is relative "to what is more defective than it."[46] Thus, "a man possesses perfection in comparison to a horse,"[47] but cannot be said to be unqualifiedly perfect.

Ghazāli's presentation of the five causes of human love and the ways in which God alone is truly deserving of this love might be seen as mechanistically reducing the love for God to a logical extension of the various categories that elicit our love for things of this world. However, not only does Ghazāli refer to the categorical *difference* of the divine perfections, his anthropology points us away from a static understanding of human love for God, and towards a conscious mode of yearning for the divine Beloved in perfection of that relationality for which human beings were made. For Ghazāli, the heart or *qalb,* represents the "subtle tenuous substance, spiritual in nature,"[48] which was created to know and love God. The heart "belongs to the world of the Unseen," enabling "ascent to the invisible, spiritual world for him to whom God has opened the door."[49]

Though the spiritual heart of man is thus created for the love and knowledge of God, this human potentiality is only perfected when one consciously dwells "in fellowship with God [which] is the heart's joy and delight in the contemplation of His Beauty."[50] In Chapter Eleven of the *Kitāb al-maḥabba,* Ghazāli elaborates on the "distinguishing marks"[51] of one's love for God, and this is framed explicitly as a conscious desiring of the divine, a constant search that animates one's life. One mark of man's love, for instance, is that one is constantly engaged in the *dhikr* (remembrance) of God through the utterance of His name,[52] just as Augustine's image is not truly complete until our inner "word" actively settles upon God. Though the

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46. Ghazāli, *Kitāb al-maḥabba,* 35.

47. Ghazāli, *Kitāb al-maḥabba,* 35.

48. Walter James Skellie, "Introduction," in Al-Ghazāli, *Kitāb sharḥ 'ajā'ib al-qalb* (The Marvels of the Heart), trans. Walter James Skellie (Louisville: Fons Vitae, 2010), 16.

49. Ghazāli, *Iḥyā' 'ulūm al-dīn,* Vol. 1, quoted in Politella, "Al Ghazāli and Meister Eckhart," 236.

50. Smith, *Al-Ghazāli: the Mystic*, 139.

51. Ghazāli, *Kitāb al-maḥabba,* 107.

52. "With his tongue he talks to people but his inmost self is absorbed in mention of his beloved" (Ghazāli, *Kitāb al-maḥabba,* 116).

"root" of love's "tree" is firmly planted, its "[fruits] emerge in the heart"[53] only as one actively longs for the divine. Notably, for both thinkers this path of human proximity to the divine is made possible only by the bedrock of God's own love. It is this theme to which our attention now turns.

3. God's Love for Humanity

3.1 Augustine: The Gift of the Spirit

Augustine's analysis of the generation of inner words reveals a Trinitarian dynamic of desire within the human mind. This process of active thought is necessarily preceded by a "prior" love that is neither separate from, nor reducible to, the love that follows – this initial love directs the attentive gaze upon its object. In his *Confessions,* Augustine reflects that just as things are "urged by their own weights to seek their own places,"[54] so too is he directed by his own "weight, which [is] love,"[55] to move ever closer to God. The creature's love of God marks not an ascent of the solitary individual into communion with the loved object, for the divine transcendence precludes His being an object to be "grasped": rather, human desire is "inflamed" by the "gift of God," through which one is "carried upwards, we glow inwardly, and go forwards."[56] The Holy Spirit is the *caritas* that is the agent of our purification and ultimate participation in the triune life – such that "the mind's object is also its means to that object."[57]

For Augustine, this human need for divine *caritas* is a matter of the fundamental created ontology (viz., the transcendence of God)[58] and the sinful nature of the human being (since the soul's congenital debility means it cannot rise on its own in the same way that it fell).[59] Sanctification by the

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53. Ghazāli, *Kitāb al-maḥabba,* 107.

54. Augustine, *Confessions,* 13, 9.

55. Augustine, *Confessions,* 13, 9.

56. Augustine, *Confessions,* 13, 9.

57. A.N Williams, "Contemplation," 139.

58. For John Cavadini, the awareness of the infinite ontological gap between humanity and God, an awareness that is the fruit of contemplation, becomes a coincident recognition of the love of God that bridged this gap in the Word becoming flesh (see John Cavadani, "The Structure and Intention of Augustine's *De Trinitate*," *Augustinian Studies* 23 [1992]: 109).

59. Ghazāli also refers to the weakness of the human creature in its inability to behold the divine light: just as a bat is dazzled by the ever-present light of day, human minds cannot perceive the "radiant" and "effulgent" beauty of God's presence that "immerses and encompasses

Holy Spirit is thus cast as an extension of the same loving movement of God that constitutes the creature's very being. To "know" God is to know oneself as held in being and renewed "by this self-communicating action of God,"[60] whereby God imparts the love that is His very essence in order that creatures might share in existence. The paradox of living as the image of God is that we are drawn to an awareness of our fundamental *difference* from God, such that to "know" and "love" God is to move ever more deeply "into our createdness."[61]

If the existence and renewal of humanity are held in the movement of divine love, one must clarify (as best as is possible) the character of this love so as to secure God's transcendence. This is essential for Augustine, who maintains across his works that God cannot "need" creation for there is no lack in the infinite plenitude of God. God's love for creatures is an entirely free gift that wills the participation of created life in the Good that is the divine life. In Book VIII, Augustine identifies that in the created realm, being "true" and being "great" are not the same thing, whereas in God, "greatness is simply truth itself,"[62] such that God *is* that unchangeable Goodness and Truth in His very essence. Thus, Augustine asserts that one can say "new" things of God, but this does not imply a temporal alteration of the divine essence: the change is on the part of the creature "with respect to which God is said to be."[63]

This is particularly significant in Book V of the *De Trinitate,* where Augustine elaborates on the meaning of God as man's "refuge" (cf. Psalm 90). In keeping with his insistence on the divine immutability, Augustine states: "the change takes place in us; we were worse before we took refuge in him, and we become better by taking refuge in him. But in him [there is] no change at all."[64] When the animating flow of the Spirit purifies our desire such that we might gaze upon God, it is *we* who are reformed in the act of conscious participation in the divine life, while God remains "altogether

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utterly" (Ghazāli, *Kitāb al-maḥabba,* 83).

