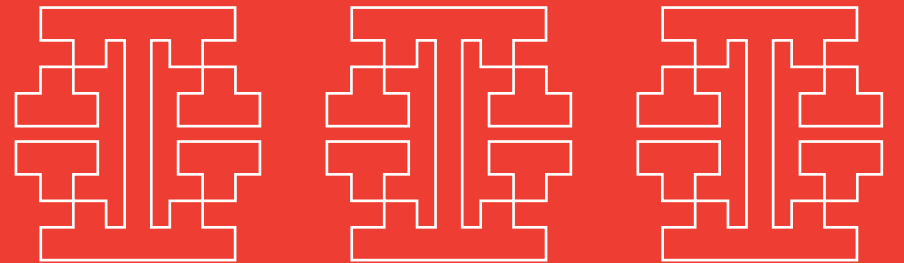ARC, THE JOURNAL OF THE FACULTY

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Book Reviews

Are Freedom from Suffering and Boundless Compassion Contradictory Ideals? A Critical Examination of Buddhist Moral Psychology

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By most accounts, Buddhism is geared toward the ethical goal of *nirvāṇa*,[1] a state allegedly characterized by the full "cessation of suffering" (*dukkhanirodha*).[2] A common claim made in many Buddhist texts is that for as long as they remain alive and active in this world, those who have attained or are very close to attaining ethical perfection—*arhant*-s, *bodhisattva*-s, *buddha*-s, etc.[3]—manifest boundless compassion for all beings.[4] It would

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1. "Ethical" and "ethics" in the present context are to be broadly construed as encompassing all types of discourse that deal with leading the "good life" and the attainment of the *summum bonum* ("highest good"). In this connection, I am inclined to agree with Richard Hayes that it is not, strictly speaking, appropriate to speak of Indian Buddhism as being "soteriological," seeing as there is no σωτήρ ("savior") in Indian Buddhism (other than oneself) and thus no "salvation" *per se* (*Diṅnāga on the Interpretation of Signs* [London: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1989], 34–35). I do not take the question as to whether or not Buddhist teachings constitute "religious doctrine" to be particularly relevant in the present context. This is why, all things considered, I prefer to describe *nirvāṇa* as an "ethical goal" and speak of the Buddhist path as one of "ethical training."

2. *Vinayapiṭaka,* Volume I, ed. Hermann Oldenberg (London: Williams and Norgate, 1879), 10.

3. It should be noted that for the sake of simplicity and clarity, all technical Buddhist terms will appear in their Sanskrit (or Sanskritized) forms unless I am *directly* quoting a Pāli text (as done above). Anthony K. Warder's systematic sanskritization of Pāli forms in *Indian Buddhism* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1980) represents an important precedent for this practice. It should be noted that all translations from Sanskrit, Pāli, German, and French in this paper are my own.

4. In the Pāli Canon, the Buddha is presented as a supremely compassionate agent (*Majjhimanikāya*, Volumes I–VI, ed. Vilhelm Treckner and Robert Chalmers [London: Pāli Text Society, 1888–1905], I.100; and *Saṃyuttanikāya*, volume I–V, ed. Léon Féer and Caroline A. F. R. Davids [London: Pāli Text Society, 1884–1904], II.110); nay, as the only agent in the world whose only goal is to act for the welfare of all "out of compassion" (*anukampāya*) (*Aṅgutarranikāya*, volume I–VI, ed. Richard Morris [London: Pāli Text Society, 1976–1981], I.22; and *Dīghanikāya*, volume I–III, ed. Thomas W. Rhys Davids and Joseph E. Carpenter [London: Pāli Text Society, 1890–1911], II.212). It is thus out of compassion, it is claimed, that he dispensed his teaching (*Majjhimanikāya,* I.23, II.238, and III.302; *Saṃyuttanikāya,*

appear, then, that a perfected Buddhist is meant to be both entirely free from suffering and boundlessly compassionate. On the face of it, this is a patently contradictory ideal. To wit: compassion, on any definition of the term, involves psychological distress in the face of the other's suffering. As its etymology in the vast majority of Indo-European languages indicates, it involves *suffering "with" the other* and thus being "moved" by her suffering (compare: Sanskirt: *anu-kampā*; Latin *com-passiō*; Greek: συμ-πάθεια; German: *Mit-Leid*). Thus, in so far as perfected Buddhists have boundless compassion for all beings, they may be said to suffer boundlessly—keeping in mind, of course, that Buddhist texts insist that there exist at all times an infinite number of pain-ridden beings. Surely, then, it appears incoherent to describe such an agent as being "free from suffering." All but the staunchest irrationalist will recognize that such a contradiction at the heart of Buddhist moral psychology[5] poses a serious problem for whomever might wish to learn from Buddhism as regards the good life.

In this paper, I will make a textual-exegetical/philosophical case in favour of the view that it is possible to resolve this apparent paradox at the heart of Buddhist psychology. Drawing from a variety of South-Asian

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I.110 and IV.359; and *Aṅgutarranikāya* I.22, III.6, and IV.139). The tenth-century Mādhyamika Kamalaśīla, then, was apparently expressing a view common to Early and Mahāyāna Buddhism when he writes: "The root cause of the Buddha's entire teaching is compassion itself. [. . .] The root of the Buddha's qualities is compassion itself" (*buddhasya aśeṣadharmahetumūlaṃ karuṇaiva* / [. . .] *buddhadharmāṇāṃ karuṇaiva mūlaṃ*) (*Bhāvanākrama,* volume I, ed. Ācārya Gyaltsen Namdol [Sarnath: Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, 1985], 155). What is more, a quick survey of both Pāli Jātaka and Mahāyāna literature will confirm that such boundless compassion is also a distinctive characteristic of *bodhisattva*-s far advanced on the path towards enlightenment. Though the concept of the *bodhisattva* certainly evolved over the course of Indian Buddhism's long history—an excellent study of this topic being Arthur. L. Basham's "The Evolution of the Concept of Bodhisattva," in ed. L. S. Kawamura, *The Bodhisattva Doctrine* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1981), 22–45—, the idea that a perfected Buddhist agent is boundlessly compassionate seems common to the Buddhist tradition, in India and beyond.

5. The phrase "moral psychology" in the context of this paper refers to claims concerning (1) the psychology of those beings that Buddhists regard as unenlightened, (2) the psychology of beings that Buddhists regard as enlightened, and (3) what is involved, *psychologically*, in passing from unenlightened to enlightened existence. At issue, then, is what distinguishes the sage who has attained the Buddhist *sommum bonum* from the common person, psychologically speaking.

texts associated with the Theravāda, Sarvāstivāda, Madhyamaka, and Vijñānavāda schools of Indian Buddhism,[6] I will argue that freedom from suffering and boundless compassion are not contradictory ideals, in so far as the suffering that comes to cessation in *nirvāṇa* and which arises as a result of genuine Buddhist compassion, or *karuṇā*, are to be regarded as qualitatively and phenomenologically different. This has the important revisionary implication that *nirvāṇa* does *not*, as is commonly assumed and taught, involve freedom from all suffering, but rather from a particular type of suffering—or, as I will suggest, from a *way* of suffering.

This paper is separated into three sections. Section one will examine what I call the psychology of *nirvāṇa*, i.e., the nature of the psychological, cognitive, and behavioural transformations that purportedly lead to freedom from suffering. Section two will seek to resolve the contradiction between "freedom from suffering" and "boundless compassion" through a careful examination of insights drawn from the writings of Nāgārjuna, Buddhaghosa, Vasubandhu, Asaṅga, and Śāntideva, most prominently. In section three, finally, I will discuss the more sophisticated and nuanced view of Buddhist psychology, which I take to emerge from the resolution of the apparent contradiction under examination.

1. The Psychology of *Nirvāṇa*

As I have argued in greater detail elsewhere,[7] it is philosophically enlightening, yet also respectful of the Buddhist tradition's self-understanding, to present the Buddhist path of ethical training as a *therapeutic programme*, the purpose of which is to bring suffering (*duḥkha*) to cessation. More specifically, it is made clear in the *sutta*-s of the Pāli Canon that what the unsurpassed therapist's (*anuttara bhiṣaj*) teaching targets is "mental suffering" (*caitasika duḥkha*) and not "physical suffering" (*kāyika duḥkha*), which in the final analysis is unavoidable for as long as

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6. Accordingly, this study will emphasize the continuity and common ground among various South Asian Buddhist schools, rather than the differences between them. It should also be mentioned that the results of the present enquiry, though it relies on South Asian sources alone, will most likely prove applicable to most Buddhist schools across Asia.

7. *Nietzsche and Buddhist Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), Chapter 4.

one remains alive.[8] Buddhist therapy, it follows, presents itself as a form of *psycho*therapy. Accordingly, it is appropriate to describe *nirvāṇa* as a state of supreme mental health. It is, more precisely, a form of "mental liberation" (*cetovimukti*)[9] thanks to which even the most excruciating forms of physical pain are no longer experienced as mentally distressing.[10]

Now, two questions immediately present themselves at this juncture: (1) What is the Buddhist diagnosis concerning the ordinary person's (*pṛthagjana*) unhealthy take on the world? And (2) what is required, psychologically, to recover from such a debilitating mental condition? I will tackle each in turn.

Reading the Pāli *sutta*-s and Madhyamaka *śāstra* texts side by side, the answer to (1) can briefly be sketched as follows. The common person's mind is in the grip of a tenacious "self"-delusion (*ātmamoha*),[11] which is the work of twin psychological mechanisms, namely (a) the "I"-principle (*ahaṃkāra*) and (b) the "mine"-principle *(mamaṃkāra)*.[12] It is by virtue of these two principles that the pre-reflective delusion of diachronic numerical personal identity and synchronic personal unity are generated and maintained; this involves, correspondingly, (a) the internal appropriation (*adhyātmam upādāna*) of the physical and mental properties that "belong" to the (thereby) constructed self, or "I" (*aham*), and (b) external grasping (*bahirdham upādāna*) to whatever this self lays claim to as "mine" (*mama*) in the process of identity-construction (material possessions and wealth, status, gender, personal relations, power, etc.).[13] Note that this is a "performativist view" of the self, as opposed to a merely reductionist view, which only claims that a person can be analysed in terms, say, of the five *skandha*-s.[14] Indeed, though

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8. *Saṃyuttanikāya,* I.27 and 110; *Saṃyuttanikāya*, IV.207.

9. *Saṃyuttanikāya,* V.119.

10. This is why the historical Buddha, for example, is said to remain serene and composed, even when he suffers tremendously painful injury at the hands of his jealous cousin Devadatta (*Saṃyuttanikāya,* I.27).

11. This phrase is from the eigth-century Mādhyamika Śāntideva (*Bodhicaryāvatāra*, ed. Vidhushekhara Bhattacharya [Calcutta: Asiatic Text Society, 1960] IX.78).

12. *Majjhimanikāya*, I.486.

13. *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*, ed. Jan Willem de Jong (Madras: Adyar Library and Research Centre, 1977) XVIII.2.

14. The sixth-century Candrakīrti makes it particularly clear that the Buddhist view of the self is performativist when, in commenting on the writings of Nāgārjuna (second to third century), he writes of the self as the "appropriator" (*upādātṛ*) of the external and internal

it is also all of these things, the "self" (*ātman*) is not just an illusion (*māyā*), a false view (*mrthyādṛṣṭi*), or an erroneous conception (*samanupaśyanā*); rather, the ordinary person performs "selving" in a specifically delusional way.[15] The *notion* of self as an error, false view, or erroneous conception is a derivative cognitive by-product of such unconscious self-performance. Thus, what makes this delusional is not just that our innate belief concerning the self's permanence and ontological status *qua* substance are *inaccurate*— so that one fails to see things, especially oneself, "as they really are" (*yathābhūtam*)—but that such a way of engaging the world co-arises[16] with a large family of debilitating affective and behavioural symptoms which fall under the banner of "thirsting" (*tṛṣṇā*).[17]

Now, thirsting, as anyone familiar with the Buddha's very first sermon in the Deer Park will remember, is said to be the (proximate) cause of *duḥkha*.[18] In view of what was reported above, the Buddhist claim seems to be the following: a person who "thirsts" as a result of suffering from the "self"-delusion is hopelessly self-centred and egoistical, endlessly dissatisfied, and continually tormented by a ceaseless and uncontrollable torrent of unhealthy desires, futile aspirations, vain hopes, and unrealistic expectations. More precisely, such persons long for pleasures (*kāmatṛṣṇā*), cling to what pleases them (*bhavatṛṣṇā*), and wish what displeases them

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psycho-physical events that undergo appropriation (*upādāna*) (*Prasannapadā*, ed. Louis de la Vallée Poussin [St-Petersburg: Bibliotheca Buddhica, 1903], 212). See, on this point, Jonardon Ganeri, *The Concealed Art of the Soul: Theories of Self and Practices of Truth in Indian Ethics and Epistemology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 203; and "Subjectivity, Selfhood and the Use of the Word 'I,'" in ed. Mark Siderits, Evan Thompson, and Dan Zahavi, *Self, No Self? Perspectives from Analytical, Phenomenological and Indian Traditions* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 176–192, 190.

15. On the key differences between illusions and *delusions*, especially as regards Indian Buddhist views on the self, see Panaïoti, *Nietzsche and Buddhist Philosophy*, 144–145.

16. On this point, see *Saṃyuttanikāya,* III.44 and my earlier commentary on this passage at "Anātmatā, Soteriology, and Moral Psychology in Indian Buddhism," in ed. Nina Mirning, *Puṣpikā: Tracing Ancient India through Text and Tradition* (Oxford: Oxbow Books Press, 2013), 365–379, 375–377.

17. Unlike most, I chose to translate *tṛṣṇā* with the straightforwardly verbal noun "thirst*ing*" to emphasize its dynamic, performative nature. *Tṛṣṇā* is not a "state," so to speak, let alone a "thing." Rather, it is something we do.

18. *Vinaya,* I.10.

to disappear or be destroyed (*vibhavatṛṣṇā*),[19] continually passing from attraction (*rāga*) to aversion (*dveṣā*), with only apathy (*moha*) in between.[20] The result is perpetual frustration, disappointment, anxiety, insecurity, dejection, and fretfulness, interspersed with only the rarest and briefest moments of contentment, serenity, or elation. The result of thirsting, in other words, is a life permeated with *duḥkha* ("suffering"). This, in its essence, is what it means for a human being to be "in *saṃsāra*."[21]

Such a diagnosis and attendant aetiology of *duḥkha* give us a good idea of what answering question (2), above, will involve. In a few words, the Buddhist therapeutic programme is geared toward the complete undermining of appropriation/grasping (*upādāna*) through the overcoming of the *ātmamoha*. The result is the "destruction of thirsting" (*tṛṣṇākṣaya*)[22] and the attendant cessation of (mental/*caitasika*) *duḥkha*.[23] Thus, it is by

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19. These are the three types of thirsting that the Buddha reportedly listed in the Noble Truths teaching (*Vinaya*, I.10–11). The third, *vibhavatṛṣṇā* (Pāli: *vibhavataṇhā*), is sometimes taken to denote some sort of suicidal desire for self-annihilation, but it is far from obvious that this was the initial meaning of the term. It seems, rather less dramatically, to stand for a desire for things to "pass away" (*vi*+√*bhū*)—of course, suicidal desires might consist in a subcategory of such desires, but their occurrence will be rather more infrequent than less obviously pathological forms of *vibhavatṛṣṇā*.

20. These three character flaws, or "three fires" (*Dīghanikāya*, III.217: *rāgaggi dosaggi mohaggi*), are often discussed in Buddhist literature. They are regarded as the three roots of all unwholesome affects and actions. Though in Middle and Late Indian Buddhism, *moha* came to be interpreted as the innate ignorance and/or delusion responsible for unhealthy attraction (*rāga*) and aversion (*dveṣā*), i.e., the *ātmamoha* itself, it is not obvious that this is what those who compiled the Pāli Canon had in mind. Instead, a number of passages in this body of literature suggest that *moha* in this context designates the subject's drowsy apathy or indifference to an object that elicits neither attraction nor aversion. This is the notion I have in mind in describing the ordinary person's psychology in the present context.

21. Note that my description of what it means to be "in *saṃsāra*" makes no reference to the idea of cyclical rebirth (*punarjanman*). Indeed, it is not obvious that Buddhist psychology bears any *necessary* conceptual relation with the common Ancient and Classical Indian idea that souls or subtle bodies reincarnate after death. On this point, see my comments at *Nietzsche and Buddhist Philosophy*, 161–162.

22. *Saṃyuttanikāya*, I.136 and III.190; and *Aṅgutarranikāya*, I.133.

23. There is something to be said, then, for Stephen Collins's interpretation of the doctrine of "no-self" as a "soteriological strategy" (*Selfless Persons: Imagery and Thought in Theravāda Buddhism* [Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1982], 12–13); though "soteriological" might not be the best term (see note 1, above). Ernst Steinkellner, in a similar vein, presents it as "psycho-practical means" ("Zur Lehre von Nicht-Selbst (anātman) im frühen Buddhismus,"

overcoming the deep-set delusion that "I" am an enduring substance and by gaining a deep realization of the transient and insubstantial nature of all factors of existence—"internal" and "external," "physical" and "mental"—that one undermines the affective, conative, and behavioural dispositions that lead me to experience the world as hostile and endlessly painful. Freed from thirsting, one becomes free from suffering.

But this is far easier said than done. Indeed, attaining *nirvāṇa* involves the complete transformation of one's cognitive and affective take on the world. How, it may now be asked, is this achieved? Structurally speaking, Indian Buddhist therapy can roughly be modelled along the lines of contemporary cognitive-behavioural psychotherapy. This approach empowers patients by assisting them both in undermining the often tacit "conceptual scheme" that underlies their disabling affective symptoms (hence the "cognitive" component) and in altering their behaviour so as to stop responding to their environment in the ways that they habitually do as a result of their mental illness's affective symptoms (hence the "behavioural" component).[24] Likewise, on the one hand, Buddhist therapy involves what may be described as "cognitive interventions" geared toward the attainment of insight (*prajñā*). These include the practice of correct mindfulness (*samyaksmṛti*), sustained self-awareness and introspection, deep reflection on the teaching of no-self—and, amongst Mādhyamika, of emptiness (*śūnyatā*)—, the attainment of various transformative meditative states (*dhyāna; samādhi*), etc., all of which are designed to undermine a specific "conceptual scheme"—namely, that by virtue of which one's delusional "ego" stands at the centre of one's world. On the other hand, such cognitive interventions are complemented with what may be described as "behavioural interventions" designed to induce psychological change by encouraging the Buddhist to both *act* and *feel* like a person who has attained the supreme mental health of *nirvāṇa*.

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in ed. Johann Figl and Hans-Dieter Klein, *Der Begriff der Seele in der Religionwissenschaft* [Würzburg: Verlag Königshausen und Neumann GmbH, 2002], 171–186, 180).

24. For a helpful introduction to cognitive-behavioural theory and practice, see Brian Sheldon's *Cognitive-Behavioural Therapy: Research, Practice, Philosophy* (London: Routledge, 1995). I should mention, in this connection, that Buddhist-inspired practices, especially mindfulness exercises, are increasingly being used in the context of contemporary behavioural-cognitive therapy. See, on this issue, Rebecca Crane's *Mindfulness-based Cognitive Therapy: Distinctive Features* (New York: Routledge, 2009).