60. Williams, *On Augustine*, 174.

61. Williams, *On Augustine*, 175.

62. Augustine, *De Trinitate,* VIII. 2.

63. Roland J. Teske, "Divine Immutability in Augustine," in *To Know God and the Soul: Essays on the Thought of Saint Augustine,* ed. Ronald J. Teske (Washington, D.C: The Catholic University of America Press, 2008), 136.

64. Augustine, *De Trinitate,* V. 17.

immutable"[65]: "it is unthinkable that God should love someone temporally, as though with a new love that was not in him before."[66] This is not to deny the divine love but it is simply to clarify the ontological mode of God's loving: indeed, in its very immutability, God's love infinitely surpasses that of the creature, as that which grounds the possibility of all relation per se.

3.2 Ghazāli: God's Lifting of the Veils

Ghazāli's *Kitāb al-maḥabba* also seeks to integrate the divine transcendence with an account of God's personal and intimate love of the creature. In Chapter Nine, Ghazāli cites several texts that point to the reality of God's love – a love that emerges as a deep longing for relation with the human beloved. In one tradition quoted by Ghazāli, God addresses the human being thus: "Hold Me before your eyes and look at Me with the vision of your heart."[67] For Ghazāli, the love of God "refers to [God's] removal of a veil from the heart, so that one sees with his heart, and to God's *enabling* a person to draw near to Him, and to God's willing that for him from eternity."[68] Closeness (*qurb)* to God, for Ghazāli, thus entails both "affective closeness and intimacy" and "the proximity resulting from knowledge and lifting of the veil."[69] This process of renewal (elsewhere framed as a "polishing" of the mirror of the heart) is dependent upon the grace of God, for God alone unveils the "partition from man's heart"[70] so that one might see God reflected therein.

Like Augustine, Ghazāli is concerned with defining the proper ontological modality of this love, lest one should suppose that God is in "need" of creation. If love is "the soul's inclination towards what is fitting,"[71]

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65. Ronald J. Teske, "Properties of God and the Predicaments in *De Trinitate 5*," in *To Know God and the Soul: Essays on the Thought of Saint Augustine,* ed. Ronald J. Teske (Washington, D.C: The Catholic University of America Press, 2008), 100.

66. Augustine, *De Trinitate,* V. 17.

67. Ghazāli, *Kitāb al-maḥabba,* 97.

68. Ghazāli, *Kitāb al-maḥabba,* 102.

69. Fadlou Shehadi, *Ghazāli's Unique Unknowable God* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1964), 30. Love and knowledge thus become "mutually transfiguring" at this stage – as Ormsby states, "love [for God], in the end, is a matter of *passionate* cognition" (see Ormsby's Introduction in his translation of Ghazāli's *Kitāb al-maḥabba,* 32, emphasis added).

70. Abrahamov, *Divine Love in Islamic Mysticism,* 84.

71. Ghazāli, *Kitāb al-maḥabba,* 101.

this can only be conceived in "a deficient soul which lacks whatever is congruent with it."[72] There is no imperfection in God, however, in whom "all beauty…glory, and majesty"[73] are "present, actual and necessarily existent for all eternity."[74] Ghazāli offers an analogy: two people may be close to each other either because of the simultaneous movement of both, or one remains stationary while the other moves. In the case of the latter, "nearness results from alteration within one of them, but without any such alteration on the other's part"[75]: a profound resonance with Augustine's claim that the relational attributes of God reflect a change only on the part of the creature, not the divine essence. In ascribing love to God, "one [must] not anticipate any alteration in God whenever nearness to Him is renewed," as though God "draws near after being far."[76] The path of purification reforms the human subject in orientation to the God who is immutably loving.

Conclusion

Ghazāli's *Kitāb al-maḥabba* and Augustine's *De Trinitate* embody a profound relationality between the human being and God, setting forth the movement of contemplative desire for God as the fulfilment of human life per se. Both Augustine and Ghazāli locate the perfected "image" or "mirror" of the human being as a *conscious* knowing and loving God. Although human beings are oriented towards the divine in their very nature as created beings, it is only when one's yearning is actively directed towards God, that one truly abides in that relationality that undergirds our very being: in Augustine's words, "You made us for Yourself, and our heart is restless until it repose in You."[77] For both thinkers, this pattern of desire that characterises the human being's movement towards God is sustained by the divine grace at each moment: such that "unless and until God meets our longing out of

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72. Ghazāli, *Kitāb al-maḥabba,* 101.
73. Ghazāli, *Kitāb al-maḥabba,* 101.
74. Ghazāli, *Kitāb al-maḥabba,* 101.
75. Ghazāli, *Kitāb al-maḥabba,* 103.
76. Ghazāli, *Kitāb al-maḥabba,* 103.
77. *Confessions,* 1, 1. Ghazāli echoes this theme of the restless character of human love for God: "a lover is someone who is never tranquil except in the presence of his beloved" (*Kitāb al-maḥabba,* 116).

his own love for us,"[78] our desire cannot be purified in contemplation of the divine.

Notably, both Ghazāli and Augustine interpret the final perfection of the human image as a matter of eschatological fulfilment; in Ghazāli's interpretation, this is framed as a final lifting of "the veils" in full, whence "that in which there is some clarity [is] made consummately clear."[79] For Augustine, we make progress now "through a puzzling reflection in a mirror,"[80] but then we shall be "face to face."[81] Crucially, Augustine's understanding of man as in the "image" of God necessarily includes the idea of likeness,[82] because "nothing can be said to be an image of something else unless it is in some way like it."[83] Ghazāli's notion that the knowledge of this world and the next differ only in their clarity[84] means that the eschatological fulfilment of the human being cannot, of necessity, be deemed a categorical "break" from the likeness that unfolds in the present. If the human being is only truly itself when it "gazes" upon the "face" of God, the final perfection of the created image becomes the fulfilment of a likeness already present as divine gift. Ghazāli's *Kitāb al-maḥabba* and Augustine's *De Trinitate* remind us that it is only through God's own movement of love that our desire is re-directed towards its truthful end, thus demonstrating the ontological priority of the divine love that creates, renews and fulfils in a single "act" of grace.