The latter involve following the rules of right conduct (*śīla*)—negatively: not behaving in ways that are typical of those who are thirsting; and positively: behaving as "healthy types" do—, but also cultivating, through specific mental exercises, certain emotions that are said to be both characteristic of and conducive to mental wellbeing. Foremost amongst these, in the early texts at least, are the four "immeasurables" (*apramāṇa*), namely, boundless goodwill (*maitrī*), compassion (*karuṇā*), sympathetic joy (*muditā*), and equanimity (*upekṣā*).[25] In later Indian texts, special emphasis is placed on *karuṇā*, which is also claimed to be the motive behind the Buddha's (and various *bodhisattva*-s') teaching and interventions in the world.[26]

It is at this juncture that our problem arises. A mind free from *duḥkha*, if the texts are to be trusted, is also a mind permeated with boundless compassion. This is an important part of the reason for which no-harm (*ahiṃsā*) is such a strong regulative principle in proper conduct and the cultivation of compassionate concern is so vehemently promoted in Buddhist training. But, as stated above, there seems to be something contradictory about a purported state of ethical perfection characterized by freedom from suffering, yet which is also characterized by the continuous feeling of an emotion, which, on the face of it, invariably involves an important measure of mental distress—viz., compassion. If there is any prospect of resolving this contradiction, it will be found by more closely examining Buddhist compassion itself.

2. The Nature of Buddhist Compassion

A superficial survey of Theravāda literature may be interpreted in a way that would expediently resolve the apparent contradiction between "freedom from suffering" and "boundless compassion." Indeed, earlier Buddhist texts suggest that the compassion of enlightened beings is qualitatively different from that of ordinary beings, arguably in that it simply *does not involve any suffering*. If this were the case, then the contradiction under examination

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25. See, for instance, *Dīghanikāya*, I.251. The instructions relating to the cultivation of the immeasurables is repeated *verbatim* several times in the Pāli Canon.
26. See, on this point, note 3, above.

in the present paper would effectively be resolved. Consider the following evidence in favour of this view.

Let us begin with a terminological point on the language of *sutta* texts. There are three words that translate as "compassion" in Sanskrit, of which Pāli was an early *prakṛt*. The first is the feminine noun *kṛpā,* which can also mean "tenderness." *Kṛpā* is derived from the verbal root √ *kṛp*, which means "to lament," "to implore," "to mourn," "to be weak," and, by extension, "to pity." From this root is derived the adjective *kṛpaṇa*, which means "inclined to grieve," "pitiable," "miserable," "feeble," etc. The second form, the feminine *anukampā*, is closest in structure to the English "com-passion" or "sym-pathy" and its equivalents in other European languages (e.g., the German *Mit-leid*). It is derived from the verbal root √ *kamp* ("to move," "to tremble," etc.) preceded by the verbal affix *anu-* ("alongside," "after," or "with"—"with" in a figurative sense, unlike the more literal "*sam-*"). The verb *anu+√kamp* has the very specific meaning "to sympathise with," "to have compassion for," though it literally means something like "to move along/after/with."[27] Here, the idea of suffering or of feeling sorrow is not explicit; rather, the idea seems to be that one is somehow *moved* by another's suffering. The third Sanskrit word for compassion is the feminine *karuṇā*, which is most likely derived from the very common verbal root √ *kṛ* ("to act," "to do," "to accomplish," "to make," etc.). The meaning of the word *karuṇa*/*karuṇā* seems to have evolved over the long history of Sanskrit literature. In Vedic Sanskrit, the neuter *karuṇa* stands for a holy action, often in the context of ritual. The feminine *karuṇā* then came to stand for the emotion commonly known as "compassion" in English and, by extension, later became associated in the Late Classical Brāhmaṇical aesthetic theory of Abhivanagupta with mourning, lamenting, and pathos, especially that felt by the audience of a dramatic performance.

The first thing to note is that *kṛpā*—the only Sanskrit form that explicitly connotes suffering—is entirely absent from early Pāli literature. From the root √ *kṛp*, only the adjectival form "*kapaṇa*" (Sanskrit: *kṛpaṇa*) appears, in the pejorative sense of "poor," "wretched," "small," or "insignificant." *Anukampā*, in contrast, is very often met with in the Pāli Canon and seems to be the most general colloquial term designating the Buddha's compassion

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27. Monier Monier-Williams, ed., *Sanskrit–English Dictionary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), 305.

and that of awakened *arhant*-s. But as we saw, it may be understood simply as denoting "being moved," or motivated, to act by the other's suffering, not necessarily afflicted by it. *Karuṇā*, finally, is often met with in early Buddhist literature, with a slightly more specialised meaning in the Pāli Canon.[28] But the *karuṇā* discussed in this textual body does not explicitly connote pain, sorrow, and grief, as it does later in Classical Indian philosophy of art. Close to its roots in the verbal √*kṛ*, it seems to denote first and foremost a desire to act, namely, as one commentator put it, "the desire to remove woe and suffering" (*ahitadukkhāpanayakāmatā*). On the face of it, then, the wording of the Pāli *sutta*-s suggests that Buddhist compassion might involve no pain or enfeeblement whatsoever. Rather than a depressive affect, it seems instead to be a stimulating emotion.

Both the Buddha and later Theravādin authors, in this connection, were careful to distinguish compassion from some of the more vulgar sentiments it might be confused with. There is a verse passage in the canon, for instance, in which the Buddha is explicitly attacked for teaching others out of compassion—or for teaching others at all for that matter—, with the clear implication that this is somehow inconsistent with being "free from all ties" (*sabbaganthapahīna*). The *yakṣa* Sakka puts it this way: "It is not appropriate (*sādhu*) for you, a wanderer (*samaṇa*) who is free from all ties and is liberated, to instruct others." To which the Buddha answers: "Sakka, the insightful person is not capable of that [form of] compassion which arises in a mind that is attached. And if, with a clear mind, he instructs others, he is not bound in this way. Such compassion consists in genuine caring concern (*anuddayā*)."[29] The idea here is that the Buddha's compassion does not involve the common sentimental attachment that everyday compassion implies. It may be inferred from this that the liberated person's compassion is in no way a painful affect. This idea finds an echo in the writing of Buddhaghosa, the eminent fifth-century Theravādin commentator. Commenting on the cultivation of the four immeasurables, Buddhaghosa carefully points out the "false manifestation" (*vipatti*) of each of these core Buddhist virtues. Just as goodwill should not give rise to attachment (*sneha*), or sympathetic joy to derision (*pahāsa*), Buddhaghosa emphasises that genuine compassion should not be confused with sadness

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28. Monier-Williams, *Sanskrit–English Dictionary*, 31.
29. Monier-Williams, *Sanskrit–English Dictionary*, 255.

(*soka*). At first sight, then, it seems as though Buddhist compassion in the Theravāda is understood to be a painless affect.

Having said this, Buddhaghosa's instructions on cultivating boundless compassion leave it unclear whether such an easy solution is really at hand. Buddhaghosa instructs us to begin by developing compassion for family and loved ones, then gradually to extend the scope of our compassion to people toward whom we are indifferent, and finally even to those toward whom we feel enmity.[30] Such instructions suggest that the compassion of perfected Buddhists is *identical to what ordinary persons feel toward those to whom they are sentimentally attached*. This comes as something of a surprise given that Buddhaghosa then tries to qualify this form of compassion as firmly distinct from mere sorrow and self-regarding sadness. Buddhaghosa's statements are ambiguous. Is the Buddha's compassion different in kind, or only in scope, from ordinary compassion? Does it involve suffering, or does it not? It is not obvious that these questions can be answered by looking at Theravāda sources alone. There is, it would seem, a palpable tension surrounding this aspect of Buddhist doctrine, which remains unresolved in this body of literature.

In Sanskrit Buddhist *śāstra*-s, things are not ambiguous at all. Here, it is explicitly stated that compassion does involve an important measure of suffering.[31] Indeed, most great Indian Buddhist authors of the Middle and Late Buddhist periods who wrote on the subject, Mahāyānist and Non-Mahāyānist alike—including the likes of Nāgārjuna, Vasubandhu, Asaṅga, Bhavya, Sthiramati, Candrakīrti, Śāntideva, and Prajñākaramati—, seem to agree that all forms of compassion involve suffering, even that of the

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30. See Thomas W. Rhys Davids's and William Stede's (eds.) *Pāli Text Society Pāli–English Dictionary* (Chipstead: Pāli Text Society, 1925), 245.

31. *Karuṇā* is the term used to designate the great virtue of compassion—alongside goodwill, sympathetic joy, and equanimity—that characterizes an enlightened being's mind and whose cultivation leads to *nirvāṇa*. Harvey B. Aronson suggests that *anukampā* and *karuṇā* actually stand for two very different things in the Pāli Canon, *anukampā* being the common emotion of sympathy and *karuṇā* being some sort of transcendental spiritual virtue (*Love and Sympathy in Theravāda Buddhism* [Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1980], 14–15). I see no reason for drawing this distinction. The standard claim that the Buddha teaches out of *anukampā* seems completely interchangeable with the admittedly less frequent claim that he teaches out of *karuṇā*. Aronson is most probably thinking of the cultivation of *karuṇā* as a meditative exercise prescribed by the Buddha—there is no cultivation of *anukampā*—, but he nevertheless fails to convince. As I see it, *anukampā* and *karuṇā* are just about synonymous.

exalted *bodhisattva*-s or of the Buddha. How, then, can such a view be made compatible with the idea that a perfected Buddhist is entirely "free from suffering"?

Examining the claims of the fourth-century Sarvāstivādin Vasubandhu and Vijñānavādin Asaṅga (possibly brothers) side by side makes it possible to answer this thorny question. Vasubandhu draws a distinction between the compassion that Buddhists are preliminarily instructed to develop in the teaching on cultivation of the four immeasurables, for instance, and the "great compassion" (*mahākaruṇā*) characteristic of the Buddha's and advanced *bodhisattva*-s' supremely healthy mind. While the former is characterized only by the absence of aversion (*dveṣā*), Vasubandhu claims that the latter is also characterized by the absence of delusion (*moha*).[32] Asaṅga's discussion of compassion, in turn, can help us understand what exactly it is that Vasubandhu means when he says "great compassion" is free from delusion. Commenting on the love (*sneha*) involved in compassion, Asaṅga explains that unlike parental love, which "consists in thirsting" (*tṛṣṇāmaya*), the *bodhisattva*'s love "consists in compassion" (*karuṇāmaya*).[33] Though strikingly circular, this clarification nevertheless has the virtue of making it very clear as to what distinguishes genuine Buddhist compassion from mundane compassion. True *karuṇā*, Asaṅga implies, does not involve thirsting. Coming back to Vasubandhu, this makes it possible to infer that the "great compassion" described by Vasubandhu is free from *self*-delusion (*ātmamoha*). For, as we saw above, Buddhist psychology posits an intimate relation between thirsting and self-delusion. True Buddhist compassion, then, must be qualitatively different from ordinary compassion in so far as it is free of self-delusion (Vasubandhu), and it must also be phenomenologically different in that the love it involves carries no trace of thirsting (Asaṅga).

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32. *Suttanipātāṭṭhakathā* of Buddhaghosa, ed. Helmer Smith (London: Pāli Text Society, 1966), 138.

33. *Saṃyuttanikāya*, I.206:
sabbaganthapahīnassa vippamuttassa te sato |
samaṇassa na taṃ sādhu yad aññam anusāsatī ti ‖
yena kenapi vaṇṇena saṃvāso sakka jāyati |
na tam arahati sappañño manasā anukampitum ‖
manasā ce pasannena yad aññam anusāsati |
na tena hoti saṃyutto sānukampā anuddayā ti ‖

The full realization of selflessness and the arising of boundless compassion are thus intimately tied in Buddhist thought. Ludovic Viévard aptly summarizes the Mādhyamikas' moral psychology as follows:

> The compassion of the profane individual rests on the *ātman*. And we have concluded that the perfection of compassion is proportional to the disappearance of the idea of *ātman*. Such [perfection] is progressive, and operates simultaneously with the gradual understanding of emptiness.[34]

Though more explicit in the Madhyamaka, this model was arguably widespread in Buddhist India. To wit: it can be reconstructed on the basis of texts by the two non-Mādhyamika authors we have been examining so far and finds a close parallel in the writings of the sixth-century Theravādin Dhammapāla. Indeed, this author describes insight (*paññā*) and compassion (*karuṇā*) as the Buddha's mind's principal cognitive and affective characteristics, respectively. Dhammapāla makes it obvious that these are really two sides of the same coin, concluding with the following remark: "Just as the master's compassion was devoid of sentimental affection or sorrow, so his understanding was devoid of the thoughts 'I' and 'mine.'"[35]

Sanskrit Buddhist literature affords another central insight concerning the nature of Buddhist compassion. According to at least two prominent Classical Indian authors, enlightened compassion is not only "free from thirsting and delusion"—a rather vague negative property—, but also the suffering it involves ultimately turns out to be a prelude for exalted joy. To provide such a positive account of compassion-born suffering, it is important to focus on the relation between *karuṇā* and the fate of those toward whom it is directed. Consider, to begin, Asaṅga's baffling claim that though *bodhisattva*-s initially recoil before the suffering they undergo as a result of their boundless compassion, this same suffering fills them with joy when it is properly apprehended (*spṛṣṭa*).[36] Asaṅga goes on to explain that in

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34. *Visuddhimagga*, ed. Caroline A. F. Rhys Davids (London: William and Norgate, 1879), 318. Buddhaghosa immediately follows this up with a discussion of compassion's "far" and "near" enemies, i.e., its opposite and the affect it may easily be confused with. While the former is cruelty, the latter he describes as sorrow related to the householder's life, i.e., ultimately self-regarding sadness (*Visuddhimagga*, 319).

35. *Visuddhimagga*, 314.

36. This perhaps explains why Buddhist Sanskrit authors do not hesitate to use the term *kṛpā*, discussed above, to refer to compassion. The sixth-century Vijñānavādin Sthiramati, in this

helping others progress on the Buddhist path, the *bodhisattva's* "compassion-caused suffering turns into happiness" (*duḥkham eva karuṇājanitam* […] *sukhaṃ bhavati*).[37] Śāntideva makes a similar claim. On his account, the suffering born of compassion is far outweighed by the formidable pleasure *bodhisattva*-s' feel when the other is helped to get closer to *nirvāṇa*.[38] The suffering born of compassion, Śāntideva seems to be telling us, is really only a preamble for the happiness of sympathetic joy (*muditā*).

Suffering, then, acts as a stimulant for *bodhisattva*-s. It actively propels them to altruistic action. What is more, it stands as a necessary condition for the deep pleasures of sympathetic joy, and thus as a prelude to a noble and healthy form of other-oriented pleasure. Far from being problematic for Buddhist ethics, then, it seems as though the fact that Buddhist compassion does involve suffering brings into relief deeper and subtler aspects of Buddhist moral psychology. More specifically, it points to a stimulating form of suffering, or way of suffering. This, however, suggests that the standard Buddhist notion of "freedom from suffering" is in need of qualification.

3. Qualifying "Freedom from Suffering"

Our discussion so far has an important revisionary implication. Indeed, it would appear that ethical perfection in Indian Buddhism does not, strictly speaking, involve complete freedom from suffering. For as long as they are alive and engaged in the world at the very least, not all suffering has actually come to cessation for perfected Buddhists. On the contrary, in so far as

connection, even went so far as to propose the following *nirukta* morphological analysis of the form "*karuṇā*," clearly suggesting that compassion is an unpleasant affect: "*Karuṇā* is composed of '*kam*' and '*ruṇaddhi*.' '*Kam*' means pleasure, so the meaning [of "*karuṇā*"] is "that which blocks (*ruṇaddhi*) pleasure" (*kaṃ ruṇaddhīti karuṇā / kam iti sukhasyākhyā sukhaṃ ruṇaddhīty ārthaḥ*). As in the case of many *nirukti*-s, this analysis is inaccurate, historically speaking—it is far more likely that the form *karuṇā* simply derives from √*kṛ*—, but as Eivind Kahrs explains in his study of the *Nirvacana* tradition, linguistic historical accuracy was not the purpose of this type of analytical exercise (*Indian Semantic Analysis: The Nirvacana Tradition* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998]).

37. Ludovic Viévard presents a succinct and useful survey of citations from these authors concerning the personal distress involved in compassion at *Vacuité (śūnyatā) et compassion (karuṇā) dans le bouddhisme madhyamaka* (Paris: Collège de France, 2002), 180–183.

38. *Abhidharmakośa*, ed. Prahlad Pradhan (Patna: Jayaswal Research Institute, 1967), 415.

they are animated by boundless compassion for all beings, ideal Buddhist agents will suffer rather frequently. In order to draw out the significance of these results for Buddhist moral psychology, it will be necessary to take some distance from Buddhist texts themselves and engage in admittedly artificial yet thoroughly informed conjecture and reconstruction. A number of the more abstract claims that follow, accordingly, are to a certain degree speculative, and thus tentative. At issue throughout this section is the significance, or spirit, of Buddhist moral psychology, not the word of any particular text or tradition.

Our enquiry suggests that the two following claims are *à propos* when it comes to describing the perfected/ideal Buddhist type: (1) s/he knows nothing of the suffering which pervades an ordinary person's life—i.e., a life lead under the thrall of the self-delusion and thus a life of perpetual thirsting; (2) the kind of suffering s/he experiences as a result of his/her boundless compassion is of an altogether different nature to which ordinary, unenlightened beings consistently encounter.

Let us begin by fleshing out (1). Should *duḥkha* strictly be interpreted as a technical Buddhist term standing for "suffering that results from thirsting (*tṛṣṇā*)," then *nirvāṇa* can accurately be characterized as involving "*duḥkhanirodha*" (the cessation of suffering/*duḥkha*). On this line of interpretation, the Buddha holds good on his promise in the noble truths teaching; following his teaching will effectively lead to freedom from suffering, albeit a specific (though arguably very prevalent) type of suffering. Indeed, by overcoming the self-delusion (*ātmamoha*), dismantling the "I"- and "mine"-principles (*ahaṃkāra ca mamaṃkāra ca*), undermining both internal appropriation (*adhyātmam upādāna*) and external grasping (*bahirdham upādāna*), and thereby bringing about the destruction of thirsting (*tṛṣṇākṣaya*), the psychological ground for all forms of egotistic frustration, disappointment, insecurity, fear of loss, anxiety, etc. is thoroughly removed and freedom from all self-centred mental suffering (*caitasika duḥkha*) is achieved. In a sense, then, the results of the present enquiry are only mildly revisionary, for there remains an important, interesting, and inspiring sense in which Buddhism compellingly promises freedom from suffering, viz., unhealthy thirsting-based suffering. Having said this, everything in the Sanskrit Buddhist textual tradition at the very least indicates that perfected Buddhists will continue to suffer on account of their boundless compassion for all beings. And indeed, the fact of the matter is that "*duḥkha*" is *not*

used as a technical Buddhist term standing for "suffering that results from thirsting (*tṛṣṇā*)" in Buddhist texts; on the contrary, the very same form is used to describe the *bodhisattva*-s' and Buddha's experience of compassion. What the texts indicate, however, is that a *bodhisattva* or a Buddha suffers *differently*.