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78. Williams, *On Augustine,* 208.

79. Ghazāli, *Kitāb al-maḥabba,* 89.

80. Augustine, *De Trinitate,* XIV. 25.

81. Augustine, *De Trinitate,* XIV. 25.

82. Augustine departed here from the tradition of his day, which sharply separated the image – as what was bestowed at creation - from the likeness, "an ultimate goal, a task to be realised" (R. A. Markus, "'Imago' and 'Similitudo' in Augustine," *Revue d'études augustiniennes et patristiques* 10 [1964]: 126).

83. Augustine, *De Diversis Quaestionibus, LXXXIII,* quoted in R.A. Markus, "'Imago' and 'Similitudo'," 125.

84. Though Ghazāli adds that there are divine matters that are infinite in nature and remain inaccessible to human beings, both in this life and the next.

Book Reviews

Shira Klein. *Italy's Jews from Emancipation to Fascism.* Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2018. x + 396 pp.

Shira Klein's *Italy's Jews From Emancipation to Fascism* is an engaging, often surprising, and at times heartbreaking social history of the Jewish communities of the Italian peninsula from the mid-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth centuries. Turning her attention to a community whose presence in Jewish studies is generally marginal, Klein examines the changing relationship of the newly-emancipated Jews to the Italian state, the new forms of religious and cultural expression which were fostered in the Kingdom of Italy, as well as the experiences of Italian Jewish refugees in both the United States and Palestine. Often drawing on heretofore unexamined sources, Klein's book does a remarkable job of calling into question certain popular understandings of the role of Italy in the Holocaust and the relationship between Jews and fascist politics.

What is known as the "myth of the *brava gente*" ("good people") – the perception that, for example, racial theory was foreign to Italian fascism, that the racial laws of 1938 were forced on Italy by Hitler, and that non-Jewish Italians in general were sympathetic towards and helpful to their Jewish neighbors – has proved remarkably persistent both in Italy and abroad. Klein's work constitutes a contribution to the deconstruction of this myth, which has begun in recent decades. Klein demonstrates that Italian fascism was racial from the beginning, that the discriminatory laws were implemented on Italian and not German initiative, and that the behavior of the general population was marked by indifference and hostility to the fate of the Italian Jews more often than by benevolence. What is particularly valuable, though disturbing, about Klein's treatment is the way in which she shows how Italian Jews, both as refugees in the United States and Palestine and as citizens of postwar Italy, were active participants in the propagation of this myth. The Jewish citizens of the new Italian kingdom had experienced unprecedented freedom and social mobility in the decades prior to the racial laws, and had become so deeply identified with their homeland

that, even in the midst and the aftermath of fascist persecution, they lavished praise on the Italian state and people, attempting to influence the Allies to act mercifully towards Italy.

No less disturbing is Klein's reassessment of the relationship of Italian Jews to fascism; she demonstrates that in the two decades of fascist governance, most Jews in Italy were at least tolerant of the regime and many actively supported it. Jewish supporters of fascism saw Mussolini's policies as preferable to those of the revolutionary left, the ascendancy of which might have threatened the economic and social interests of a community which had, since emancipation, rapidly become genteel and professional. That so many Jews could have been active supporters of the fascist regime seems incredible in hindsight, but Klein does an admirable job of showing just how rational such a position seemed to the Italian Jews of the 1920s and 30s. Although she draws no explicit parallels between this history and the present day, the story of Italian Jewish involvement in fascism ought, in light of many contemporary political trends in the Jewish world, to serve as a cautionary tale.

Apart from this contribution to a larger movement in the contemporary historiography of Italy, Klein's book sheds light on some aspects of Italian Jewish experience which have hitherto attracted little or no attention, including the development of new cultural and religious practices in the early nineteenth and twentieth centuries, as well as the experience of Italian Jewish refugees in the United States and Palestine. The comparatively small scale of these communities (in both cases measured in the hundreds rather than the thousands) makes possible a very intimate examination of the refugee experience, often based on previously unstudied primary materials and interviews conducted by the author herself.

To a slight degree, the study suffers from a feeling of imbalance. Klein writes that her book "does not propose to be a comprehensive survey of modern Italian Jewish history," but rather seeks "to highlight how Italy's Jews from 1848 to 1938 cultivated a conceptualization of Italy as their beloved home, and how this outlook shaped their reactions to, and postwar narration of, the horrors of 1938-45" (p. 15). This caveat being admitted, the fact remains that six of the book's eight chapters focus on the Second World War and its penumbrae; though her treatment of the near century of pre-fascist development of Italian Jewish culture is very valuable, the reader is left wishing it were more extensive. Also notable is the fact that Klein's

treatment of Jewish religion in pre-War Italy attends almost entirely to the (often idiosyncratic) practices of the laity, without really touching on the development of the modern Italian rabbinate and its participation in the Jewish intellectual movements of the time. For example, despite the fact that the Collegio Rabbinico Italiano was the first modern institution of its kind, it does not feature at all in Klein's story. While the focus on popular practice is a welcome corrective to the more common error of attending entirely to "official" Judaism, the lack of attention to the few figures of Italian Jewry whose impact on Jewish thought is still felt is somewhat striking. Samuel David Luzzato (the premier Italian participant in the *Wissenschaft des Judentums* movement), for example, is mentioned only once in passing, while Umberto Cassuto (a Bible scholar and critic of the Documentary Hypothesis who eventually became Chair of Biblical Studies at the Hebrew University) is not mentioned at all.

These criticisms, however, are minor ones in light of the overwhelming strengths of Klein's achievement. Her book represents a major contribution to the rather underdeveloped secondary literature on Italian Jewry and in particular adds a new perspective to the study of modern Jewish negotiations of nationalism. The field of Jewish studies has traditionally been dominated by the experiences of North American and German Jews, while today the need to attend to Jewish experiences in the Middle East and North Africa is becoming more widely recognized, Klein's work makes a strong case for the relevance of the Italian community as well.

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Andrew Radde-Gallwitz. *Gregory of Nyssa's Doctrinal Works: A Literary Study*. Oxford: OUP, 2018. xvi + 307 pp.

Studies of the late fourth century bishop, Gregory of Nyssa, continue to be produced by a number of capable scholars. This plenitude, no doubt, stems from Gregory's many works having been preserved from antiquity, as well as his status as a Father of the Church who has been recognized in the Latin West and the Greek East, both in Chalcedonian and non-Chalcedonian churches. The variety of Gregory's writings that have been preserved vary

from doctrinal to practical, from esoteric to mundane. His spiritual (i.e., allegorical) interpretation of Scripture ensured that the most mundane features of ancient stories could be turned to spiritual benefit – his *Life of Moses* being a prime example.

When a new study appears on such a familiar figure, we may wonder: what new insight can be gained? Dr. Andrew Radde-Gallwitz, however, offers his study as a means of understanding Gregory of Nyssa in a new and helpful way. He limits himself to Gregory's dogmatic works for a few reasons. Gregory's corpus is large enough that its entirety cannot generally be covered in one study. More significantly, there is something in the problem that Radde-Gallwitz has highlighted, which makes a study of Nyssa's doctrinal works apropos. He writes, "I focus on what Gregory variously calls 'the mystical [or revealed] dogmas' or 'the rationale of the faith' – that is, the creed and its attendant questions. These questions range from the divinity of the Son and the Holy Spirit to the unity of the three hypostases, to the mystery of Christ's incarnation, passion, and resurrection" (p. 6). He sees a problem in the studies of Gregory dating over the last century, viz., the perceived need for scholars to systematize Gregory's thought. As he writes, "In my view, such a systematic presumption was the major flaw in the initial generation of scholarly work on Gregory's Trinitarian theology, and it continues to appear in certain kinds of scholarship" (p. 7). He highlights this problem in Diekamp's dissertation from 1896 and even implicates John Behr and Khaled Anatolios in this movement (though to a much smaller degree).

Instead, Radde-Gallwitz is proposing an avowedly rhetorical reading of Gregory's dogmatic works: "In contrast to the systematic approach, I would prefer to think of my reading of the canon as literary and rhetorical analysis grounded in a sense of the works' various historical contexts. I cannot claim that such an approach is immune from any of the problems of other methods, but the procedure is intended to keep the focus on each work's original rhetorical aims" (p. 8). In responding to the criticism that Gregory's theology does not seem consistent, Radde-Gallwitz endeavours to read Gregory's texts in a performative manner. By this, he means that Gregory is often responding to specific circumstances in his writings. Sometimes he is arguing against non-Nicene heretics like Eunomius, while other times he is defending himself from fellow Nicene Christians who were questioning his *bona fides*. Throughout this book, then, Radde-Gallwtiz goes to some

length to highlight Gregory's life situation and to establish against whom or for whom Gregory was writing. So Radde-Gallwitz writes at one point, "Such synoptic work enables us not only to flesh out arguments that are compressed or absent in *To Eustathius*, but also to gain an appreciation for Gregory as a self-conscious writer. The first strategy can be illuminating, but it can also lead to an overly synthetic portrait of Gregory, one that misses the ways in which each work is a unique performance aimed at a specific goal and employing its own strategies" (p. 60). This approach helps the reader to appreciate the circumstances and difficulties Gregory was experiencing in his ecclesiastical role as bishop/pastor, theologian, and sometime ambassador for other hierarchs.

Though Radde-Gallwtiz eschews a systemizing approach to Gregory scholarship, he does offer some organizational principles in this book. The first thing we notice is that Radde-Gallwitz highlights baptismal practice as the meaningful locus of Trinitarian speculation in Gregory's writings: "in his dogmatic treatises, where textbook accounts might lead one to expect much more on the metaphysics of substance or relation, one finds a great deal on baptismal grace; in his sermons, reflecting on the occasion of baptism tends to prompt Trinitarian questions" (p. 1). Simply put, Radde-Gallwitz is asserting the *lex orandi, lex credendi* principle in Gregory's writings. The author notes that the ubiquity of three-fold baptism as stated in Matthew 28:19-20 in the ancient Church amongst Nicene and non-Nicene Christians allows Gregory space to parse what should be understood when one is baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He helpfully reminds us of this baptismal focus throughout the work (e.g., "from the standpoint of our works thus far, Trinitarian theology is a matter of commentary on the vivifying action of God in baptism" [pp. 72-73]; "that the hypostases be ordered in accordance with the baptismal formula" [p. 114]; "the chief example of a divine activity for Gregory here and throughout his corpus is the giving of life in baptism" [p. 155]; "through the sacrament of baptism, souls participate in their own remedy, which has been wrought by Christ in his own sinless soul" [p. 214]).

Radde-Gallwitz offers another organizational principle in the form of chronology. He follows the dogmatic works in the order in which they were composed. This generally functions well as Gregory's early writings tend to address Trinitarian concerns more explicitly, since the time leading up to and immediately following the Second Ecumenical Council in 381 was

consumed with establishing the proper understanding of the *homoousios* of the Son with the Father and extending this debate to the nature of the Holy Spirit. Thus, the first section of the book is focused on the question of "who God is," while the second part of the book is concerned with "what God does." Though these questions cannot be dealt with in a strictly chronological fashion, there are general themes in different eras of Gregory's life in which these questions come more to the fore.

I appreciate the emphasis that the author places on the Greek word *Energeia* in Nyssen's writings, and how he highlights its semantic range from effect or actuality (e.g., the warmth of a fire) to activity (e.g., human acts). When applying *Energeia* to God, Radde-Gallwitz sees Gregory using this in terms of God's *ad extra* relationship to creation, whereas he says inner-Trinitarian relations are more concerned with ordering and dignity. Discussion about *Energeia* in Gregory often tempts scholars to make Gregory a proto-Palamite (especially amongst Orthodox writers) – highlighting the Essence-Energy distinction in later Byzantine theology – but Radde-Gallwitz leaves Gregory in his own era and tries to appreciate him on his own merits.