We may now enquire as to what distinguishes the perfected Buddhist's compassion-born suffering from the ordinary person's. I suggest there are three important respects in which *karuṇā*-born suffering is different from the suffering that comes to cessation in *nirvāṇa*. First, it appears to be different by virtue of its more limited "scope," so to speak. Indeed, it arises specifically as the result of an emotion, namely compassion, which has *the other* for its intentional object. The perfected Buddhist no longer experiences mental distress as a result of what happens, what happened, or what may happen to her. With the overcoming of the self-delusion, the patterns of egocentric concern so typical of ordinary people's experience of life no longer plague the perfected Buddhists' mind. The mental distress born of their genuine compassion has the *other* and more specifically the *other's suffering* as its sole intentional object. On the Buddhist view, thirsting invariably taints ordinary, unenlightened compassion—even the seemingly "purest," such as parental love (Asaṅga)—, which is why it essentially amounts to little more than sentimental sadness (Buddhaghosa).[39] Genuine Buddhist compassion, in contrast, is focused solely on the other; it is unique in being truly altruistic. This makes for a different type of suffering, the *immediate* and *unique* cause of which is the other's woe.

This connects directly to the second difference between the unenlightened *vs.* the enlightened person's suffering. This is a difference not in scope, but in kind, or "structure," more precisely. In so far as the perfected Buddhist's compassion-born suffering is not grounded in thirsting, it cannot be a result of the subject's vulnerability or irritability, but rather in her responsiveness and openness to the other. This idea requires a bit of fleshing out. Consider the structure of thirsting-based suffering. Such suffering is essentially the outcome of the unenlightened subject's over-sensitivity to the unpredictability of the world, to phenomenal change, to the impermanence of all things, etc. Subjects are closed up unto themselves, striving at all costs

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39. *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkara*, ed. Surekha V. Limaye (New Delhi: Indian Books Centre, 1992) XVII.43, Commentary.

to preserve their identity—or the "integrity" of their "self"—in the midst of an incessant sea of change. As a result, they suffer tremendously because their rigidity makes them markedly vulnerable. Surely they would rather not suffer, but they do; they thus undergo suffering passively. Perfected Buddhists seem to stand beyond any such ego-related vulnerability; their emotional resilience as regards themselves and what happens to them is supreme. When they suffer as a result of true, i.e., thirsting-free, compassion, it is not as a result of being closed up unto their delusional and fragile little self, but precisely because they are sensitive, responsive, and open to the other. Accordingly, far from attempting to avoid suffering, they actively seek such opportunities to suffer because they are strong enough to take it.[40]

And this in turn points to the third fundamental difference between the ordinary person's suffering and that of the perfected Buddhist, namely the difference in the way experiencing suffering *feels* to them. Otherwise put, the difference here is *phenomenological*. Thirsting-born suffering is enfeebling. Subjects are afflicted and weakened by it. Asaṅga and Śāntideva help us see that quite the opposite holds for the compassion-born suffering of the ideal Buddhist type. Though it may initially be feared, such suffering quickly gives rise to pleasure (Asaṅga). And in so far as the actions it motivates effectively help the other in progressing toward *nirvāṇa*, it becomes a mere prelude for sympathetic joy in the face of the other's progress (Śāntideva). This suggests that the perfected Buddhist experiences compassion-born suffering as an invigorating, stimulating affect that signals the presence of a challenge to meet proudly, an obstacle to overcome heroically.[41] This is certainly very different from how suffering ordinarily feels, even that which results from everyday compassion, or pity.[42]

In sum, the ethical primacy of compassion in Buddhist moral psychology leaves us with no choice but to qualify seriously the standard idea that Buddhism promises "freedom from suffering." Having said this, the qualifications required should not be seen as posing a threat to the Buddhist tradition. On the contrary, it would seem that such a qualification enhances the appeal of the Buddhist psychology of suffering. If I am right,

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40. Viévard, *Vacuité (śūnyatā) et compassion (karuṇā) dans le bouddhisme madhyamaka*, 241.
41. *Paramatthamañjusā*, quoted in Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli, *The Path of Purification* (Kandry: Buddhist Publication Society, 1975), 774.
42. *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkara*, XVII.46.

then Buddhism can coherently promise to bring a particularly disabling and harmful form of self-centred suffering to cessation, whilst also pointing to a different way of suffering, which on ethical grounds ought to be embraced. Buddhist ethical training, indeed, need not be concerned solely with creating serene subjects, but also *responsive agents*.

Concluding Remarks

What are we to make of this critical examination of Buddhist moral psychology? Beyond its immediate and more obvious contributions to the philosophy of religion and Buddhist studies, this study might be of interest to contemporary psychologists and psychiatrists. Two prominent recent trends in the psychological sciences already point towards fruitful dialogue between Western and Buddhist forms of therapy. The first is the increasingly widespread use of Buddhist mindfulness practices in cutting-edge cognitive-behavioural therapy.[43] The second is the nascent field of positive psychology. Rather than focusing on relatively rare (though not rare enough) abnormal symptoms and pathological conditions, positive psychologists are interested in whatever might help otherwise well adapted or healthy people lead happier and more meaningful lives.[44] These two trends have lead to a broader interest in so-called "contemplative traditions," such as Buddhism.

Note, to begin, that on a rather cynical reading of the tradition, a Buddhist response to the positive psychology project in particular (which may also be relevant to Western psychiatry in general) is that even those people whom contemporary psychologists and psychiatrists would regard as "healthy" are in fact profoundly unwell, and in particular quite thoroughly deluded as regards selfhood, with everything that may follow from this. "Normal," on this line of interpretation, in no way implies "healthy" for Buddhists. There is certainly something to be said for this way of putting the Buddhist point, but there is a slightly more positive and, I believe, useful way of framing the problem. This would simply be to say that Buddhism teaches us that we could all be doing significantly better than we currently are. The gist of the first noble truth, under this formulation, is not that living is horrendous, but that it is possible for intelligent, sensitive,

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43. *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkara*, 47, Commentary.
44. *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, VIII.104–108.

and determined people to lead far more meaningful lives. On this line of thought, Indian Buddhism may be seen as converging with the concerns of positive psychologists and to have something distinctive to offer mental health practicians more generally.

On the face of it, most Western psychologists will not find the seemingly quietist ideal of attaining a state in which a subject will be entirely free from suffering all that appealing. They will rightly ask whether all forms of suffering are really that bad, and whether some *ways* of suffering may not be healthier than others. More importantly, along with philosophers, they may ask whether moral agency—and responsiveness to other people's suffering in particular—requires that the agent suffer in the face of the other's woe. The more refined Buddhist moral psychology that has emerged from our present enquiry suggests the answers the Buddhist tradition may provide are more subtle and nuanced than might first appear when reading Buddhist texts or listening to Buddhist teachings. And in this regard, Buddhism may have valuable contributions to make to psychological theory and practice. Of course, a number of Buddhist psychological hypotheses—viz., on self-delusion and its relation to selfishness, on the propensity of less troubled agents to be more concerned with others, etc.—would have to be more thoroughly theorized and empirically tested. But it may be well worthwhile to go through the trouble of doing this. Empirically informed Buddhist-inspired psychology, after all, promises not only to produce happier, calmer "patients," but also more engaged, responsive, and responsible "agents." Virtue ethicists, in particular, would welcome this sort of win-win. In concrete terms, it would certainly make the world a better place; a world not free from suffering, but in which suffering may at least be turned to profit.

Problems of "Canon" and "Reason" in Theravāda Studies: Cultural Anthropology Encounters the Pali Canon (巴利文大藏經), From Cambodia to Yunnan

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The study of the most ancient written records of the Buddhist religion is both internally contentious and disputed in its application to the study of contemporary Buddhism (in the fieldwork of anthropology and other disciplines). The vast majority of academics who publish studies of Theravāda Cultures cannot offer comparative references to the primary source material of the Theravāda Canon and cannot read Pali, i.e., the ancient language this canon is written in; nevertheless, cultural studies do not hesitate to make comparative judgements that contrast contemporary practices to canonical ideals. This is a problem that hampers many of the best studies written by researchers with long and distinguished careers; for younger scholars, the effect can be quite baffling, because they neither have direct access to ancient texts, nor can they easily survey representative examples of modern cultural practices. Comparative statements that relate something known to something unknown will inevitably misrepresent both.

This essay attempts to address fundamental misconceptions about the canon (that are currently vitiating academic discourse) while offering positive examples of the ways that the ancient texts can enrich our understanding of contemporary cultural phenomena. This could be considered a sequel to my earlier work titled *Bālì Wén De Xiāo Shī Yī Ge Shí Yòng De Zhǐ Nán* (巴利文的消失　一個實用的指南) in that I am again providing scholars with "a practical guide" to using these historical sources; in another aspect, this could be considered a sequel to a more recent essay that I delivered as a lecture in Cambodia warning about the shortcomings of European scholarship on Theravāda Buddhism, and the difficulties that Asian scholars will have as they now inherit this legacy (titled, "The Opposite of Buddhism," and still in peer review). In all three essays, I imagine myself on the historical margin marking the end of an era wherein European scholars of Theravāda Buddhism

outnumbered the Asian scholars, and the start of an era wherein the Asian scholars will outnumber the Europeans.

In the next 100 years, I expect there will be more Chinese-language scholars of Theravāda Buddhism than Europeans. In this era, Yunnan could have a unique role as the one area of China where Theravāda is an indigenous tradition, and where the adjacent traditions of Southeast Asia are readily available for Chinese researchers of both ancient texts and contemporary cultures. Whereas Taiwan's unique importance in the last 100 years has been widely acclaimed in Buddhist Studies, this paper may raise the question of what its role will be in the next 100 years, indicating that new research into the Pali canon is requisite to further progress in the field.

§1.

Among European academics, the study of the Theravāda Canon is so contentious that the significance of "canonicity" itself continues to be disputed. This is a dispute that involves specialists of many different disciplines, and they have created the controversy for a variety of reasons.

A British scholar named Martin Southwold stated the matter with uncommon clarity in defending his work against criticism; his own view, he stated, is that "the results of ethnographic fieldwork 'must be the canon of what is authentic Buddhism'."[1] In a sense, this is the default assumption of many anthropologists trying to evaluate Theravāda Buddhist cultures: for them, fieldwork (田野調查) itself is the only "canon" (大藏經) and they dismiss (or ignore) the evidence gathered from the corpus of ancient texts (normally called a "canon" in plain English). Southwold rejects the assumption "that only 'nibbanic'[2] Buddhism is authentic ('normative', 'orthodox', 'pure', and so forth) and that the Buddhism of ethnography, which differs from it, is in some sense not quite the genuine article."[3] In a more recent article, Joanna Cook complains that any comparative reference to a "single, authentic Great Tradition . . . does not make sense for social scientists, who ought to be in the

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1. Martin Southwold, "Buddhism in Life: A Reply to Robert A. Paul," *American Anthropologist*, New Series, Vol. 89 (1987): 448.
2. The author quoted is creating an English adjective out of the Pali word *nibbāna*, variously transliterated into Chinese as 涅盘, 泥洹 and so on.
3. Southwold, "Buddhism in Life," 448.

business of observing what people do and reporting on it."[4] Cook offers this complaint immediately after a citation of Southwold's earlier work; the two seem to me completely consonant in demoting (or disregarding) the written canon in order to exalt the "observations" of ethnographic fieldwork (as if these were mutually-exclusive options, or else presuming that contrasts to a "more authentic" canon could only be an obstruction to their work).

While Southwold's position is extreme, it seems to encapsulate a set of assumptions that is very popular at the moment, having replaced the old-fashioned view that the philosophy of the written canon "is an 'incomplete religion,' which presupposes a complementary religion."[5]

The latter, old-fashioned approach allows fieldwork to reveal the ritual, social and superstitious aspects of "popular Buddhism" that were presumed to function as an augment to the written canon; this complementary approach entails the significant caveat that the "popularizations" may be invalidated by the same canon they are presumed to buttress. It is fair to say that this approach (of contrasting "folk religion" to the written canon) has gone out of vogue along with the theories of Max Weber (馬克斯・韋伯). Weber presented Buddhism as a religion "of the educated gentility [that] could not provide for the emotional and pragmatic needs of the masses."[6] The ethnographer, therefore, stood among the masses, and could take the inventory of cultural accretions that had developed as the "complementary religion":

> Yet, the sociological understanding of the sangha [i.e., monastic community], including its relations with the Buddhist laity, has remained relatively undeveloped compared to other fields of religious sociology. Part of this may be the result of an undue respect for the formative thoughts of scholarly 'ancestors' in the field. Max Weber was among the first to apply systematic sociological perspectives to the study of the sangha. In doing so, however, he set the terms of the debate in ways which may have limited rather than expanded inquiry. Even scholars who have written their own chapters in the sociology of Theravāda still perpetuate some of the same unexamined perspectives first introduced by Weber and others.[7]

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4. Joanna Cook, James Laidlaw, and Jonathan Mair, "What if There is No Elephant?: Towards a Conception of an Un-sited Field," in *Multi-Sided Ethnography*, ed.Mark-Anthony Falzon (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing, 2009), 66.

5. Hans-Dieter Evers, "Buddha and the Seven Gods: The Dual Organization of a Temple in Central Ceylon," *Journal of Asian Studies* 27 (1968): 549.

6. S. J. Tambiah, "Buddhism and This-Worldly Activity," *Modern Asian Studies* 7 (1973): 4.

7. Ivan Strenski, "On Generalized Exchange and the Domestication of the Sangha," *Man* (N.B. the publication was subsequently re-named *JRAI*), New Series, 18 (1983): 463.

Among those "unexamined perspectives" that Weber was so influential in establishing, I would draw attention to the broad assumption (among Western-educated researchers) that Buddhism was philosophically complete, but had lacked social aspects that Weber himself presumed to discover through theorizing and historical speculation. This framework was easily applied to cultural anthropology, whereby participant observation (參與觀察) could seemingly reveal the social structures that Weber had sketched out.

This type of theory may have seemed more compelling when Theravāda countries were remote and exotic places in the European imagination. Weber lived from 1864 to 1920; his impression of Buddhist philosophy (and history) relied upon pioneering translations of that era. Today, anyone conducting fieldwork in Thailand, Laos, or Cambodia would be more likely to surmise that Theravāda Buddhism is a religion entirely devoted to "the emotional and pragmatic needs of the masses." To quote a very pragmatic description:

> Indeed, in Cambodia the pagoda plays an important role in providing education for children, retirement homes for the elderly, and other social functions. This social role will be evident to the visitor, who will undoubtedly note the schools attached to many pagodas, or the many elderly people dressed in either white or black-and-white, living in the temple complex.[8]

> [The Buddha's] doctrine of detachment is reflected Cambodian pagodas. . . . Their beauty is not austere, however, and some are quite elaborate to the point of gaudiness. This reflects the fact that Buddhism is not basically an austere religion.[9]

The current fashion (that, I think, Southwold encapsulates neatly) asserts that the form of Buddhism revealed as "the results of ethnographic fieldwork" is a complete religion unto itself (eschewing any inquiry into its basis in the so-called "incomplete religion" of the ancient texts). Southwold quotes his own motto, "'Basically, I am reporting as Buddhism what the Buddhists I knew taught me'."[10] I know several researchers who would smile ruefully at such a motto, as Theravāda Buddhists will very often explain their own tradition as an attempt to enact something from a canonical text; often enough, informants will openly state their regret that

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8. Raymond A. Zepp, *A Field Guide to Cambodian Pagodas* (Phnom Penh: Bert's Books, 1997), 4.
9. Ibid., p. 3.
10. Southwold, "Buddhism in Life," 448.

they cannot consult the original text that they are trying to preserve, depict, or pay homage to. Quoted below is a very down-to-earth description of one of the most common scenarios encountered in fieldwork, demonstrating that such discussions often direct the researcher back to the written canon, even if what the researcher wants to know is (literally) written on the wall:

> Although the information depicted in the pictures and statues of Cambodian pagodas have at their root the Pali scriptures, or Triptiaka, they take on the flavor of folk stories when told by Cambodians. . . . Thus, there may be several versions of some stories, and it is impossible to state that one is right and another is wrong. Adding to this confusion of versions is the fact that most of Cambodia's monks were killed during the 1970s, and the young generation often have only vague ideas of the stories, if they recognize them at all. . . . A final confusion comes from the fact that many of the inscriptions on the paintings are written in the Pali language, or at least in old, difficult Khmer which the monks cannot read precisely. The visitor should not become too frustrated if he asks a monk to read an explanation of a picture [painted on the wall or ceiling] and is told that the monk cannot read it.[11]

§2.

Southwold's argument does not reject the written Theravāda canon entirely, but specifically rejects the written canon as it is known through European scholarship. This is what he calls "nibbanic Buddhism" (above) and he dismisses it as "largely the product of mainly western scholars."[12] For Europeans who only have access to these texts through European interpretations, dismissing the interpretation is tantamount to dismissing the canon. While Southwold admits that this written canon existed before Europeans started to translate it, "Western scholars distorted it by exaggerating its prominence and authority."[13]

The problem is that Southwold continues to make comparative judgements about canonical sources in reliance upon the same tradition of European scholarship that he reviles as "distorting." Southwold is not alone.

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11. Zepp, *A Field Guide*, 2.
12. Southwold, "Buddhism in Life," 448.
13. Ibid.

These views seem to be especially fashionable amongst European scholars who study Theravāda Buddhism but who cannot read Pali themselves:

> The Buddhism created by the text-centered study [of the Theravāda canon by Europeans] was rational, humanistic, validated by the apparatus of Western scholarship, and centered on the historical actuality of Gautama the man[14] and was unabashedly different from Buddhist practice. As T.W. Rhys Davids himself wrote, "The Buddhism of the Pāli Pitakas is not only a quite different thing from Buddhism as hitherto commonly received, but antagonistic to it."[15]

Although I sympathize with the general complaint that European interpreters have been biased and have misrepresented the canon (and I have published on this issue repeatedly), my response to this problem has been to study the ancient primary sources in their original language myself (i.e., I taught myself to read Pali, 巴利语); this overcomes the bias of secondary sources and enables me to challenge established assumptions when I differ from them. An extremely small number of Europeans have reading comprehension of Pali in the twenty-first century (and an even smaller number can combine this expertise in Pali as a dead language with knowledge of any one of the living traditions, such as Cambodia, Burma, Sri Lanka, etc.); for those who cannot read Pali themselves, asking for advice and assistance from those who can might seem like a reasonable compromise. Unfortunately, Southwold's uncompromising approach (now in vogue) provides an excuse for researchers to disregard these ancient sources or at least to demote their significance; there is a very significant degree of demotion in Southwold's claim that the "nibbanic Buddhism" of the written canon is "actually a minority tradition."[16]

It is misleading to contrast a written canon (in a dead language) *as a "minority"* to the plurality of local traditions (in living languages and contemporary cultures) encountered by anthropologists *as a collective "majority."* Texts do not have social authority because of the number of people who read them, nor even because of the number of people able to read them; on the contrary, the authority of the scriptures extends through

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14. This is the Pali clan-name Gotama, transcribed into Chinese as 瞿曇. In using the phrase "Gautama the man," Snodgrass draws attention to the European scholars' preference for this clan-name, i.e., regarding it as a more vernacular (and less supernatural) way to refer to the Buddha.
15. Judith Snodgrass, "Defining Modern Buddhism: Mr. and Mrs. Rhys Davids and the Pāli Text Society," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 27 (2007): 198.
16. Southwold, "Buddhism in Life," 448.

the (much larger) number of people who defer to them *if and when* they are consulted. The question we should consider is *when* and *how* the texts are consulted (something that differs from one culture to another, and in one historical period in contrast to the next). An interesting example was observed in rural Cambodia by Kobayashi.[17] At one temple, he reports, the monks rejected a particular ghost-feeding ritual after consulting the writ of the Buddhist canon; the ritual they decided to reject was conducted at other temples the researcher had surveyed in the same area and is still generally accepted throughout Cambodia. I quote the justification for abolishing the ritual that Kobayashi reports from the head monk of the temple:

> If one wishes to transfer merit to the dead, rice should be offered to a monk as a source of merit. In Buddha's sacred words in the Tripitaka, we could not find any explanations about bân baybin [i.e., the Cambodian name of this ghost-feeding ritual]. Such practice is really meaningless, because merit must be transferred through Buddhist monks. Dogs eating rice on the field can't help anything.[18]

The final statement refers to the real outcome of throwing rice through the air in the ritual alluded to: regardless of personal religious beliefs, when the ritual is finished, the rice that was thrown through the air falls to the ground, and is often eaten by stray dogs. Although it is anecdotal, this is a useful example of the interaction between textual authority and religious tradition that is ongoing in Theravāda cultures. Although there may be a small minority of people who are able to consult the ancient texts (and an even smaller minority may be motivated to do so), the written canon remains an open resource for anyone who would question or challenge Buddhism as it merely exists.

The power of tradition exists in the habits of mind that deter such questions from arising; the study of culture is research into the sum of questions that are never asked. Whenever such doubts should arise, the priority of the texts over practice is proven, again and again, in tiny "reformations" of this kind: the reform may begin with a single monk's inquiry, and may end with a single temple's minor change in rituals. Meanwhile, nobody questions the fact that the Buddha is depicted on the temple walls with a full head of hair, whereas

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17. Kobayashi Satoru (小林知), "An Ethnographic Study on the Reconstruction of Buddhist Practice in Two Cambodian Temples: With the [sic] Special Reference to Buddhist Samay and Boran," *Southeast Asian Studies* 42 (2005): 495–501.
18. Ibid., 501.

the ancient scriptures uniformly describe him as shaven-bald (an example I've discussed in a separate essay, titled "The Buddha was Bald"). Innumerable examples of this type of unquestioned contradiction could be offered, and this is the substance of what we call culture (as something distinct from belief or knowledge). Meanwhile, "The pre-eminence given to Sinhalese Theravāda Buddhism in mainland Southeast Asia has meant that, periodically, local traditions and texts are measured against the Pāli Canon, and if found lacking, reformed or suppressed."[19]

In this instance, I note, Kobayashi (the researcher quoted above) did not verify (and did not challenge) the monk's claim that the ghost-feeding ritual lacked any canonical basis. If we want to move beyond merely "reporting as Buddhism what the Buddhists I knew taught me" we need to be able to interrogate the original texts ourselves, to present original contrasts between precept and practice. Participant observation (參與觀察) is insufficient if all of the participants are equally ignorant of the written canon; conversely, the example I have just examined shows that the dynamic relation between text and practice can extend from the most ancient written records down to the minutiae of monastic rituals as they are conducted today. If an informant (interviewed in fieldwork) does claim to have some canonical knowledge and the researcher is merely credulous in reporting their claims, then the substance of the work still needs to be verified. In this sense, ethnography without philology leaves the task incomplete.

Even worse (but less readily visible) is the problem that a researcher who is unaware of the canon will be unaware of many questions that are worth asking and will be unable to distinguish recent innovations from (genuinely) ancient traditions. I was astounded to read Judy Ledgerwood's observation of a certain ritual (the *Uposatha*) being performed on the same days of the month now as they were observed 100 years ago; in fact, the significance of the dates (that she comments on) were an established fact of history more than two thousand years ago.[20] In addition to the evidence of the most ancient "core" of the Theravāda canon, this aspect of the religious calendar is also evident in

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19. Elizabeth Guthrie, "A Study of the History and Cult of the Buddhist Earth Deity in Mainland Southeast Asia" (Ph.D. diss., University of Canterbury), 3–4.

20. Judy Ledgerwood, "Buddhist Practice in Rural Kandal Province, 1960 and 2003," in *People of Virtue: Reconfiguring Religion, Power and Moral Order in Cambodia Today*, ed. Alexandra Kent and David P. Chandler (Copenhagen: NIAS Press, 2008), 154.

pre-Buddhist traditions of ancient India.[21] Ledgerwood offers her comments on this (supposed) hundred-year old tradition without any reference to the written canon; if that is valid, it is at least incongruous to see the canon totally omitted in the comparison of her own observation to another Westerner's observations of a century past. The presentation of such observations (as "ethnography without philology") does indeed leave a most important task incomplete and would mislead many readers. A lack of interest in the ancient texts entails that important aspects go unnoticed both by the researcher in the course of their observations, and by the readers of their conclusions.

§3.

By the same token, ethnography and philology can be mutually illuminating in Theravāda Asia, because so many cultural assumptions and folk traditions have developed with constant reference back to the written canon: justifications are sought in the ancient texts (rightly or wrongly), coeval with the development of new cultural forms.

To offer a positive example in brief, consider the ubiquitous goddess called "Phra Thorni" in Cambodia ("Thoranee" in Thailand and Laos). The image of this goddess is found throughout Theravāda Buddhist temples of Cambodia, Thailand and Laos, very often on the pedestal of a Buddha statue, sometimes on the gateways to temples; she almost always appears in the (non-canonical) "biography" of the Buddha, and she is sometimes depicted as a statue unto herself in (secular) public monuments, outside of the temples. She is normally classified as an earth goddess, but could also be described as a goddess of water (rivers, floods, and rainfall, including the power of withholding or releasing the rain). She is linked to Buddhism by one specific narrative: in the folklore version of the Buddha's life story (common to Cambodia, Thailand, and Laos) this goddess is summoned by the Buddha touching the ground on the completion of his meditation, and she then releases a flood by twisting her hair, protecting the Buddha from an army of demons (thus "washing away" the enemies of Buddhism). Again,

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21. Bhikkhu Nyanatusita, *A Translation and Analysis of the Pātimokkha* (Kandy, Sri Lanka: Buddhist Publication Society, 2008), 64.

there seems to be no reason to identify her with earth more than water; her powers are linked to both.[22]

Zepp observes that this goddess, "does not appear in the Tripitaka or other Buddhist accounts outside Southeast Asia, and may have roots in an ancient pre-Buddhist figure in local mythology."[23] Zepp's account refers to her by an alternate Cambodian name, "Nieng Kang Hing," but the standard names "Thorni" and "Thoranee" are simply local attempts to pronounce the Pali name *Dharaṇi* (and her name is still spelled as such in Cambodian orthography).[24] Jaini similarly assumes that this goddess is of local origin, despite this canonical-sounding name: "The legend of *Dharaṇi*, as pointed out by Cœdès, is unknown to the canonical texts and is peculiar to Cambodia and Siam. The earliest image of *Dharaṇi* is found on a stele at Angkor Vat. It is likely, in view of this iconographical evidence, that the legend of *Dharaṇi* is of Khmer [i.e., Cambodian] origin."[25] In commenting on the ubiquity of this goddess in Southeast Asia, Guthrie remarks:

> I began to see the earth deity everywhere I looked: [depicted as a statue] standing with her crocodile in a main traffic roundabout in Phnom Penh [金邊], tattooed onto the arms of an old soldier, presiding over the Sanam Luang in Bangkok [曼谷], stencilled onto the walls of a wat in Luang Prabang [i.e., 老撾北方]. The one place I did not find her was in the Pāli Canon, the texts that Theravāda Buddhism is founded on.[26]

In contrast to these widely-held assumptions, I would point out the following:

1. The name *Dharaṇi* does appear in the Pali canon. In the illustration, I have quoted a passage in full, showing the minor variations revealed by the comparative study of the text.

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22. For much more detail, see Guthrie, "A Study."
23. Zepp, *A Field Guide*, 18.
24. Many more variations on the name are noted by Guthrie, whose detailed study of this goddess goes beyond the countries mentioned above, including evidence from India, Myanmar, Indonesia and elsewhere: "The earth deity's name changes in different countries, but is generally a form of a word for 'earth,' i.e. Pṛthivī, Kṣiti, Dharaṇī, Vasundharā, and so on. In Cambodia the earth deity is known simply by her title . . . (pronounced 'neang kongheng'). . . . In the Tai regions she is known as Nang Thoranee or Mae Thoranee: 'lady earth' or 'mother earth'" ("A Study," 2 n. 2).
25. Padmanabh S. Jaini, "'Mahādibbamanta': A 'Paritta' Manuscript from Cambodia," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 28 (1965): 63.
26. Guthrie, "A Study," 1–2.

2. In this passage, the phrase *Rahadopi tattha Dharaṇi. . .* appears immediately after a list of the names of gods, in a text that is dominated by lists of the names of numerous gods, demi-gods, and demons of various kinds. Many of the gods whose names are preserved in this particular text are no longer celebrated in any culture (i.e., many of the gods named here, though not all, have been forgotten by both Buddhists and Hindus in the intervening centuries).

3. While the primary source text, if correctly interpreted, states *Dharaṇi* as the name of a lake (not a goddess, apparently), there is no reason to assume that Cambodians interpreted it correctly: appearing immediately after a list of gods' names, it would be easy to mistakenly assume that this is one further god (or goddess) in that list.

4. The description of this lake (perhaps mistaken as a goddess) is only one sentence long, but states that *Dharaṇi* is the origin of both the rainclouds and the rain. If this description were applied to the Cambodian goddess (as we know her today) it would seem suitable enough: she controls the floods and the rains.

5. Although the reader might assume this is an obscure passage that I am quoting in the illustration, the particular canonical text quoted here (namely, the *Āṭānāṭiya-sutta*) was considered important and very frequently recited aloud in the pre-modern world. Throughout recorded history, this text was believed to have magical protective powers; indeed, in the preamble to the text itself, its purpose is explained as useful for allaying demons, and it is not surprising that the performance of this text became an important ritual in the medieval Buddhist world.

My conclusion is simply that the opinions I have quoted from Zepp, Jaini, and Guthrie (above) are not strictly accurate: the name *Dharaṇi* appears in the canon, and the peculiar context it appears in would offer an explanation for how this Cambodian goddess acquired her Pali name. I am not challenging the assumption that the true origin of the goddess (and the story of her releasing a flood, etc.) is Cambodian; however, if she is Cambodian, this means that her Pali name must have a separate origin. As mentioned, she also has Cambodian names that are entirely non-Pali, but these do not resemble (and do not provide an explanation for) the name *Dharaṇi*. If we presume that the Cambodians did have their own ancient

Sinhalese (BJT) DN vol. 3, p. 322 (Āṭānāṭiya-sutta)

1. The Sinhalese reads *bhagalavatī*, but notes the variant *sālavatī* from the Burmese edition (the latter is presumably an error: සාල vs. භග).

2. The Sinhalese reads *mayūrakoñcābhirutā* and notes the Burmese text as *mayurakoñcābhirudā* instead. The Khmer text (above right) has the same -*dā* ending as the Burmese edition.

Cambodian Canon vol. 19, p. 108 (DN, Āṭānāṭiya-sutta)

1. In several places the Khmer text has a long *ī* ending where the Sinhalese has a short *i*.

2. The Khmer is clearly *suro*, whereas the Sinhalese apparently reads *sūro* (සූ vs. සු is frequently unclear).

3. Whereas the Sinhalese ends -*tā* (see left, above left).

4. The Sinhalese has *kokilādīhi* (above-left) vs. the Khmer reading *kokilābhīhi* (above).

goddess (of local origin) who controlled the rains and the floods, it would be fair to suppose that they selected this one-sentence description of *Dharaṇi* as an analog for their own goddess; they could do so either by misinterpreting the word "lake," or else by accepting it, and reading the passage as a lake personified as a goddess. If they had done so, their own goddess would suddenly be included in the pantheon of the most ancient Buddhist canon simply through the creative interpretation of one sentence (or, perhaps, through the sincerely inept misinterpretation of one sentence!).

Although it is a matter of inference, it seems impossible that this brief mention of a magical lake named *Dharaṇi* (that controls the rains, etc.) could have prefigured and inspired the Cambodian goddess and the stories surrounding her. Instead, it seems more likely that this passage simply provided an already-existing goddess with one additional epithet, and that the Pali name created a corroborative link between the ancient Indian pantheon and one of Cambodia's local deities.

I would offer this as a positive example of the nexus between ethnographic observation and the written canon. If the reader takes some time to stare at the illustration, they will see that this is slightly tricky work: comparative reading of sources preserved in a dead language is not easy. However, the results can be illuminating, and the only alternative to undertaking such work (for oneself) is to ask a Pali scholar to do it on your behalf.

§4.

Part of the blame for the confusion over the status of the written canon should be apportioned to scholars of the primary source texts: we have not made it easy for ethnographers to know what we mean by "the Theravāda canon." In two sections, I would here (in §4) describe the confusion arising from the relationship between the extant canons (in the plural), then explain (in §5) the confusion that is internal to our understanding of the Theravāda canon. Hopefully, I can also offer some constructive suggestions to alleviate this confusion for ethnographers and other interested scholars, even if this essay cannot be detailed enough to suit Pali specialists.

The first cause of confusion was the mere happenstance whereby the Buddhist canons were revealed to modern scholars in bits and pieces; the order

of the "rediscovery" (and re-printing) of the texts was arbitrary. Recent studies by Urs App discuss the intellectual reactions that accompanied the arrival and publication of the first (poorly translated) canonical texts in Europe[27]; this is much more dramatic than the history of the same period as told within the small circle of textual scholars whose job was to receive and evaluate these texts.[28]

When Europeans first received Chinese texts about Buddhism there were no clear guidelines as to what was of definitive importance and what was merely peripheral to the canonical tradition; the Chinese sources had their own claims to authority based on their (supposed) descent from more ancient Sanskrit (梵文) originals, and Europeans had no special advantage in scrutinizing these claims. As an instructive example, App points out that "the Forty-Two Sections Sutra [四十二章經] had for many centuries been hailed as one of Buddhism's earliest texts and as the first Sanskrit scripture to reach China and to be translated into Chinese, [but] this sutra is in reality a product of fifth-century China."[29] In this case, the Chinese were fooled many centuries ago, and then Europeans were fooled all over again when the text was transmitted across continents (and the text was influential: by happenstance, it was one of the first Buddhist texts to be translated into European languages). China was an important source of canonical texts, even if their importance derived from their (tenuous) connections to Sanskrit sources originating in India; Western scholars inherited these Chinese texts "bundled up" with many cultural assumptions they could hardly know how to question.

As another example, the Buddhist poet Aśvaghoṣa had his first European edition in 1893 (by E. B. Cowell) and then became massively influential due to a translation from Chinese into English by Samuel Beal (promoted as part of Max Müller's popular "Sacred Books of the East" series, starting in 1899–1900). The problem is not that this text went from Sanskrit into Chinese and was then translated again from Chinese into English; the problem is that Westerners have been credulous in assigning definitive importance to works that happened to arrive in Europe first, and then happened to become popular in translation. It is really just happenstance that Aśvaghoṣa became a best seller (in

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27. E.g., Urs App, *Arthur Schopenhauer and China: A Sino-Platonic Love Affair*, Sino-Platonic Papers 200 (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 2010).
28. E.g., Akira Yuyama, *Eugene Burnouf: The Background to his Research into the Lotus Sutra* (Tokyo: The International Research Institute for Advanced Buddhology, Soka University, 2000).
29. App, *Arthur Schopenhauer and China*, 10.

English translation) 100 years ago, but this seems to powerfully warp people's assumptions about the text's significance more than 1000 years ago (raising questions, moreover, about its significance here and now). Fashions in how history has been popularized are more powerful than bare historical facts; the translations of both the the Forty-Two Sections Sutra and Aśvaghoṣa's poetry became influential in the modern era, without any understanding of how these texts related to the historical development of the canon (or, we could say, despite the weakness of their relationship to the canon).

In general, researches into Chinese canonical Buddhism were much more advanced than contemporaneous Theravāda scholarship in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, but the Chinese canon itself contains only an echo of the Theravāda canon, with confusion (naturally) ensuing as to how all these sources relate to each other. The following opinion, I note, is now more than 80 years out of date, but still (in my experience) representative of what many researchers presume to be true:

> The Pali canon is not represented as a whole in Chinese. Only a few of the translations go back to Pali originals. The Chinese Tripitaka consists mainly of translations from Sanskrit and Prakrit, but the old Sanskrit canon itself is not found in Chinese as a unit, although most of it seems to be present in a scattered form.[30]

It is not surprising (in any era, modern or ancient) that Chinese researchers would be confused about the "scattered" correspondence between their own canon and its antecedents in ancient India. In Chinese, all of these canons are imprecisely called *Sān Zàng* (三藏, i.e., "the Tipiṭaka"); the term *Ā Hán* (阿含, "Āgama") is no less confusing.[31]

Westerners have not had much of an advantage, partly because we relied so much on Chinese scholarship as an intermediary: the Chinese canon became accessible before the Theravāda canon, but, more importantly, at every stage of the development of our understanding thereafter, we have had many scholars who could read classical Chinese (in both Asia and Europe) but very few who could read Pali. Classical Chinese has now become a mainstream subject in universities around the world, while the language of the Theravāda canon has

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30. Walter Eugene Clark, "Some Problems in the Criticism of the Sources for Early Buddhist History," *Harvard Theological Review* 23 (1930): 121–47.

31. Contrary to some expectations, this term (阿含) does not identify a text as non-Theravāda; the same term (Āgama) is used in the Pali commentaries, etc.

remained an obscure area of study. Although the form of archaic Chinese used in *Ā Hán* (阿含) literature is a special area of study unto itself (i.e., only a minority of Chinese classicists can read the texts that have putative analogues in the Pali canon) this sub-discipline is copious in contrast to Theravāda canonical research. Remarkably few people even know what the word "Pali" means in any given part of Asia today; both in Southeast Asia and within China there is still widespread confusion as to what the difference between Pali (巴利文) and Sanskrit (梵文) is supposed to be. Several times, Chinese professors have self-confidently (and incorrectly) instructed me that it was inappropriate to refer to Pali as a *wén* (文) because they assumed that Pali was merely a spoken dialect with no written tradition (and no literature) of its own. Of course, this is neither more absurd nor less absurd than what European professors of Buddhism say to me on the same subject; in many ways, we remain at "step 1" in introducing the Pali canon to both the East and the West.