The author states in the introduction that this work is intended for scholars and students. I would concur that this is an apt description, though I think that the term "student" would need some qualification. I doubt that a student who does not have familiarity with the theological debates of the fourth century would be able to appreciate the richness of this book. A first reading left this reviewer in awe. It is well researched and I have no doubt that Dr. Radde-Gallwitz is an astute scholar. The book, in fact, bears re-reading in order to appreciate the depth and volume of the scholarship assembled here.

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Christopher Heilig. *Hidden Criticism? The Methodology and Plausibility of the Search for a Counter-Imperial Subtext in Paul.* Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2017. Edelweisse Ebook.

Hidden Criticism addresses the proliferation in recent decades of studies discussing the possibility of a "counter-imperial" or "anti-Roman" subtext in the letters of Paul. Heilig specifies that his intervention is not intended to provide a final answer to this complex and often controversial question, or even to establish an authoritative method for trying particular cases: "the book is mainly about the background plausibility of the hypothesis of a counter-imperial subtext" (page 8 in the digital edition from Edelweisse that Fortress offers for review). The Pauline Studies trend flagged and discussed in Heilig's study is real and often revelatory, so *Hidden Criticism* is a timely and welcome effort. Unfortunately, it is hampered by what looks like haphazard execution and editing. Some problems make themselves known at the surface level of proofreading and publishing, while other more serious problems (having to do with organization and editing), can be found at the level of the book's overall logic and argument.

The proofreading and publishing problems meet the eye first. Heilig thanks a large number of reviewers for their help in preparing his "monolith" (pp. 13-15), but the end product has a noticeably under-edited appearance. On average, every fifth page preserves a proofreading error glaring enough to be distracting. The many orthographical mistakes and oddities of the 2015 edition remain, and there are also frequent reminders that the author was probably thinking in German – for example, the 2017 ebook, in at least one instance, renders the "subtext-hypothesis" as "subtexthypothesis" (p. 305). Other problems evoke issues with publishing technology and timelines. The 2017 index follows the 2015 edition, for example, in informing the reader that the topic of kingship is discussed on pages 153, 154, 153-154, 154, and 153-154.

The under-edited character of the book appears more subtly but also more seriously in the logic and presentation of its overall argument. Heilig proposes to move from a short excursus discussing possible veiled criticisms of Rome in the writings of Philo (Chapter One) to a presentation of his approach (Chapter Two), and from there to considerations of the discursive context (Chapter Three), the "Roman Context" (Chapter Four), the "Pauline Context" (Chapter Five), and the "Explanatory Context" (Chapter Six) he

Context" (Chapter Five), and the "Explanatory Context" (Chapter Six) he sees as unavoidably involved in the question at hand. However, it is not always clear how well-suited and well-prepared each contextual lens really is, or precisely how each contextual frame relates to the others.

Chapter One ("Analogy") uses scholarship on Philo to show that the question of critical subtexts in ancient Jewish writings is sensible and pertinent, but also dauntingly complex. The parallel does indeed seem pertinent, but for some reason Heilig discusses it before describing his approach in Chapter Two, which neither unpacks nor depends upon this Philonic analogy in meaningful detail. Instead, Heilig recommends in Chapter Two the pursuit of two questions: "How well does the event fit into the explanation given for its occurrence?" and "How plausible are the basic parameters presupposed by the hypothesis?" This stress on likelihood is a welcome instance of a New Testament critic following F. C. Baur's advice to seek the probable in historical investigation – not just the theoretically possible. Heilig's approach accordingly involves sorting and weighing probabilities: the probability that Paul would have wanted to criticize Rome; the probability that Paul would have felt the need to disguise such criticism; the probability that his addressees would have understood and been receptive, etc. In an attempt to add precision, though, Heilig argues at length for importing Bayes' Theorem from the field of probability theory, presented somewhat unusually as $p(H|E)=p(E|H)\bullet p(H)/p(E)$, to help scholars pursue the continuing project as he sees it. The "unknown" probability of the subtext hypothesis must be assessed, Heilig insists, with reference to nested sets of demonstrated "knowns" and acknowledged "likelihoods."

The problem is, of course, that the probability of a hidden anti-Roman subtext in Paul is controversial precisely because scholars have competing ideas both about what is proven and about what is likely. For this reason, introducing an impressive-looking formula adds nothing but potential distraction to the current (non-)method of historians simply sorting and weighing arguments about what they see as probable. Heilig himself demonstrates that his recommended Bayesian frame is disposable at best, by promptly forgetting it for the rest of the book: readers actively interested in the idea of importing tools from probability theory will be disappointed to find only a single (fleeting) subsequent reference to Bayes on page 271. In Chapters Three to Six, Heilig sorts and weighs selected ideas about what seems probable, given certain context-determined likelihoods (James C.

Scott's discursive habits of oppressed people, common and expected ancient Jewish reactions to Roman ideology, etc.). Heilig concludes that an anti-Roman subtext is indeed relatively probable in Paul, but more careful study conducted on such grounds is still needed.

Predictably, Heilig's conclusions and suggestions all look convincing to the degree that the reader shares the ideas of likelihood involved in a given chapter's argument. *Hidden Criticism* spends a lot of time, for example, asking questions about Paul's most likely "intentions," as reconstructed based partly on our understanding of his "personality" (pp. 83, 117, 155, 173, 235, 241, 305). However, if scholars like Laura Nasrallah and Melanie Johnson-DeBaufre are right in stressing that the authorial voice(s) of Pauline letters must always present – in good ancient epistolary form – strategic authorial *personae*, it is not clearly likely that we can recover "Paul's personality" from his letters, or that such intuitions are likely to help us divine any hidden personal intentions. It is even less clearly likely that we can use stories about Paul from the book of Acts to psychologize him, as Heilig does now and then (pp. 38, 115, 137, 232, 237, etc.). At its best, then, *Hidden Criticism* is a necessary, measured and open-minded call for due diligence in scholarly engagement with the anti-Roman Pauline subtext hypothesis. At its worst, it is a valuable reminder of the generally desultory state of the question.

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Jon Stewart. *Hegel's Interpretation of the Religions of the World: The Logic of the Gods*. Oxford: OUP, 2018. xvii + 321 pp.

Reading Hegel is never innocent. As one of the most formidable and challenging intellects of the nineteenth century, Hegel's thought resists being transformed into a museum piece – even exegetical work is forced to consider the real impact Hegel's ideas have on contemporary thought. In his book *Hegel's Interpretation of the Religions of the World: The Logic of the Gods*, Jon Stewart produces some fine textual work contextualizing Hegel's views on religion and the debates it caused in his time. However, the work ultimately fails as a convincing account of religion, precisely because

it wants to be an innocent historical reading, thereby misconstruing the actual philosophy going on in the texts it addresses. In order to properly substantiate this claim, some background information is first necessary.

Religion was a subject of predilection for Hegel, and one can find an important text from every period in his career on the subject, each bearing a mark on Hegelian thought as a whole. While *Hegels theologische Jugendschriften* (partially translated as the *Early Theological Writings*) witnesses the birth of the Hegelian dialectic, religion is the penultimate moment of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* – that which gathers together all previous historical stances – and his late lectures on the Philosophy of Religion, which concern us here , show us Hegel's prowess as both logician and historical thinker.

These last lectures on the subject, given at Berlin in 1824, 1827, and 1831, would seemingly represent the mature Hegel's definitive views on the matter, the last word on the subject before its author's death late in 1831. Almost from the time they were pronounced, however, they created a fundamental ambiguity among Hegel's disciples. While traditionally seen as a right-left cleavage, a closer look at the literature yields a whole spectrum rather than a divide. The hard-right Hegelians are unabashed Lutheran theologians. Somewhat more circumspect theists, such as Karl Ludwig Michelet, occupy a centre-right position. The centre-left position belongs to mythologizing philosophers of religion, such as David Strauß, for whom Christianity is still consummate and not merely consummated. Finally come the strong leftists, headed by Bruno Bauer (to boot, a former right Hegelian), who lost his professorship by claiming that there had been no historical Jesus. It was Bauer who founded the infamous Doktorklub that reared a younger generation of left Hegelians, among them Karl Marx. In the mix one also finds the wildcard that was Feuerbach, a left Hegelian by temperament, but one who never professed to speak for the master: rather, Feuerbach set about showing some of the internal inconsistencies in Hegel's views on religion.

While this chaos was partly due to the lack of critical editions of the lectures, the most fundamental ambiguities have survived the excellent textual work of Walter Jaeschke and the equally laudable English translations by Peter Hodgson and company. There is no lack of contemporary literature on the subject, and while the debate is more poised, the varied positions represented by the likes of Robert Williams, H.S. Harris, Bernard Bourgeois,

and George di Giovanni – not to mention Jaeschke and Hodgson themselves – are sometimes irreconcilable even on the narrowest of exegetical points.

Given the freshness of the current debate (Jaeschke's and Hodgson's editions were still coming off the press into the 1990s), wisdom would dictate a return to the texts themselves. This is precisely what Jon Stewart's book does. In all of their iterations, Hegel's lectures are threefold in presentation: the first section deals with the concept of religion, the second with the historical development of the concept through world religions ("determinate" religion), and the third with a Christian (or perhaps post-Christian) philosophy of religion, what Hegel calls "consummate" or "revealed" religion. While the first and third sections have been amply discussed, little has been written on the second section. To this reviewer's knowledge, Stewart's book is the first monograph in any language to offer a systematic reading of the second section, closely following Hegel's account of the religions of the world.

Stewart follows Part II of the lectures systematically, offering a well-researched composite portrait of the different iterations of the lectures, and making it clear where they diverge – notably, Hegel will reassess Buddhism and Judaism a number of times. After an introductory chapter on Hegel's methodology (I will explore the significance of this in a moment), and a treatment of the preliminary lecture on immediate religion or "magic," Stewart brings us on an East-West odyssey through the lectures, starting in Imperial China and meandering through Tibet, India, Persia, Palestine, Egypt, Greece, Rome, and finally, Christian Europe. Each chapter begins by situating the particular religion in question within the whole. The author then identifies Hegel's sources and explores contemporary debates around the subject. Finally, a close reading of the text itself is offered, often accompanied by footnotes drawing connections to the sources already identified.

The book has much merit as a history of ideas that situates Hegel within the tradition of eighteenth and nineteenth century German orientalism. Stewart's capacity to identify what sources were available to Hegel, what he had read, and what his contemporaries thought on the same subjects, is remarkable. The number of original historical theses that one can draw from what Stewart has laid bare could allow for much original work, and this alone makes a strong contribution to existing literature. He has paved the way for new work on Hegel's relationship to both Creuzer and Herder, and

his masterful presentation of eighteenth century German Indology in what is probably the book's best chapter establishes a new front in the old debate between Hegel and the Romantics – the latter see in India a Rousseauean utopia, while Hegel, argues Stewart, critically distances himself from this viewpoint. Stewart also adroitly deals with the question of "orientalism," claiming that because one must understand Hegel's reading of history to understand his thought as a whole, one cannot simply dismiss these lectures as outdated eurocentrism.

Stewart is surely right about this last point. Two centuries of debate over these lectures, however, situates the answer to Hegel's understanding of religion elsewhere: in Parts I and III, or perhaps even further removed, in the religion chapter of *Phenomenology of Spirit*. One is forced to call into question whether the exposition of determinate religion can, on its own, say anything accurate about Hegel's philosophy of religion. The fact that none of the participants in the debate sketched above rely at all on this section (even Jaeschke remains deliberately mute on it) speaks loudly, and should condition our approach. If there are conceptual conclusions to be drawn from determinate religion, they must be considered in tandem with the first section, the concept of religion, ideally referencing the ample scholarship done on the lectures as a whole. Stewart, however, has largely chosen to ignore Part I of the lectures, the *Phenomenology of Spirit* (his occasional references to it repeatedly accuse Hegel of obscurantism), and, most damningly, the secondary literature. Even Jaeschke and Hodgson are confined to the last section of the bibliography. Unfortunately, no matter how close a reading such an approach incorporates, it will always be missing key elements. Ironically, the gravity of some of these omissions may be the only thing about which Hegelian philosophers of religion agree.