Fomenting further confusion, Western academic attitudes toward the canon have gone through many fads and fashions; some of these have been responses to the emergence of new evidence, and some relate to changes in research methods. In the past, there had been some false hope that modern scholars were going to reconstruct a "pure" canon from the comparative study of Chinese and Indian sources. This benighted duty that Europeans assumed was "reconstructing, as far as possible, the old Sanskrit canon," with the further hope that the comparison of canons would reveal traces of "precanonical Buddhism."[32]

Either implicitly or explicitly, this approach tended to assume that a (non-extant) Sanskrit canon pre-dated the Theravāda canon; this assumption is false. Worse, the idea that scholars can compare two texts to reveal a third one that is more ancient than either of the first two is usually a delusion: in comparing the intact Theravāda canon to the fragments of canons from Central Asia, we primarily learn about the languages and cultures of Central Asia *in the same era as the unearthed fragments concerned*. In other words, when we compare different versions of the canon we do not probe any further backward into the history of the composition of the canon, but instead move forward into the history of its later dissemination. By "Central Asia," we mean the area that now includes Afghanistan (阿富汗), Turkmenistan (土庫曼), and most of the old

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32. Clark, "Some Problems," 138.

Silk Road (絲綢之路) linking this area to China, but the same argument could apply to other examples.

Some Western scholars have been able to "triangulate" fragments of

1. Non-Theravāda traditions (variously recorded in Sanskrit, Prakrit, Gandhārī, etc., with many fragments in languages of pre-Islamic Central Asia, such as Khotanese, Sogdian and Tokharian), with,
2. The Pali canon, and,
3. The "scattered" canons (as described above) partially preserved in Chinese translation.

There are some impressive examples of very detailed studies of this kind[33] but I would warn the reader that this research does not answer the type of philosophical and cultural questions that most people are interested in; I think it is fair to say that the findings arising from these studies are irrelevant to contemporary ethnography (although they are interesting to myself personally). In de Jong's detailed discussion of minor variations between fragments of a certain canonical text, perhaps the sole observation of interest to ethnographers is the conclusion that the text itself "must have been one of the most popular of Buddhist sūtras."[34] This type of finding is not trivial,[35] but it is a contrast to the grandiose expectations of "reconstruction" (such as I've quoted from Clark above) through comparative study. For the most part, these inter-canonical comparisons reveal extremely similar contents arranged in different (numerical) sequences, along with a great deal of evidence of the difficulties that translators struggled with in the ancient world. From the study of these differences, we can learn a lot about

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33. E.g., Valentina Stache-Rosen, *Dogmatische Begriffsreihen im älteren Buddhismus II: Das Saṅgītisūtra und sein Kommentar Saṅgītiparyāya*, 2 vols. (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1968); J. W. de Jong, "The Daśottarasūtra," in *Buddhist Studies*, ed. G. Schopen (Berkeley: Asian Humanities Press, 1979), 251–73.

34. De Jong, "The Daśottarasūtra," 252.

35. Indeed, it is very difficult (or perhaps impossible) for ethnographers to know what elements of the Buddhist canonical panoply were actually popular with audiences (in any given culture, in any particular historical period) without reference to "hard" textual (and archaeological) research of this kind.

the culture of translation and transmission (in the place and time of the excavated fragments), but very little about Buddhism.

The recent discovery of a large volume of non-Theravāda manuscripts in Afghanistan (only known to scholars from 1999 forward)[36] could have started a new era of such research through the "triangulation" of sources. Instead, I surmise that it will affirm the sense of disappointment with non-Theravāda sources that mounted during the last hundred years. The discovery of a Sanskrit analog to the Pali *Dīgha Nikāya* is "a dream come true" for many Western scholars, as both are analogous to the *Cháng Ā Hán* (長阿含) in the Chinese canon. Alas, palpable reality can rarely satisfy the fantasy that anticipated it. Contrary to the optimism of Clark, Central Asian fragments primarily teach us about the cultures that transmitted Buddhism in Central Asia. Secondarily, the type of information that we glean from comparing two different recensions of the same text (where they are the same text) only demonstrates two different strategies to preserve the same story; I use the term "strategy" because these are (in my opinion) intentionally employed by human authors. As an example, in one instance the Theravāda canon preserves two stories as two separate *sutta*s (經), one after the other, whereas the newly-discovered Sanskrit version has the two stories combined as one text[37]; if we accept that these are simply two strategies employed by storytellers, the difference becomes banal, and cannot provide the materials for any kind of reconstruction. This stymies the (benighted) quest for greater authenticity and authority in a subtle but pervasive way. For one further example, I do find it interesting that the Sanskrit version has transposed the *Brahmajāla-sutta* (梵動經) with the *Dasuttara* and *Saṅgīti* (十上經 & 眾集經), "and it is difficult to avoid the impression that the order of sections and texts within them has been reversed intentionally" in contrasting the Sanskrit to the Pali equivalents[38]; however, this type of intentional change only demonstrates that the non-Theravāda schools were revising their own canon with an awareness of the Theravāda canon, seeming all the more derivative in

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36. Jens-Uwe Hartmann, "Contents and Structure of the /Dīrghāgama/ of the (Mūla-)Sarvāstivādins," *Annual Report of the International Research Institute for Advanced Buddhology at Soka University* 7 (2004): 119–37.

37. The two texts alluded to here are the *Mahā-Parinibbāna-sutta* (analogous to the 大般涅盘经) followed by the *Mahā-Sudassana-sutta* (i.e., the 16th and 17th texts in the *Dīgha Nikāya*); according to Hartmann (ibid., 4) the Sanskrit recension discussed presents both stories as one continuous narrative.

38. Ibid., 4–5.

so doing. Inasmuch as the Sanskrit corpus is derivative of the Pali, the study of the differences is banal; indeed, even when the Sanskrit derives from some other antecedent (prior to but sharing origins with the Pali) we still have no advantage in "authority" nor "authenticity" (but instead, just a separate set of errors). Thirdly, if we compare two texts that do not preserve the same story we have no basis for comparison whatsoever, and so all of the same hopes and pretensions (of "reconstruction," etc.) collapse. Although the discovery of a "new" story might be welcome for the casual reader, if we discover an allegedly-canonical text without any parallel in the other canons, it is a philological dead-end.

The same type of problem described in this type of "triangulation" of sources limits findings that are possible through the "two sided" approach of, e.g., a very careful comparative study of the Pali and Chinese versions of the *Brahmajāla-sutta* (梵動經) undertaken by Cheng Jianhua [n.d.]. We can either read the findings of such a comparison with a "forward looking" interest in the historical problems of the Chinese translation (and adaptation) of Buddhism, or else with a "backward looking" interest that simply stops with the Theravāda canon (because there is no earlier evidence to consider). In looking backward, the most we can hope to discover are the sectarian differences between the non-Theravāda schools showing up in revisions to the text; evidence of this kind is very much posterior to the creation of the Theravāda canon.[39] Conversely, these discoveries are of little interest to non-specialists (including ethnographers) because these non-Theravāda schools of Buddhism are now extinct.

We cannot infer anything about the canon's first composition from differences that arose in later stages of transmission and translation. The difference between first composition and later transmission involves a space of centuries and, in most cases, hundreds of kilometres. Culturally, this difference describes a shift from the attitudes of authorship to the attitudes of conservatorship. The culture of the conservator was that "[e]very measure [should be] taken to ensure that the early literature was as fixed and accurate as it could be under the circumstances" with the ideal of "word for word accuracy" in transmission.[40]

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39. Cp.: "we must admit that this evidence reflects a well developed literary tradition, and not the conditions which existed at the beginning of Buddhist composition" (Alexander Wynne, "The Oral Transmission of the Early Buddhist Literature," *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 27 [2004] 120).

40. Ibid. 122–23, cf. 102–4.

In contrasting the Theravāda and non-Theravāda canons, we are merely studying slightly different strategies that were employed to preserve canonical Buddhism; the comparative method is only useful where these are derivative of the same antecedents (or wherein they attempt to tell the same story), regardless of whether they are written in Sanskrit or not. For all of these reasons, contrasting canons cannot reveal anything about "precanonical" Buddhism. These are fundamental facts that are, perhaps, forgotten in the enthusiasm for evidence that is simultaneously "new" and "ancient" (such as the newly discovered manuscripts from Afghanistan certainly are).

Any hope that Westerners formerly had of reconstructing a canon older than (and more authoritative than) the Theravāda canon is now over (even though the materials that are now available for this benighted quest are now much better than ever before). Viewed positively, this also means that the study of the Theravāda canon itself is more important than ever before (i.e., an attitude very much the opposite of the sources quoted in §1 and §2).

A recent publication reports that "the enterprise of reconstructing precanonical Buddhism" is still underway in Japan, and is still based on the method of comparing different canons, though this has been out-of-fashion for a long time in the West.[41] The same disparity between the trends seems to be evident in the Japanese contribution to debates about the date of the historical Buddha.[42] In many Mahāyāna countries, one of the major effects of the comparison of the Theravāda canon to the Chinese versions has been a renewed interest in the passages that were identified as relatively ancient and authentic by their correspondence to the Pali (whereas other texts, like the aforementioned Forty-Two Sections Sutra, were effectively demoted by modern scholarship). Reportedly, in modern Korea the Āgama (阿含) texts suddenly emerged from the confusing morass of the Chinese canon to come to the fore of scholarly discourse because modern Theravāda scholarship demonstrated their connection to the historical Buddha (in contrast to Mahāyāna texts of later origin, etc.).[43] None of the Buddhist canons were arranged in chronological

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41. Sungtaek Cho, "The Rationalist Tendency in Modern Buddhist Scholarship," *Philosophy East and West* 52 (2002): 435.

42. Charles S. Prebish, "Cooking the Buddhist Books: The Implications of the New Dating of the Buddha for the History of Early Indian Buddhism," *Journal of Buddhist Ethics* 15 (2008): 12–13. Online: http://blogs.dickinson.edu/buddhistethics/files/2010/05/prebish-article.pdf

43. Cho, "The Rationalist Tendency," 427. I note that Cho himself is writing as an opponent of this tendency; he quotes from various Korean scholars and describes this historical reaction, but he is a

order; Theravāda scholarship revived interest in the Mahāyāna canon with the exciting possibility of separating the most ancient texts into historical strata. This, also, is a fashion that cannot last long (though it may come and go at different times in Japan, Korea, etc.).

I surmise that many scholars plunged into the study of non-Theravāda materials hoping to discover something "more ancient" and "more authentic" than the Theravāda canon (even if they are searching for a "proto-canon" that only existed in the modern imagination); in the end, for Japanese and Western scholars alike, I suspect, this quest will inadvertently demonstrate the unique philological significance of the Theravāda canon itself, in contrast to all of the (failed) attempts at the "reconstruction" of something pre-canonical. The hard work of textual comparison is praiseworthy in all of the examples I've mentioned, but it does not answer the type of expectation quoted from Clark above, nor, in my opinion, can it even broach simple questions such as the date of the historical Buddha.[44]

In this section I have tried to sketch out the reasons as to why the simple concept of "the canon" has remained contentious amongst specialists, and why it continues to be a source of frustration and confusion for non-specialists. One reaction to this situation has been the rejection of the word "canon" by some scholars, though it is an abolition proposed in a genial and sometimes jocular mood. Hallisey uses the terms "allegedly canonical" and "allegedly non-canonical," perhaps implying that we should refrain from judgement (as to what the canon is) due to lack of evidence[45]; similarly, Collins wrote an article with a slightly droll title, inviting us to question "the Very Idea of the Pali Canon."[46] This lack of consonance about canonicity can be seen in a positive light; for some, perhaps, it reflects a spirit of skepticism as new evidence becomes available (and as old assumptions go out of vogue). Unfortunately, many respond to the same discord by eschewing the canon entirely, or by denying its salience to their research, or by suggesting that the notion of the canon is somehow a fabrication of Western scholarly debate (as discussed in §§1–2, above, and in §6, below).
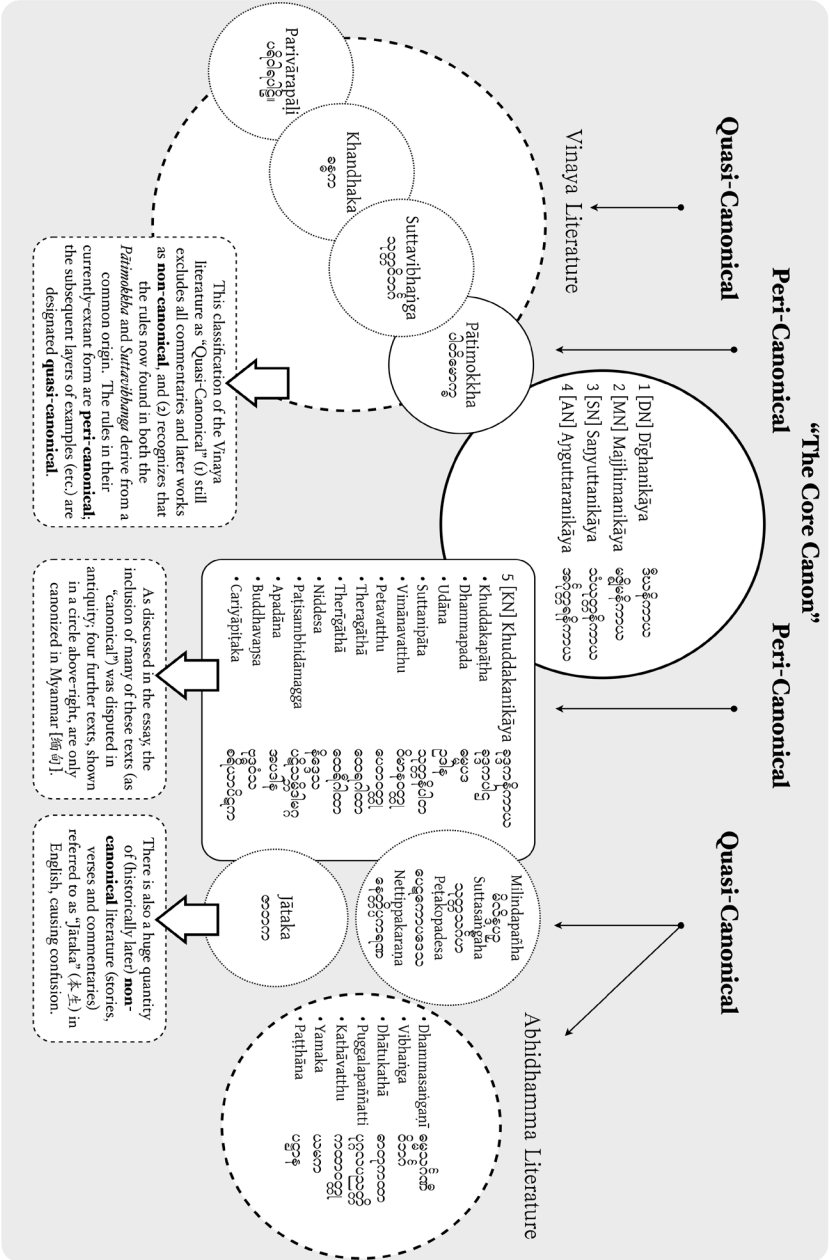
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critic of the resulting attitudes and assumptions about Buddhism.

44. Cf. Prebish, "Cooking the Buddhist Books," 1–21.

45. C. Hallisey, "Nibbānasutta: An Allegedly Non-Canonical Sutta on Nibbāna as a Great City," *Journal of the Pali Text Society* 18 (1993): 97–130.

46. Steven Collins, "On the Very Idea of the Pali Canon," *Journal of the Pali Text Society* 15 (1990): 89–126.

Quasi-Canonical

Peri-Canonical

Vinaya Literature

Parivārapāḷi ပရိဝါရပါဠိ

Khandhaka ခန္ဓက

Suttavibhaṅga သုတ္တဝိဘင်း

Pātimokkha ပါတိမောက္ခ

"The Core Canon"

Peri-Canonical

1 [DN] Dīghanikāya ဒီဃနိကာယ
2 [MN] Majjhimanikāya မဇ္ဈိမနိကာယ
3 [SN] Saṃyuttanikāya သံယုတ္တနိကာယ
4 [AN] Aṅguttaranikāya အင်္ဂုတ္တရနိကာယ

This classification of the Vinaya literature as "Quasi-Canonical" (i) still excludes all commentaries and later works as **non-canonical**, and (2) recognizes that the rules now found in both the *Pātimokkha* and *Suttavibhaṅga* derive from a common origin. The rules in their currently-extant form are **peri-canonical**; the subsequent layers of examples (etc.) are designated **quasi-canonical**.

5 [KN] Khuddakanikāya ခုဒ္ဒကနိကာယ
• Khuddakapāṭha ခုဒ္ဒကပါဌ
• Dhammapada ဓမ္မပဒ
• Udāna ဥဒါန
• Suttanipāta သုတ္တနိပါတ
• Vimānavatthu ဝိမာနဝတ္ထု
• Petavatthu ပေတဝတ္ထု
• Theragāthā ထေရဂါထာ
• Therīgāthā ထေရီဂါထာ
• Niddesa နိဒ္ဒေသ
• Paṭisambhidāmagga ပဋိသမ္ဘိဒါမဂ်
• Apadāna အပဒါန
• Buddhavaṃsa ဗုဒ္ဓဝံသ
• Cariyāpiṭaka စရိယာပိဋက

As discussed in the essay, the inclusion of many of these texts (as "canonical") was disputed in antiquity; four further texts, shown in a circle above-right, are only canonized in Myanmar [緬甸].

Milindapañha မိလိန္ဒပဉှာ
Suttasaṅgaha သုတ္တသင်္ဂဟ
Petakopadesa ပေဋကောပဒေသ
Nettippakaraṇa နေတ္တိပ္ပကရဏ

Jātaka ဇာတက

There is also a huge quantity of (historically later) **non-canonical** literature (stories, verses and commentaries) referred to as "Jātaka" (本生) in English, causing confusion.

Quasi-Canonical

Abhidhamma Literature

Dhammasaṅgaṇī ဓမ္မသင်္ဂဏီ
Vibhaṅga ဝိဘင်း
Dhātukathā ဓာတုကထာ
Puggalapaññatti ပုဂ္ဂလပညတ္တိ
Kathāvatthu ကထာဝတ္ထု
Yamaka ယမိုက်
Paṭṭhāna ပဋ္ဌာန်

§5.

My second illustration tries to offer a positive remedy for the confusion I've already described, however, it will also illustrate some further misconceptions arising from the organization of the Tipiṭaka (三藏). Immediately after the chart, the four categories I have proposed are first listed and then explained (as briefly as possible). In reading the chart from left to right we see a breakdown of the three traditional "baskets" that the Tipiṭaka is organized into (1. *Vinaya*, 2. *Sutta*, and 3. *Abhidhamma*, although, in the discussion below some significant exceptions to this tradition are mentioned); at the top of the chart we see the three categories that I'm imposing onto the canon (from the top down) as follows, with the fourth remaining unstated.

1. The core canon, above the main circle in the middle of the chart.
2. What I have called peri-canonical texts, requiring the most explanation below, to the immediate left and right of the core.
3. Quasi-canonical texts, the furthest removed from the core (again, on both the left and the right).
4. Non-canonical Theravāda literature (i.e., texts with no claim to being included in the canon). These texts are not shown on the chart (as our purpose is to show what is included within the canon, not what is excluded by it).