Here is where a look at Stewart's methodology section becomes necessary. As a means of explaining religion's progression as Self-recognizing Spirit, Stewart begins the chapter by presenting the Master-Slave dialectic as a paradigm of recognition. Compounded with this, he suggests that religion's progression is one of Spirit rising above nature and arriving at Christianity – a claim bafflingly supported by using the lectures on the philosophy of history in greater measure than those on the concept of religion. This culminates in the assertion that the goal of Spirit is freedom, and that religion's development is one of increasing freedom that brings us to Christianity, where God and humans finally recognize each other as

free subjects. This narrative is at the centre of Stewart's reading of Hegel's historical account of religion (see pp. 16-17). While it has merit, it overlooks a number of key points. Entirely missing is the idea of representation (*Vorstellung*), the fundamental idea that Hegel uses to describe religion throughout his career. Religion is Spirit recognizing itself *as* Spirit, and not just as Other. Its journey involves a community's representation of its absolute Essence as being outside of itself *qua* representation, but really within the community all along. As Jaeschke uncontroversially says, representation is the theoretical form of religion.[1] Recognition is not recognition of one's freedom – or someone else's for that matter – but the recognition that Spirit was there all along, or to speak theologically, to see that God is with us. In Hegel's own words, "the community itself is the existing Spirit, the Spirit in its existence, God as a community."[2]

The notion of representation makes us realize that, *pace* Stewart, earlier moments in the historical progression are not necessarily more primitive. What is immediately present in "magic," for example, is in fact an immediate expression of what discourse will unpack as being mediated: Hegel knew that ancient "primitive" religions had complex ways of life and did all the things that religious communities have always done. What evolves is Spirit's recognition of itself *as* Spirit – in other words, its recognition that it can contain its own meaningful expression of existence. Meaning is in the community's life, and not beyond it in some (represented) other. If there is a struggle here, it is happening at another, deeper level of determination, and not that of self-consciousness, as in the Master-Slave dialectic.

To put it simply, Stewart never really identifies what is at stake, neither in the question of religion as a whole, nor in its individual manifestations. An example will suffice to make my point: in exploring Hegel's criticism of the Egyptian afterlife as being merely a continuation of finite existence, Stewart suggests that this is an indirect argument, asserting that Hegel does indeed have a theory of immortality, since a higher concept of the afterlife would involve that of "essential characteristics" living on rather than a mere continuation of life as it is (pp. 184-185). Here, Stewart is fundamentally

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1. Walter Jaeschke, *Reason in Religion: The Foundations of Hegel's Philosophy of Religion*, trans. J. Michael Stewart and Peter C. Hodgson (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 180.
2. G.W.F. Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion,* (3 vols.) trans. Peter C. Hodgson et al. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984-7), 3:331.

arguing that immortality cannot be what Hegel would call a bad infinity. Yet even a higher, "good" infinity would be inappropriate here: the infinite belongs to the logic of being, the earliest part of the Hegelian system. It cannot be carried all the way through the progression of concepts and ideas we find in religion – in fact, by the time we have arrived at the Egyptians, we have already left it behind.

It is precisely this sort of latitudinarian conceptualization that makes Stewart's transitions from one religion to another opaque. Other than the fact that we seem to be on a journey from East to West, there seems to be no necessity leading us from one sort of religion to another; different religions are merely a contingent string of topographies that Stewart was never interested in justifying. Because we never leave the realm of Being or reflections on self-consciousness, the real movement of Spirit's self-recognition – one of deepening levels of determination based on necessary moves stemming from the categories themselves – is lost.

In sum, isolating determinate religion from the rest of Hegel's writings on the matter casts him as a sociologist of religion. To ask whether he was a good one, a bad one, or a historically relevant one is ultimately a task of obfuscation, one that moreover flattens out what really matters: the development of the concept of religion. No matter how much one knows about Hegel's reading habits and their historical context, it cannot be forgotten that he was first a philosopher, and his vast erudition was marshalled in defense of philosophical goals. If Hegel is merely a German orientalist – which is all he can be even on the most charitable reading of Stewart's interpretation – then there is no real reason to read him at all; like an ancient deity whose worshippers are no longer, he would merely fade away.

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Eisuke Wakamatsu. *Toshihiko Izutsu and the Philosophy of WORD: In Search of the Spiritual Orient*. Translated by Jean Connell Hoff. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017. xi + 118 pp.

Eisuke Wakamatsu's intellectual biography of Toshihiko Izutsu (1914-1993) is the only resource of its kind available concerning the late Japanese scholar. This alone ought to make this work indispensable for anyone interested in Izutsu's life and thought. It also contains a useful chronology, as well as a complete bibliography of Izutsu's works. Wakamatsu's background in literary criticism can be felt throughout the book. The work is a dance between philosophy and poetry, and this is exactly what Wakamatsu wishes to convey about Izutsu as well (p. xvi). The breadth of Wakamatsu's research is impressive; he uses archival material and looks extensively into the resources Izutsu read and worked with. The result is a complex web of ideas and connections that are bound together "synchronically." What does the Muslim mystic Ibn 'Arabi have in common with Lao-tzu? And what do they both have to do with Izutsu? Wakamatsu carefully crafts a narrative that prepares us to confront this and similar questions that Izutsu had.