What I refer to as "the core canon" includes only the first four *Nikāya*s (refer to the chart for details). This is the most ancient of what we now call *sutta* (經) material, and is (roughly) analogous to (some of) what the Chinese canon has (imperfectly) preserved as the Āgamas (阿含). Grouping these four together (and these four only) is not a novel claim, but simply clarifies an assumption that is often implicit (and applied inconsistently) in Pali studies; as Malalasekera says of the *Nikāya*s, "The first four are homogeneous and cognate in character."[47] This is a polite way of saying that the fifth one is, in some

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47. G. P. Malalasekera, *Dictionary of Pāli Proper Names*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Pali Text Society: 1937–1938), s.v. *Sutta Piṭaka*. Malalasekera's volumes are henceforth cited as DPPN, a standard abbreviation in Theravāda studies (i.e., a convention used by a small number of authors); it is an acronym from the title of this often-used reference work, which is now widely available as a digitized resource on the internet.

sense, excluded from being in the same category as the first four (a distinction discussed in the pages following).

The "peri-canonical" texts are shown on the chart both to the left and the right of the core canon. On the left-hand side, the monastic rules (具足戒) form the hypothetical bridge between the core canon and the *Vinaya* literature. These rules are found with minor differences in both the *Pātimokkha* and the *Suttavibhaṅga*; the rules provided the basis for the subsequent elaboration of the *Vinaya* texts (shown in circles further to the left in this chart). The basic sequence and priority of development of these texts is not controversial, because it is demonstrable from evidence internal to the texts, i.e., how they are derived from one another (as shown on the chart, the *Parivāra* is the last addition, and thus displayed as the furthest from the core canon, with the *Khandhaka* being subsequent to the *Suttavibhaṅga*, etc.).[48] The old-fashioned view of this history allows several centuries for the elaboration of the *Vinaya* literature, with the rules providing a nucleus common to all schools of Buddhism as late as 250 BCE[49]; both the details and the fundamental assumptions of this timeline are disputed in current scholarship.

The monastic rules had a peculiar priority both in shaping the *Vinaya* literature and also in re-shaping the *sutta* (經) literature into the form that is now extant; the concept of the *sutta* itself seems to have devolved from these rules[50] and, I would add, there is a reciprocal relationship between one portion of the *Vinaya* literature and the (*Dīgha Nikāya*'s) *Mahā-Parinibbāna-Sutta* (analogous to the Chinese *Dà Bō Niè Pán Jīng*, 大般涅盤經).[51] This is a recurrent feature of Theravāda scholarship: things that are separated in their origins are often united in their revisions.

Whereas the left-hand side of the chart shows an orderly progression, the right-hand side is fairly messy and confusing. To the right of the core canon (on the chart) is the fifth *Nikāya*, with a long list of texts that are considered part of the Theravāda canon in Sri Lankan orthodoxy today. I specify Sri Lanka (斯裡蘭卡) because a few texts are excluded by the Sri Lankans but are accepted as canonical in Myanmar (緬甸); these appear on the chart as "quasi-canonical,"

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48. Oscar Hinüber, *A Handbook of Pāli Literature* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2000), 20–22.

49. Nyanatusita, *A Translation and Analysis of the Pātimokkha*, 24–25 and n. 11.

50. Ibid., 50–54.

51. E. Obermiller, "The Account of the Buddha's Nirvana and the first Councils according to the Vinayaksudraka," *Indian Historrical Quarterly* 4 (1932): 781–84.

grouped in a separate circle (to the right of the fifth *Nikāya*) with the first title being the *Milindapañha*.

Within the paradigm of Sri Lankan orthodoxy, the fifth *Nikāya* has a peripheral place and has been regarded with varying degrees of legitimacy in the history of Theravāda Buddhism. The Pali commentaries (of Buddhaghosa, written ca. 400–450 CE) record that many of these texts were rejected by certain schools of monks in (contemporaneous) Sri Lanka; reportedly, one school of monastic scholars (the reciters of the *Dīgha Nikāya*) rejected four of these texts as entirely non-canonical and relegated twelve of the remaining texts to the category of *Abhidhamma* literature.[52] The existence of debates of this kind in antiquity reflects the fact that Buddhist scholars were struggling with their own categories to separate out the "quasi-canonical" elements of the Pali corpus, in their own terms.

It is outside the scope of this essay to review current philological debates about each and every one of the texts on the chart (although, I note, Hinüber's *Handbook* attempts to provide such a survey); however, I would emphasize that the relative dating of these "peri-canonical" texts (as I have called them) most often relies on evidence internal to the texts themselves, and is thus non-controversial. For example, in Sri Lankan orthodoxy, the poems of the *Jātaka* (本生) are considered canonical, but not the prose: there is a clear contrast between verses (詩) and prose (散文) within the text and (therefore) this is not controversial (and is not offensive to anyone's religion), even if the assumption that the layers of prose were later additions may now be debatable. If we accept this first distinction, we must (therefore) accept that a third text quoting the prose layer aforementioned is even later in its origins (and is thus "less canonical" by degrees). This is not merely hypothetical: it has been demonstrated, e.g., with the last text in the fifth *Nikāya* shown on the chart, called the *Cariyāpiṭaka*.[53] Obviously, if the *Jātaka*'s prose is non-canonical, it would be contradictory to define an even later text (that is partly derivative of this non-canonical source) as "canonical." Contradictions of this kind exist within the fifth *Nikāya*, and thus, as I say, there were reasons for scholars of antiquity to consider these texts as less-than-entirely-canonical, without any intervention from modern researchers.

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52. B. C. Law, "Chronology of the Pali Canon," Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute 12 (1930): 176, 195; cf. DPPN, s.v. *Dīghabhānakā*, cf. s.v. *Cariyāpiṭaka*.
53. DPPN, s.v. *Cariyāpiṭaka*.

As one further example, I would note that another text in the fifth *Nikāya*, titled the *Apadāna*, allegedly quotes an *Abhidhamma* text called the *Kathāvatthu*[54]; the latter text is traditionally ascribed to the era of Emperor Aśoka (阿育王, i.e., ca. 250 BCE).[55] The fact that this is a "traditional" ascription does not necessarily mean that it is true, however, it does mean that the status of the text was already debated by monastic scholarship in pre-modern history, and its origins were decided to be very much subsequent to the death of the Buddha (without meddling from modern scholars, and, thus, we cannot be called controversial for pointing out the same thing now). In this case, the derivation of one text from another then marks both as dubious, without controversy: if the *Apadāna* post-dates the *Kathāvatthu,* in what sense can it be called "canonical"? Although I am proposing this new category of the "peri-canonical," my point here is that *only the term itself is new*: these texts were already marked-out as a sub-category (in some sense) by indigenous scholars, without any Western influence in the matter. It is neither novel nor offensive to affirm that (within the canon) some texts are more canonical than others.

In sum, inconsistencies of this kind are nevertheless consistent in marking the fifth *Nikāya* as a miscellaneous category at the periphery of the canon (whereas there is no such variation possible in the contents of the first four *Nikāya*s).

It is even more instructive to note that the Pali commentaries record an alternate method of organizing the entire canon by extending the fifth *Nikāya* to include both the *Vinaya* Literature and the *Abhidhamma*.[56] If this method had prevailed, it would allow a simpler two-category view of the Theravāda canon, with the core canon (of four *Nikāya*s) clearly set to one side, and "everything else" put into this miscellaneous category of the fifth *Nikāya*. I surmise that this could have been unpopular because it demotes the status of the monastic rules somewhat (i.e., if we have only two categories, we would seemingly "lower" the *Vinaya* rules to the same level as collections of poetry and apocryphal storytelling).[57] What is more fundamental is that the mere existence of this

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54. DPPN, s.v. *Apadāna*.

55. I am presuming the emperor's death to be 232 BCE and his reign to commence less than 30 years earlier, perhaps in 268 BCE (any debate on this point is outside of the remit of the current article).

56. DPPN, s.v. *Khuddaka Nikāya*.

57. To be more explicit: if the commentaries did allow both interpretations of the fifth *Nikāya* as equally valid (with one being a "narrow" interpretation and the other being a "wider" use of the term *Nikāya* itself, as according to Law, "Chronology," 184) and if this had been a widely-held view

type of ambivalence toward the canon's organization demonstrates that what we now think of as "the structure of the canon" has historically devolved from (changing) cultural attitudes toward the texts. Those attitudes are no longer susceptible to change because the Pali language itself is now dead, and remarkably few people are conversant in the literature.

I will not devote very much space to describing the third category of the quasi-canonical texts (可疑經典). The most difficult aspect to discuss is the structure of the *Vinaya* literature (on the left of the chart), and enough of this has already been explained above (in delineating the role of the monastic rules, etc.). It is less difficult but more contentious to speak of the *Abhidhamma* literature (on the right-hand side of the chart); this corpus of texts is simply and bluntly acknowledged by all specialized scholars as *the least canonical* of additions to the canon and, in relative chronology, it was added last.[58] Hinüber remarks, "The language of the *Abhidhamma* texts is clearly distinct from the usage found in the first two *Piṭakas*."[59] Evidence of this kind is obvious, but only for the tiny minority of people who work with primary sources.

Categorizing the Theravāda *Abhidhamma* as quasi-canonical is only "contentious" for two reasons that are worth mentioning (briefly) because they directly interfere with fieldwork in Southeast Asia today. The first is that the *Abhidhamma* texts are revered as magical in a wide range of cults and cultures of Southeast Asia, and almost none of these rituals involve reading comprehension of the texts themselves.[60] Very few people in Southeast Asia think of the *Abhidhamma* as a corpus of palpable texts; for most, the word suggests an impalpable ideal. Secondly, the term *Abhidhamma* is contentious simply because the word itself is now so commonly misused (and misunderstood) that people frequently get confused and take offense no matter how carefully we may speak about the subject.

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during that era of authorship (ca. 400–450 CE, as aforementioned) then we could surmise that one of the two interpretations has waned away due to its unpopularity since that time (leaving only this trace in commentaries, such as the *Sumaṅgalavilāsinī*, etc.).

58. Law, "Chronology," 183; cf. DPPN s.v. *Abhidhamma Piṭaka*.

59. Hinüber, *A Handbook of Pāli Literature*, 68.

60. Many of these beliefs have no connection whatsoever to the content of the texts, and often invoke the *Abhidhamma* symbolically, e.g., through the recitation of magical formulas that are not meaningful in any language. Justin McDaniel has published on this subject in Lao and Northern Thai cultures (*Gathering Leaves and Lifting Words* [Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008], esp. ch. 8).

As I've noted on the chart, we have a similar problem with the word *Jātaka* today, but whereas contemporary Buddhists treat the *Jātaka* as a genre (defined aesthetically) their idea of the *Abhidhamma* is instead supernatural and rather nebulous. In a sense, there is nothing surprising about a story that resembles the style of a *Jātaka* being called by this same term, i.e., not even if the person telling the story knows that it was first written in medieval Thailand, with no connection to ancient India whatsoever. Indeed, it is not offensive to clarify that one text is a locally-written *Jātaka* (of some relatively-recent century), whereas another is considered "canonical" in origin, because the term is now informally used to mean a genre that is inclusive of the apocryphal and the ancient alike. By contrast, one Cambodian professor was very much offended when I explained to him that a text he regarded as "*Abhidhamma*" was, in fact, first written in twentieth-century Myanmar and had never existed in any language more ancient than modern Burmese (緬甸語). He was surprised because he had already been translating this text from English into Cambodian for several years. He had assumed that he was translating the canonical *Abhidhamma*, but he had no clear notion of what the word is supposed to mean. Both *Jātaka* and *Abhidhamma* texts, I would note, are performed as part of funeral rituals throughout mainland Southeast Asia; this is one very simple reason why they are taken much more seriously here than elsewhere (i.e., regardless of their contents).

In contrast to the tremendous reverence I've just described, many of the western scholars who devoted their time to the *Abhidhamma* literature left castigating remarks against the texts. After some 40 years of work of this kind (by her own estimate) C. A. F. Rhys-Davids described the European efforts to research the *Abhidhamma* as a hunting expedition that only captured "a bag of mice"; she repeatedly asks whether or not this entire venture had been a "waste of time."[61] She does also remark that the study of the *Abhidhamma* (as a corpus of texts entirely subsequent to the *sutta*s of the core canon) demonstrated some interesting intellectual developments in contrast to the earlier canon; Rhys-Davids calls these later developments a new "discipline in consistency of thought and language," and also "a kind of intensive and introspective growth" that took place "in the course of perhaps a few centuries."[62] However, her evaluation of the *Abhidhamma* literature as a whole was of a "cenotaph of

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61. C. A. F. Rhys-Davids, "The Abhidhamma-Pitaka and Commentaries," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* 2 (1923): 245–46.
62. Ibid., 247.

the works of a dead culture."[63] She clarified her meaning by drawing attention to the etymology of this word "cenotaph": she was not merely reviling it as a tomb, but as an empty tomb.

In discussing the *Abhidhamma* we have a clear contrast between the attitudes of modern scholars and (ongoing) Buddhist tradition. For the purposes of modern scholarship, these are blatantly non-canonical texts that were (somehow) added to the canon after-the-fact. While we have commentarial records of dissent about the canonicity of these sources within Theravāda monastic tradition (similar to the foregoing discussion of the fifth *Nikāya*), the supernatural myth that is offered as an excuse for including these texts in the canon is itself an invention of an even later era (i.e., the myth itself first appears in the commentaries, and has no basis in the canon).[64] The problem here is not the contrast between myth and reality, but the contrast between one era of mythology and another. Nobody who actually reads these texts can accept a theory that they are of simultaneous origin with the rest of the canon; it hardly matters if the theory is supernatural or not.

Without digressing further, I would note that the *Abhidhamma* is also the most variegated in comparing each version of the canon to the others:

> It may be noted that this Sanskrit canon contained seven Abhidharma texts, just as the Pali canon contains seven Abhidhamma texts. But these two sets of texts seem to be entirely unrelated. They are not variants from one common tradition but independent compositions.[65]

> Further, [the Chinese canon] contains seven Abhidharma texts, but these seem to differ in toto from the Pali Abhidhamma texts. . .[66]

In my opinion, this asymmetry was made much more important by relatively late scholars such as Xuán Zàng (玄奘) whose translations both preserved and promoted (non-Theravāda) Abhidharma texts in China (in the seventh century CE). Resultantly, works like the *Abhidharmakośa* (that have no analogy in the Theravāda canon) became popular in China (and were perceived as important components of the canon there). It is an overt fact that the text just mentioned was written by Vasubandhu (世親, a.k.a. 天親) in the fourth century CE, with

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63. Ibid., 245.
64. Hinüber, *A Handbook of Pāli Literature*, 66.
65. Clark, "Some Problems," 137.
66. Ibid., p. 127.

no possible connection to the historical Buddha; from a Theravāda perspective, it is a "pseudo-*Abhidhamma*" treatise; conversely, in light of all the facts we have reviewed above, the whole of the Theravāda *Abhidhamma* could be described as "pseudo-canonical." The proposed term quasi-canonical would encompass all of these texts that are overtly subsequent to the canon, and yet are (incongruously) included within it; this allows us to avoid statements about which texts are "pseudo-" from one perspective or another.

The main advantage of the foregoing "practical guide" to the canon is, in fact, inverse to all that I have said: while I have summarized historical distinctions that researchers should understand before fieldwork is undertaken, this also enables them to disregard many (spurious) historical distinctions that they will encounter both in print and in speech.

At present, Theravāda scholarship of every kind is extremely lenient about pseudo-historical claims that are offered about texts found within (what I have called) the core canon. Claims about specific texts (and even specific concepts) being "later" and "earlier" are made very lazily and informally, often without proper citation; learning when to disregard such claims (and when to take them seriously) is a science unto itself. As a remarkable example (from a remarkable scholar) G. P. Malalasekera contradicted his own better research in suggesting that King Yama (閻王, a.k.a. 閻羅) only performs judgement on the dead in "later literature"[67]; on the contrary, the same author's own article (written decades earlier!) informs us that King Yama appears in the most ancient part of the Theravāda canon.[68] There can be no debate whatsoever that King Yama appears as the judge of the dead (and the king of hell) in the most ancient stratum of Buddhists texts that exist in any canon (i.e., what I have called the core canon)[69]; nevertheless, in recent generations it has been routine for scholars to propose pseudo-historical distinctions of this kind *in passing* (without proof or even citations)—even if they know better themselves.

With all of these warnings having been offered (in the spirit of practical advice) I would reiterate that my message here remains positive: as with the example of the name *Dharaṇi* (§3, above) there are innumerable useful

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67. G. P. Malalasekera, "'Transference of Merit' in Ceylonese Buddhism," *Philosophy East and West* 17 (1967): 85.

68. DPPN, s.v. *Yama*.

69. For one example among many, see the *Devadūta sutta*, the 130th *sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikāya* (PTS 3 [1902]:178–179).

applications of canonical materials to fieldwork, and what we discover in fieldwork should inspire new inquiries into the canon as well. Unfortunately, this is not in vogue.

§6.

Instead, the current fashion seems to be comparative claims about what the researcher presumes to be the "doctrinal rationality" of the written canon as opposed to "the diversity of cultural practices" and "performative ritual realities" that ethnographers can uncover in their fieldwork.[70] The central assumption (that I would refute here) is that the written canon is "rational" whereas contemporary culture is "irrational."

I have grave doubts that these researchers have studied the texts that they deem to be "rational" in these comparisons. In a recent article, Anne Hansen attempts to contrast a "rational" *sutta* ([71]經) to the *Jātaka* (本生) tradition in general[72]; she thinks that a canonical text called the *Mahā-Parinibbāna-sutta* exemplifies the "rational" tendency that Europeans exaggerated, in contrast to the Buddha as he is depicted in *Jātaka* literature. In fact, the *sutta* she has selected (and quoted) as an exemplar of this "rationalism" contains all of the same magical aspects of storytelling found in the *Jātaka*s: in the *Mahā-Parinibbāna-sutta* the Buddha remembers previous lives, predicts the future, magically causes earthquakes, interacts with demi-gods, demons, ghosts, etc., and he performs both psychic and physical miracles. Hansen neither quotes nor mentions any of these magical aspects of the story, creating the illusion that this *sutta* excludes the supernatural (and other *Jātaka*-like mythological elements) to which she would contrast it. She claims that this *sutta* she (selectively) quotes from shows the Buddha as a human, historical figure, "rather than the mythic character represented in Jataka narratives."

What really is the supposed difference between this *sutta* and the *Jātaka*s that equates to "modernist ideas of rationalism"?[73] It is simply not true that the

70. Juliane Schober, "Communities of Interpretation in the Study of Religion in Burma," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 39 (2008): 261 (citing Collins).
71. Anne Hansen, "Modernism and Morality in the Colonial Era," in Kent and Chandler, eds., *People of Virtue*, 45.
72. Ibid.
73. Ibid., 37.

Mahā-Parinibbāna-sutta features "the demythologized historical Buddha,"[74] and I can only imagine that the author making this comparison has relied on biased secondary sources, or that she is somehow unfamiliar with the primary source she is quoting to support her argument. Similarly, I find Schober's contrasting claims about "[the] rationality of Pali and especially *abhidhamma* texts" extremely dubious.[75] The texts these scholars allude to (and dismiss as "rational") are, in fact, brimful of precisely the type of magic and mysticism that they presume to discover in their ethnography (and that they pretend such ancient texts are lacking). I surmise that the contrast they offer their readers is misleading because these authors are contrasting something known to something unknown.

There is an equivocation between "rational" and "scriptural" in many of these English-language studies of Southeast Asian Buddhism. Hansen quotes the term "scripturalism" from Tambiah[76] and then equates this with "rationalism" and "rationalized Buddhism" (in Cambodia, Thailand and Burma) without defining what she means by "rational."[77] Perhaps this can be explained as confusion between the "rational act" of consulting the written record and the presumed rationality of the content of the scriptures themselves. To return to the example quoted from Kobayashi (in §2, above), the act of the monks consulting the written canon (to either certify or invalidate a particular ritual) can be described clearly enough as "scripturalism"; however, I think it is wildly misleading to describe this as a "rationalist" opposition of "modernity" to "tradition." It would be utterly false to infer that the ancient texts are opposed to ghosts (or ghost-feeding) in general: in this example, the monks simply rejected one method of ghost-feeding for another, and the ritual remains a merit-transfer ceremony intended to benefit ghosts, particularly those in hell. Only minor differences in ritual are resolved in comparing current practices to the ancient texts. The contents of such scriptures (dealing with hell or any other topic) are neither well-known to the anthropologists, nor are they well-known to their informants (interviewed in fieldwork) in contemporary Southeast Asia.

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74. Ibid., 45.

75. Schober, "Communities of Interpretation," 260–61.

76. Anne Hansen, "Modernist Reform in Khmer Buddhist History," *Siksācakr* 8–9 (special issue 2006–2007): 34; cf. eadem, "Modernism and Morality," 41.

77. Hansen, "Modernist Reform," 38.

The problem for ethnographic fieldwork is that Theravāda Buddhist monks themselves are often enough proceeding with an assumption diametrically opposed to Southwold's hypothesis: the monks often believe that only the written canon "is authentic ('normative', 'orthodox', 'pure', and so forth) and that the Buddhism of ethnography, which differs from it, is in some sense not quite the genuine article."[78] In this way, the ethnographer who presumes to discover something indigenous, continuous, and unwritten in their fieldwork comes to regard the canon as an unwanted obstacle to their research: if they associate the canon with a "rational" and "modern" digression from the authenticity of local tradition, they will want to avoid it as a distraction from the imagined subject of their own inquiry. In a very simple sense, I reject this entire train of thought because I do not accept "rationalization" of Buddhism (and I do not think that any of the authors whom I have quoted offer a valid proof of this equation).

On first encountering Theravāda Buddhism in Sri Lanka, former generations of Western scholars construed the dichotomy between "rational" and "irrational" aspects of Buddhism simply in order to praise the aspects of canonical Buddhism they preferred.[79] This peculiar use of "rationality" has been forgotten; it was used in the context of a very specific set of debates confronting Christian Missionaries in what was then the British colony of Ceylon, and had a very limited meaning in contrasting Buddhism to Christian doctrine (indeed, in this context, "rational" very often meant "not offensive to Christian morality").[80] This debate is of real historical significance, but it is wildly spurious to the academic context that the word "rational" is now employed in (as quoted from Schober, above, and introduced at length in §2). The argument that I now find repeated so often in academic literature employs this dichotomy to a very different purpose: the supposed "rationality" of the ancient texts is treated as a pretext to exclude them as if they were (therefore) irrelevant to the research of the living culture. As with Southwold and Cook (quoted above, §2) this tends to be rolled up in one ball with with insinuations that whatever we know about the canon is the factitious work of "rationalizing" Western scholars. Thus, "rational" is used to insinuate "inauthentic" and "unreal."

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78. Southwold, "Buddhism in Life," 448 (quoted above, §1).

79. Elizabeth June Harris, *Theravada Buddhism and the British Encounter* (London: Routledge, 2006), 214–15.

80. Ibid., 75, 107–8, 187, etc.

The primary sources that I have outlined (in §4 and §5) above are not the result of Western influence; they are the antidote to Western influence. For those who would complain about biased interpretations of the canon, the alternative is to understand the canon itself, without an interpreter.

To offer a very simple conclusion on a very complicated matter, it seems to me that "rationalism" is a term that is meaningful only if it is understood as something internal to (European civilization's) Christian discourse, whereas "scripturalism" has a clearer meaning in the Theravāda milieu (i.e., the verification of practice by consulting the canon). We should be very wary of the uncritical acceptance of any claims about "modernity" made by any side in these debates, precisely because so many Asian Buddhists have now appropriated the same terms:

> At present the "rational" greatly influences our reading of Buddhist texts, confining it within the limits of scholasticism. The mentality involved in such a selective reading is, on the one hand, the overestimation of the explanatory power of human reason and, on the other, a tendency to separate the realm of religion from the human existential realm. Western scholarship arrived at this standpoint from the traumatic experience of the dominance of the Church during the Medieval period. Failing to see the historical context of concepts like "rational" and "scientific," East Asian scholars accepted them as part of modernity, and the East Asian tradition began to be reinterpreted in the light of the Western legacy.[81]

The solution here is not to attempt to ignore the canon (because of its presumed entanglement with this mess of modernity) but instead to develop the acumen to discern what is truly canonical, and what is merely modern opinion about the canon. Why would the importance of the Buddhist canon itself be challenged by this antagonism, that "Buddhism as hitherto commonly received"[82] may be a very different thing from what we find in the most ancient texts? Why would that diminish the salience of the canon to cultural anthropology? The study of modern Greek culture is not invalidated by its lack of resemblance to ancient Greece; the study of modern China is not impaired by the study of ancient Chinese texts. Contrasts of this kind should not impair research, but should enable it

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81. Cho, "The Rationalist Tendency," 434.
82. Snodgrass, "Defining Modern Buddhism," 198 (quoted above, §2).

"When he hears the words of this covenant…": Memory Theory as Framework for the Study of the Reception of Authoritative Texts in Qumran's *Community Rule* (1QS)

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Since the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls over half a century ago, much effort has gone into identifying the many ways in which their authors interpret and re-use Scripture. A number of studies have been published which attempt to describe this activity, even in the minutest of details.[1] While these are necessary and useful, few attempts have been made to examine the larger patterns. In the conclusion to her study of the use of Scripture in Qumran's *Community Rule*, Shani Tzoref rightly observed that while the biblical book of Deuteronomy is the most significant source for biblical allusions, more work is needed to study this phenomenon at the macro level.[2]

Our goal is to explore the ways in which memory theory can be useful in providing a framework through which we can attempt to make sense of this activity as a whole, by focusing not so much on specific texts, themes, or methods, but rather on the function of exegesis and its importance for the shaping the identity and life of the community. Helpful in this regard is Jan Assmann's synthesis of cultural memory theory, which deals with the use of authoritative texts as memory artifacts, an approach that can be fruitfully applied to text-centered communities such as the group represented in many of the Dead Sea Scrolls.[3] In his work, Assmann distinguishes

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1. See, e.g., the recent studies in Matthias Henze (ed.), *Biblical Interpretation at Qumran*, Studies in the Dead Sea Scrolls and Related Literature (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005).

2. Shani Tzoref, "The Use of Scripture in the Community Rule," in *A Companion to Biblical Interpretation in Early Judaism*, ed. Matthias Henze (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012), 230–31.

3. Contrary to Halbwachs, it considers tradition as another form of memory playing a vital role in a community. See Assmann's synthesis of Halbwachs and Nora's work in *Cultural Memory and Early Civilization: Writing, Remembrance, and Political Imagination* (Cambridge: Cambridge University

between communicative memory, which is the memory shared by a living group in a limited temporal horizon, and cultural memory that draws upon tradition, reaching far into the past through the generations.[4] A group will draw on its cultural memory—its tradition—in order to shape its present communicative memory and define its self-understanding. Communities set up *lieux de mémoire*, that is, monuments, rituals, special days, in order to remember things they do not wish to forget. This type of memory is an important part of a group's identity, forging a bond within a community around elements that are commonly valued. Within this framework of bonding memory, the past is always instrumentalized, that is, reconstructed in light of present concerns.[5] Since cultural memory cannot preserve the past exactly as it was, it should not be considered a "value-free" activity.[6] Tradition is therefore a memory store built through the generations, from which the present generation draws based on its needs and circumstances.

The situation at Qumran is complex due to the many theories concerning the origins of the texts and the people that produced them.[7] This, however,

Press, 2011), 31–33. Halbwachs' classic statement of collective memory can be found in Maurice Halbwachs, *La Mémoire Collective*, 2nd rev. ed., Bibliothèque de philosophie contemporaine (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1968). Assmann departs from Halbwachs' theory when the latter attempts to limit collective memory to a living community. For Halbwachs, what is older is "abandoned" to history. Assmann on the contrary sees much value in a form of memory that reaches far in the past, as we will see. Jan Assmann describes their differences in "Collective Memory and Cultural Identity," *New German Critique* 65 (1995): 128.

4. "If we think of the typical three-generation cycle of communicative memory as a synchronic memory-space, then cultural memory, with its traditions reaching far back into the past, forms the diachronic axis" (Jan Assmann, *Religion and Cultural Memory: Ten Studies*, trans. Rodney Livingstone [Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006], 8).

5. Ibid., 24. He adds: "The past does not just emerge from its own accord; it is the result of a cultural process of construction and representation. This process is always guided by particular motives, expectations, hopes, and aims, each of which takes its form from the referential frame of the present… repetition and interpretation are functionally equivalent processes in the production of cultural continuity" (Assmann, *Cultural Memory and Early Civilization*, 71–72).

6. George J. Brooke, "Memory, Cultural Memory, and Rewriting Scripture," in *Reading the Dead Sea Scrolls: Essays in Method* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2013), 59.

7. Ida Fröhlich remarks that nothing concerning the background of the conflicts depicted or the writers of the scrolls has been found ("Qumran Biblical Interpretation in the Light of Ancient Near Eastern Historiography," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls in Context: Integrating the Dead Sea Scrolls in the Study of Ancient Texts, Languages and Cultures*, ed. A. Lange et al., 2 vols., VTSup 140–141 [Leiden: Brill, 2011], 2.821). There are questions as to the number of communities responsible for

does not deprive these texts of all historical value since they can also be approached as memory artifacts, that is, witnesses to how a community of this period understood itself in relation to others and its past.[8] In the words of Maxine Grossman: "After all, the reading of [these documents] tells us more about what the covenant community thought of itself, or could potentially understand itself to be, than it tells us, in any objective way, about 'what really happened' in the history of this community."[9] There is therefore much value in approaching these texts from the vantage point of memory theory, despite all the uncertainty surrounding their authorship and historical context. It is in this light that I propose to examine the scroll commonly named the *Community Rule* (1QS), as both the reception and production of memory of a particular community.

Strategies of Remembering

As George Brooke recently noted, most applications of collective or cultural memory to the field of biblical studies have been concerned with historiography or narrative.[10] This scroll however makes use of cultural

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the sectarian scrolls. For example, the *Community Rule* and the *Damascus Document* may not the product of the same group, or perhaps not from the same period. For a treatment of this issue in relation to our concerns, see Charlotte Hempel, "Community Structures in the Dead Sea Scrolls: Admission, Organisation, Disciplinary Procedures," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls after Fifty Years: A Comprehensive Assessment*, ed. James Vanderkam and Peter Flint, 2 vols. (Leiden: Brill, 1998–1999), 2.67–92.

8. There is thus a layering of memory at hand, one text being simultaneously the reception of a previous tradition and the shaping of this tradition. Jacques Le Goff comments on the fact that this recognition on the part of some historians has brought about a new approach to the past, something he names the "history of representations… [which is] a history of overall conceptions of society or a history of ideologies; a history of the mental structures common to members of a social category or a society in a particular period, or a history of mentalities..." (*History and Memory*, trans. Steven Rendall and Elizabeth Claman [New York: Columbia University Press, 1992], xviii). Philip Davies adds "… memory itself is a historical datum, and it helps to explain the self-understanding of the community" ("Between Text and Archeology," *Dead Sea Discoveries* 18 [2011]: 332).

9. The author references another similar document from Qumran, the *Damascus Document*, but the comments apply equally here. See Maxine L. Grossman, *Reading for History in the Damascus Document: A Methodological Method*, STDJ 45 (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 209.

10. Brooke, "Memory," 58–59. To be sure, some recent efforts have focused on other aspects of memory work, such as the following essays by Ehud Ben Zvi, "Exploring Jerusalem as a Site of Memory in the Late Persian and Early Hellenistic Period," in *Memory and the City in Ancient*

memory in different ways, extending to language, rituals, and conceptions of time. When examining this document, one is struck by the centrality of covenant, a concept drawn extensively from authoritative texts.[11] The examples provided all draw on the same section of the biblical book of Deuteronomy, the book of the Mosaic covenant, but in different ways, demonstrating the interrelatedness of the use of authoritative texts, touching multiple aspects of religion. For our purposes, we will briefly examine three strategies which illustrate the purpose of this remembering: 1) The language employed is one that connects the community to the Mosaic covenant. 2) Admission into the community requires participation in a ritual similar to covenant rituals portrayed in Deuteronomy. 3) Particular eschatological lenses are employed to read the authoritative text, locating the community in a different period on the Mosaic covenant timetable.

1. Covenant Language

The document is steeped in biblical idiom betraying a close familiarity with the groups' scriptures. This is all the more obvious when describing the community entrance covenant, the language of which closely follows that of similar ceremonies described in Deut 29. The following example is taken from the warnings addressed to those who might be entering the

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Israel, ed. Diana Edelman and Ehud Ben Zvi (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2014), 197–217; idem, "Othering, Selfing, 'Boundarying' and 'Cross-Boundarying' as Interwoven with Socially Shared Memories: Some Observations," *Imagining the Other and Constructing Israelite Identity in the Early Second Temple Period*, ed. Diana Edelman and Ehud Ben Zvi, LHBOTS 456 (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark: 2014), 20–40. See also Benjamin Wold, "Memory in the Dead Sea Scrolls: Exodus, Creation and Cosmos," in *Memory in the Bible and Antiquity: The Fifth Durham-Tübingen Research Symposium (Durham, September 2004)*, ed. Stephen Barton et al., WUNT 212 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007), 47–74. More generally, see Jaime Vázquez Allegue, "Memoria colectiva e identidad de grupo en Qumrán," in *Flores Florentino: Dead Sea Scrolls and Other Early Jewish Studies in Honour of Florentino García Martínez*, ed. A. Hilhorst et al., JSJSup 122 (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 89–104.

11. James Vanderkam has already demonstrated this by highlighting several links between 1QS and the Pentateuch, see "Sinai Revisited," in Matthias Henze (ed.), *Biblical Interpretation at Qumran*, 45–48. Also of interest is the subsequent study by Daniel Timmer which highlights even more sources, especially revolving around atonement and divine presence, see "Sinai 'Revisited' Again: Further Reflections on the Appropriation of Exodus 19–Numbers 10 in 1QS," *Revue Biblique* 115 (2008): 481–98.

covenant carelessly. It borrows heavily from the biblical text but adapts and summarizes to fit the present situation. The text borrowed from Deut 29:18–20a is here broken down in three sections, each of which displays its own characteristics. The reconstructed biblical Hebrew text (BHS) will be set out first and then compared to the Hebrew text of 1QS[12]:

A. Deut 29:18a = 1QS 2.12b–14a

והיה בשמעו את דברי הָאֵלָה הַזֹאת והתברך בלבבו לאמר שלום יהיה לי כי בשררות לבי אלך (BHS)

And when he hears the words of this oath, he will congratulate himself in his heart, saying: "I will have peace, in spite of my walking in the stubbornness of my heart."[13]

והיה בשׁמעו את דברי הַבְרִית הַזֹאת יתברך בלבבו לאמור שלום יהי לי כיא בשרירות לבי אלך (1QS)[14]

When he hears the words of this covenant, he will congratulate himself in his heart, saying: "I will have peace, in spite of my walking in the stubbornness of my heart."[15]

Section A reproduces the Deuteronomy language almost word for word, except for "this oath" which is made more explicit in 1QS to reference "this covenant."[16] The word "covenant" (ברית) here replaces the word "oath" (אלה) found in the Deuteronomy text, which deals in this section more specifically with an oath to observe the covenant stipulations. The word covenant is mentioned in the broader context of the Deuteronomy text, and

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12. It is of course possible that the scribe responsible for 1QS was using a text of Deuteronomy which was different from the one represented in BHS. Such variants, when known, will be noted.

13. Our translation, which is purposefully close to García Martínez and Tigchelaar's rendering of the 1QS text in order to highlight similarities and differences. The same is true of the remaining BHS translations.

14. As transcribed in Florentino García Martínez and Eibert Tigchelaar, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition: Volume 1. IQI–4Q273* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 72. The remaining Hebrew transcriptions from 1QS are also taken from here.

15. Ibid., 73.

16. To be sure, another difference is the *plene* spelling of vowels in the consonantal text of 1QS, according to the Qumran scribal practice. Notice also how throughout the divine name (YHWH) is changed to the more generic God (El).

so this adjustment is simply linking to the general context of this quote. It perhaps also signals the intention to provide a more explicit association with the concept of covenant at the heart of the Deuteronomy passage. Our text goes on however:

B. Deut 29:18b–19a = 1QS 2.14b–15a

למען ספות הרוה את הצמאה לא יאבה יהוה סלח לו (BHS)

…so as to obliterate the moist and the dry. The Lord will not be willing to forgive him…

ונספתה רוחו הצמאה עם הרויה לאין סליחה (1QS)

However, his spirit will be obliterated, the dry with the moist, without mercy.

The text in section B is much more difficult. Many of the ancient versions disagree on how the Hebrew text should be understood, the plant metaphor being the "root" of the problem.[17] While the Hebrew text in 1QS demonstrates many similarities to its BHS counterpart, the words for moist and dry are inverted, and the word "spirit" (רוח) is inserted as subject.[18] Additional differences are mainly due to the Qumran scribal practice, with its unique spelling and grammatical adaptations. The final clause is abridged, simply stating that there will be no mercy. While the addition of the word "spirit" (רוח) fits nicely with the sect's ideology, its close resemblance to the word "moist" (רוה) suggests that we are perhaps facing a scribal error, and not a case of adaptation as such.[19] Nevertheless, the Deuteronomy idiom remains mostly intact and the main idea remains unchanged. The following section shows important divergences (sections which are similar in BHS and 1QS have been underlined):

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17. According to Jack R. Lundbom (*Deuteronomy: A Commentary* [Eerdmans, 2013], 810), this is a proverbial way of describing the annihilation of everything in one swoop, the good and the bad. The Septuagint goes in a completely different direction, translating ἵνα μὴ συναπολέσῃ ὁ ἁμαρτωλὸς τὸν ἀναμάρτητον ("So that the sinner does not destroy the sinless as well").

18. A minority of Hebrew manuscripts of Deuteronomy show הרוח (spirit) instead of הרוה (moist) but this does not explain why the 1QS text contains both words.

19. In this case, a particular kind of dittography, where the word is repeated although with a minor spelling difference, as note 16 demonstrates. For a different explanation, see Tzoref, "The Use of Scripture," 220.