Wakamatsu situates Izutsu's intellectual biography between structuralism and the worldview of the existential phenomenologist of religion, but he also contextualizes it in the framework of the Japanese reception of Western philosophy and literature, as well as in the centrality of language in understanding other cultural and religious structures. The book can be divided into three main parts: the first part (chapters 1-5), traces the sources that influenced and contributed to the formation of Izutsu's thought, and follows him until he leaves Japan in 1964. Wakamatsu identifies four main sources for this period, namely Greek philosophy, Islam, Russian literature, and Catholic and French literature. While Buddhism is present to Izutsu since childhood, it does not become a prominent interest of his until later in life. In all these topics, the themes of prophecy and poetry – the saint and the poet – make a constant appearance. Wakamatsu insists that poetry, mysticism, and shamanism are the building blocks for Izutsu's understanding of religious phenomena. Here Socrates, Plato, Ibn Hallaj, Paul Valéry, Dostoevsky as well as Louis Massignon are some of the thinkers who provide context and shape to Izutsu's theories. It is also at this early stage that Izutsu writes a biography of the Prophet Muhammad and publishes the first Arabic to Japanese translation of the Qur'an. Wakamatsu

publishes the first Arabic to Japanese translation of the Qur'an. Wakamatsu points out that both are imbibed with Izutsu's own Japanese understanding of prophecy and the transcendent. This reflects Izutsu's idea of scholarship, an idea which holds that many original thinkers (including Derrida, Foucault and Barth) utilize "creative 'misunderstandings'" (p. 160). In other words, a purely objective study is near impossible. Izutsu saw himself as an existentialist thinker; accordingly, he would only write about those things he could personally attest to (p. xvi; 160).

The second part (chapters 6-8) delves into the fruit of this development by looking at Izutsu's work overseas, first at McGill University's Institute of Islamic Studies in Montreal, then at its Tehran Branch in Iran, and finally at the Imperial Iranian Academy of Philosophy. Izutsu's first non-Japanese work was *Language and Magic*. Underlying all of Izutsu's thought is a deep concern for language and linguistics. Despite being regularly identified as a scholar of Islam, Wakamatsu insists that Izutsu's speciality in Islam was simply one of his many talents. It was not in and of itself an end for Izutsu, but rather provided him with the most promising angle to reflect upon and develop a theory of language (see Chapter Seven). Language and linguistics form the starting point of Izutsu's reflections – all cultural and religious experiences find their root in language. Wakamatsu discusses Izutsu's linguistic theory and its relation to several thinkers including Kitaro Nishida and his Kyoto School, Johann Leo Weisgerber, Edward Sapir, and Benjamin Whorf. Finally, Wakamatsu observes the role of the Eranos conferences in Izutsu's works on Zen Buddhism and Oriental thought, while Henry Corbin's idea of a "dialogue dans la métahistoire" provides backing for a theory of "metalanguage" (p. 205; 226).

The third part (chapters 9-10) turns to the works produced after Izutsu's return to Japan in 1979. Wakamatsu seeks to narrate an intellectual biography that does not fully proceed in chronological order, but rather in an order of priority – he weighs the importance of the various sources of Izutsu's thought in the first part, ties them together in the second, and presents their culmination in the third. Wakamatsu's narrative ultimately prepares us for what he considers to be Izutsu's lifelong quest: the "synchronic structuralization" of Oriental philosophy, a theory or method of carrying out inter-religious (and also inter-disciplinary) dialogue. Wakamatsu clarifies that "Oriental" has little of the connotations it holds today. For Izutsu, the "Orient" is not a geo-temporal space, but rather an almost ontological

category that is trans-historical. It is also in this part that Wakamatsu brings out the salient features of Izutsu's final work, *Consciousness and Essence,* revealing his philosophical acumen. Perhaps one of the most enduring influences on Izutsu in this regard is that of Jean-Paul Sartre. Wakamatsu recounts the importance of Sartre's notion of the self, existence and "nausea" (pp. 265-268; 270-271), which, when paired with Derrida's notion of *déconstruction* – "the breakdown of language in the phenomenal world" – provides the theoretical basis of Izutsu's project (pp. 306-308). However, it is only after it converses with Buddhism and Islam, in particular, that Izutsu's philosophy takes its full form. It is not merely a methodology, but a metaphysical treatment of language and its limits in human consciousness.

Wakamatsu provides a compelling intellectual biography and repeatedly challenges the common assumption that Izutsu's esteem rests on his works on Islam. Izutsu repeatedly identified himself as a philosopher of language and Wakamatsu provides the evidence necessary to shift the reader's perspective in that direction. His case is compelling, and he succeeds in bringing out Izutsu's theoretical and methodological commitments to wider developments in linguistics and structuralism. Rather than providing a simpler narrative and dealing with the various elements of Izutsu's thought disparately, Wakamatsu goes out of his way to provide a cohesive narrative that substantiates his thesis. This certainly has the advantage of a synthesis, but the facts he presents are much too intertwined with his own commitments. He also inevitably excludes certain elements, for instance, the thorny and elusive subject of Izutsu's political views and perhaps connections – however oblique – to Japanese military programs and World War II. In addition, Wakamatsu has a tendency for repetition and poetic hyperboles which may be appealing in a literary context rather than an academic one. Be that as it may, Wakamatsu's work is a rich, detailed account of Izutsu's intellectual journey, and Jean Hoff's clear and accessible translation provides an abundance of bibliographic resources for the interested student.

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1. Stanley Fish, *Is There a Text in This Class? The Authority of Interpretive Communities* (London: Harvard University Press, 1989), 123.

2. M. Jimmie Killingsworth and Jaqueline S. Palmer, "Millenial Ecology: The Apocalyptic Narrative from Silent Spring to Global Warming," in ed. Carl G.

Herndl and Stuart C. Brown, *Green Culture: Environmental Rhetoric in Contemporary America* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1996), 21–45.

3. Pierre Hadot, *The Veil of Isis*, trans. Michael Chase (Cambridge, MA.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2006), 18.

If a complete bibliographic reference has already been given in a previous footnote, use the following short form: author's last name, main title, page number.

4. Fish, *Is There a Text in This Class?*, 124.

5. Killingsworth and Palmer, "Millenial Ecology," 34.

6. Hadot, *The Veil of Isis*, 25.

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