C. Deut 29:19b–20a = 1QS 2.14b–15a

כִּי אָז יֶעְשַׁן אַף יהוה וְקִנְאָתוֹ בָּאִישׁ הַהוּא וְרָבְצָה [20] בּוֹ כָּל הָאָלָה הַכְּתוּבָה בַּסֵּפֶר הַזֶּה וּמָחָה יהוה אֶת שְׁמוֹ מִתַּחַת הַשָּׁמָיִם וְהִבְדִּילוֹ יהוה לְרָעָה מִכֹּל שִׁבְטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל ...(BHS)

But rather may the Lord's anger and his wrath smoke against that man, and stick fast to him all the curses written in this book, and the Lord will blot out his name from under heaven. May the Lord separate him for evil **from all the tribes of Israel**…

אַף אֵל וְקִנְאַת מִשְׁפָּטָיו יִבְעֲרוּ בּוֹ לְכַלֵּת עוֹלָמִים יִדְבְּקוּ בּוֹ כָּל אָלוֹת הַבְּרִית הַזֹּאת וְיִבְדִּילֵהוּ אֵל לְרָעָה וְנִכְרַת מִתּוֹךְ כָּל בְּנֵי אוֹר ... (1QS)

May God's anger and the wrath of his verdicts consume him for everlasting destruction. May stick fast to him all the curses of this covenant. May God separate him for evil, and may he be cut off **from the midst of all the sons of light**…

Finally, section C shows how the remainder of the Deuteronomy text is compressed in 1QS to retain the idea of God's enduring wrath, the curses that will befall the unfaithful, and God's delivering him to evil (all underlined). But as the last phrase of this example demonstrates, there is more going on than the condensing of the source text. An important modification is introduced where the backsliding are to be cut off not from the people of Israel, but from the sons of light (בני אור), which aligns the source text with the group's dualistic ideology.

While 1QS does not formally introduce this quotation, it is for practical purposes, at least partly, a quotation of an authoritative text. Yet the combination of ideas and the context in which it is used displays not only appropriation, but a degree of transformation. The community members who enter into this covenant are not the people at Sinai who entered into the mosaic covenant. The entrance into the covenant is for the purpose of creating an "elite," the sons of light, who are the true Israel, and will maintain the mosaic covenant through their obedience. Language such as this is typical of this scroll and cannot but establish a close connection with its scriptural counterpart and underline the common identity and heritage

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20. Manuscript 4QDeut[c] found in Qumran has ודבקה in the Hebrew text of Deuteronomy, which may be what our scribe had in front of him. Our translation reflects this possibility.

that is being constructed. The language is thus borrowed for the purposes of identity creation and formation.

In the context of Deuteronomy, the curses apply to the people of Israel as a nation while individuals can be cut off from the nation upon disobedience. In contrast, the curses found in 1QS apply to a group within Israel, which as a whole is never considered to be part of the covenant. The same is true of the blessings, which in this case apply to the "sons of light" and serve to delineate the boundaries of the group.[21] It is a reflection of the group's particularities and perhaps the indication of a setting where its social structure and beliefs were contested.[22]

There are a few instances of explicit quotations of authoritative texts in the *Community Rule*, but it is not the main "tool."[23] The scriptural tradition is not usually drawn upon by explicit quotes, but by relying on pervasive allusions and borrowed vocabulary. There is thus a fascinating interplay of language where a new text is composed by people steeped in scriptural idiom, who through their recourse to legitimization techniques, draw from the cultural memory store to bolster their community-shaping project. The same can be said of the way in which some linguistic forms are adopted, such as the spelling of independent pronouns, which, according to sociolinguists, betray an attempt to make their Hebrew dialect appear old and identify themselves with Mosaic or even pre-Mosaic traditions.[24] The

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21. Werline also describes how other blessings and curses attached to the entrance covenant are inspired from authoritative texts. For example, the blessings promised for obedience (1QS 2.2–4) draw their language from the priestly blessing found in Num. 6.24–26. The curses are a reversal of this blessing, yet do not display such obvious textual links to pentateuchal material. Their formulation relies instead on similar language found in other authoritative texts, in this case, sections of 1 Enoch and Jubilees 23. See Rodney A. Werline, "The Curses of the Covenant Renewal Ceremony in 1QS 1.16–2.19 and the Prayers of the Condemned," in *For a Later Generation: The Transformation of Tradition in Israel, Early Judaism, and Early Christianity*, ed. R. A. Argall et al. (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2000), 285–288.

22. See the suggestion to that effect made by Sarianna Metso, "Biblical Quotations in the Community Rule," in *The Bible as Book: The Hebrew Bible and the Judean Desert Discoveries*, ed. E. Tov and E. D. Hebert (London: The British Library & Oak Knoll Press, 2002), 89.

23. Sarianna Metso (*The Serekh Texts*, CQS 9 [London: T&T Clark, 2007], 43) identifies only three explicit citations, two of which are in column V and the other in column VIII. Neither are analyzed in this paper.

24. See Steven Weitzman, "Why Did the Qumran Community Write in Hebrew?" *JAOS* 119 (1999): 35–45; William Schniedewind, "Qumran Hebrew as an Antilanguage," *JBL* 118 (1999): 235–52;

result is a combination of old and new that strengthens the community's self-understanding in opposition to outside forces. While this may appear to be a manipulation of tradition, it also speaks of the authority that the scriptural tradition—especially the Torah texts—had on the community and how it viewed its practices in continuity with the scriptural ones.

2. Covenant Ritual

This borrowing and adaptation of biblical language has to be understood in light of the ritual being described. In other words, we are not only dealing only with a text, but also with the ritual it prescribes. We have no way of verifying whether that ritual was practiced in this particular way, but the importance of this scroll at Qumran would hint in favor of such a ceremony being performed.[25] The centrality of ritual in the Qumran texts, and in the life of the community it portrays, has been abundantly demonstrated.[26] What needs to be highlighted here is the role ritual plays in the remembering of the community. Assmann rightly points out that access to cultural memory is not a given. In many circles, the process is controlled.[27] The entrance

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Gary A. Rendsburg, "Qumran Hebrew (With A Trial Cut [1QS])," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls at 60*, ed. L. H. Schiffman and S. Tzoref, STDJ 89 (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 217–46.

25. This ritual also matches in many ways the description made by Josephus of the Essenes and the similar ritual in the *Damascus Document*. Despite the differences, it seems likely that an admission ceremony similar to what is described in 1QS was being practiced, although probably not at the scale described here when it assumes groups of "thousands".

26. See for example Robert A. Kugler's conclusion that "… the rituals entangled community members inextricably with God's will for the cosmos and drew them away from the profane world of their Jewish and non-Jewish neighbors. As a result, ritual at Qumran was hegemonic, making every aspect of their experience religious in Durkheim's sense of the word. Indeed, the scrolls apply the rationale for ordered entry into the community meal to much of the group's life: they did these things so they would know their standing … 'in the community of God, in conformity with an eternal plan' (1 QS 2:22–23)" ("Making All Experience Religious: The Hegemony of Ritual at Qumran," *JSJ* 33 [2002]: 152).

27. "[Cultural memory's] distribution is controlled, and whereas on the one hand it makes participation obligatory, on the other it withholds the right to participate. It is subject to restrictions which are more or less rigid. In some cases, people must prove their competence (or their membership) by means of formal tests… Meanwhile, others are excluded from such knowledge. In Jewish and Ancient Greek culture these 'others' included women…" (Assmann, *Cultural Memory and Early Civilization*, 40).

covenant ritual is certainly part of the identification with God's special people, a privilege that is closely guarded. It demonstrates the group's concern for securing true obedience and purity. It is through this ritual that new members are admitted into the community and that existing members see their connection to the community confirmed.[28]

The covenant ceremony described in 1QS can be broken down into four parts, with the participants playing different roles:

	Priests	Levites	People
(1.18–20)	Bless God and his works		"Amen, Amen"
(1.21–2.1a)	Recite the deeds of God and his favor towards Israel	Recite the iniquities of Israel	Confess sins
(2.1b–10)	Pronounce a blessing	Curse the "men of Belial"	"Amen, Amen"
(2.11–18)	Curse those who would enter the covenant with idols or iniquity		"Amen, Amen"

The short section that follows describes the procession that leads to this oath-taking ritual. The priests enter first, one after the other, followed by the Levites and then the people, also one at a time. They are to do so in their thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens, according to their standing in the community (2.19–23).

The format of this ceremony follows closely the one portrayed in Deut 27 which was to take place on Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal. There, the priests, the Levites, and the people all played a role in this antiphonal recitation, pronouncing similar blessings and curses. Also, the organization of the community in thousands, hundreds, and so forth is a direct allusion to the organization of the Israelite community at Sinai, where on account of Jethro's advice, Moses is said to have divided God's people into such groups (see Ex 18:21, 25). There is no doubt that the ritual is in many respects patterned on the scriptural model.

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28. Metso (*The Serekh Texts*, 24) states that although the introduction ceremony is described in 1QS 1.16–2.18 and the renewal in 2.19–25a, they probably describe the same ceremony. The new members would be introduced during the yearly renewal ritual.

Whether or not this ceremony actually took place in this precise format, what is important for our purposes is how the appropriation of a past ritual gives shape to the community. The reason for the ceremony is stated explicitly in the text: it is normative in its design, so as to promote perfect obedience to the divine commands (1.16–18), as interpreted by the leaders of the community (5.7–10a). This perfect obedience also results in distinguishing the community from other Jews, thus shaping their attitudes towards outsiders. Thus the ceremony is to be performed:

> in order to welcome all those who freely volunteer to carry out God's decrees into the covenant of kindness; in order to be united in the counsel of God and walk in perfection in his sight, complying with all revealed things concerning the regulated times of their stipulations; in order to love all the sons of light, each one according to his lot in God's plan, and to detest all the sons of darkness. (1.7b–10a)[29]

As García Martínez notes, "here the distinction between 'us' and the 'other' is absolute, detached from any principles of ethnicity."[30] The rhetorical effect of such an exercise should not be underestimated, as memories are being instilled into the new members and reinforced in existing members. This type of collective remembering does not happen primarily in the isolated individual, but in interaction with the group. Ritual performance is how the memory becomes collective, bonding, and formative, and allows such tradition to be embodied and perpetuated.[31] The reenactment of oaths, the procession, and antiphony in yearly repetition is critical in strengthening the group's self-understanding. Many characteristics of cultural memory are combined in this exercise, including the "reconstruction" in the present time of a true Israel, the organization of the community according to rank

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29. García Martínez and Tigchelaar, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition*, 1.71.

30. Florentino García Martínez, "Invented Memory: The 'Other' in the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *Qumranica Minora II: Thematic Studies on the Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed. E. J. C. Tigchelaar, STDJ 64 (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 212.

31. "Social memory is iterable, habitual, persuasive recollection. In order to be more than the sum of individual, psychological memories, collective memory must institutionalize itself externally as ritualized, performative memory. Such performance rituals display in turn cognitive and affective as well as evaluative and bodily habitual components" (Ian H. Henderson, "Memory, Text, and Performance in Early Christian Formation," in *Religion und Bildung: Medien und Funktionen religiösen Wissens in der Kaiserzeit*, ed. Christa Frateantonio and Helmut Krasser, PAwB 30 (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 2010), 167.

and standing, and the system of values that it promotes. All these converge to produce a counter-memory, that is, a construction of the past that sets the identity of the group in contrast with other prevalent reconstructions of its time. After all, this community was not alone in drawing on these authoritative texts to address present concerns.

3. Covenant time

While memory is intimately related to time, such as calendar cycles and special days, our interest here is slightly different. To be sure, the Dead Sea sectarian texts, like other Jewish writings of their time, demonstrate an acute interest in matters of ritual calendar. What is of interest at this point however is the community's understanding of history in relation to the covenant, and especially where it locates itself on its historical timetable.

Ida Fröhlich has explored the way historiography is done in Qumran and how the periodization of history[32] is one strategy employed to situate the community and shape the group's self-understanding.[33] Their interest in history, while not of the expected historiographic nature, is nevertheless real.[34] In the *Community Rule*, this can be seen most clearly in the section called the discourse on the two spirits (3.13–4.26) where the group is described as living in a period dominated by evil, the domination of Belial (בממשלת בליעל). Four events are said to follow this period in a not-too-distant future:[35]

1. The dominion of evil broken, coming of the Messiah(s) (4.18–19, 9.10–11).
2. Purification of the sons of light and their deeds (4.20–21).
3. Recompense for the sons of light and sons of darkness (4.6–8, 11–12).
4. Eternal life or punishment/annihilation (4.7–8, 13–14).

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32. What Assmann refers to as "theologizing of cultural memory" (*Religion and Cultural Memory*, 37).

33. Fröhlich, "Qumran Biblical Interpretation," 2.855.

34. Ibid., 821.

35. I owe these in part to Daniel C. Timmer's insightful study of the eschatology in the Rule of the Community, see "Variegated Nomism Indeed: Multiphase Eschatology and Soteriology in the Qumranite Community Rule (1QS) and the New Perspective on Paul," *JETS* 52 (2009): 344.

The covenant ritual described earlier is to be practiced annually, "all the days of the domination of Belial" (כול יומי ממשלת בליעל),[36] which is the current period for the community. The fascination with *periods* and *times* implies that the community sees itself as living in a particular time, which has been labeled by some as a "semi-eschatological" time.[37] This understanding of living at the end of human history may be drawn in part from Torah texts with clear references to the "end of days,"[38] a period described as a turning point for the covenant-keeping nation. Deuteronomy 31:29 is a clear example, announcing the evil that will befall the disobedient nation, "in later days" (באחרית הימים), and Deut 4.30 further announces that a period of disobedience will be followed, "in later days" (באחרית הימים), by a return to God, who will remember his covenant and deliver his people. These texts, as well as several others, came to be understood eschatologically in this period and in the sectarian scrolls where the expression "later days" refers to the time of testing preceding the end, the "end of days."[39] This is a time of difficulty but also a time of fulfillment of the Mosaic covenant where God intervenes for his people. In a clear allusion to Isa 40:3, the goal set for the community is to prepare the way of YHWH.[40] By becoming the

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36. 1QS 2.19.

37. See Timmer, "Variegated Nomism Indeed," 342.

38. באחרית הימים.1QS does not use this particular expression but a similar one קץ אחרון.

39. Gen 49:1 and Num 24:14 are other texts that employ the same phrase. John J. Collins describes this process in detail in *Apocalypticism in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (London: Routledge, 1997), 56–58. García Martínez's study is also very helpful, see "Apocalypticism in the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *The Encyclopedia of Apocalypticism*, vol. 1 (New York; London: Continuum, 2000), 162–92, esp. 177–179, which shows how the "end of days" is related to the domination of Belial. The consecutive accounts of blessings and curses found in Deuteronomy are transposed diachronically as a pattern of Israel's history; see David Lincicum, *Paul and the Early Jewish Encounter with Deuteronomy* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2013), 84.

40. Isa 40:3 is alluded to in two places (1QS 8.14 and 9.19–20), both of which have to do with the blameless obedience to the revealed Torah for which the members are expected to strive. "He should lead them with knowledge and in this way teach them the mysteries of wonder and of truth in the midst of the men of the Community, so that they walk perfectly, one with another, in all that has been revealed to them. This is the time for making ready the path to the desert and he will teach them about all that has been discovered so that they can carry it out in this moment [and] so they will be detached from anyone who has not withdrawn his path from all injustice" (1QS 9.18b–21a, trans. García Martínez and Tigchelaar, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition*, 1.93).

ideal, the ultimate covenant community, they will atone for the land in the expectation of the coming deliverance and judgment.

That the covenant tradition is read with particular, eschatological lenses is confirmed in the text. The *Community Rule* insists in many places that the leaders of the community are to interpret the law "according to each period."[41] While this indicates that the community understands itself as living in a particular time, it also underlines the fact that this knowledge is not obvious to all. It is carefully guarded. These mysterious exegetical keys, concealed from Israel but discovered by the interpreter, are to be shared only with the men of the community (8.11–12).[42] This is to be done until the coming of the "prophet and messiah of Aaron and Israel."[43]

Much more could be said concerning the apocalyptic tendencies present in the Qumran texts. For our purposes, however, we should first note that this self-understanding as eschatological covenant community is closely linked to the practice of the covenant ritual and the behavior that it entails. This carefully shaped identity gave the group significance and, as Louise Lawrence notes, "allowed them to conceive of themselves as significant players in the eschatological drama."[44] Associating themselves with the foundational memory of the Sinai community not only contributed to generate a common identity, but also provided support for the hopes

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41. The following is a choice example: "These are the regulations for the Instructor by which he shall walk with every living being in compliance with the regulation of every period and in compliance with the worth of each man: he should fulfill the will of God in compliance with all revelation for every period; he should acquire all the wisdom that has been gained according to the periods and the decree of the period" (1QS 9.12–13, ibid.).

42. See also 1QS 8:15–16a: "This is the study of the law wh[i]ch he commanded through the hand of Moses, in order to act in compliance with all that has been revealed from age to age, and according to what the prophets have revealed through his holy spirit" (ibid., 89). Joseph Blenkinsopp's more general comment applies here: "What sets the Qumran groups and Christianity apart as sectarian is their radical reinterpretation of the traditions constitutive of normativity and their conviction about their own centrality in the context of those traditions" ("The Qumran Sect in the Context of Second Temple Sectarianism," in *New Directions in Qumran Studies: Proceedings of the Bristol Colloquium on the Dead Sea Scrolls, 8–10th September 2003*, ed. J. G. Campbell et al., LSTS 52 (London: T&T Clark, 2005), 11–12.

43. 1QS 9.11.

44. See Louise J. Lawrence, "'Men of Perfect Holiness' (1QS 7.20): Social-Scientific Thoughts on Group Identity, Asceticism and Ethical Development in the Rule of the Community," in J. G. Campbell et al., *New Directions in Qumran Studies*, 87 n. 21.

and aspirations of the group. Strategies such as these are most obvious in situations of oppression where the memory is reconstructed for the purpose of questioning the current situation and to call for change.[45]

Conclusion

The *Community Rule* is a great example of the type of memory work performed by a community that sees itself not only in continuity with tradition, but as its only legitimate fulfillment. The community is structured in such a way as to become the continuation and realization of the perfect covenant community as described in the Pentateuch. This eschatological understanding is perhaps the most significant differentiating factor in terms of how this group understands itself in relation to its Sinai counterpart. Much could be said of other strategies embedded in this text that make use of cultural memory. But for now, three observations are in order:

First, this "excavation" of cultural memory is done through interpretation of authoritative texts. As Assmann notes, cultural memory always implies special agents, memory specialists, whose social status is consequently elevated.[46] In the context of the *Community Rule*, the role of the scribe as agent of memory is brought to the forefront. The text describes him not only as the author of such a work, but also highlights his role as a leader of the community. He is the agent of memory and is steeped in the group's tradition. He is the facilitator of the identity-forging memory. He orients the community around the study of the law of Moses and subsequent traditions, keeping his special knowledge of God's mysteries for his people.[47]

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45. According to Assmann (*Cultural Memory and Early Civilization*, 62–64), movements such as messianism and millenarianism use memory in this way, as a mythomotor, the book of Daniel being a prime example.

46. Ibid., 39.

47. As Assmann aptly puts it, "… there is a gulf between the established text and the changing reality that can only be bridged by interpretation. In this way interpretation becomes the central principle of cultural coherence and identity. The normative and formative impulses of cultural memory can only be gleaned through the incessant, constantly renewed textual interpretation of the tradition through which identity is established. Interpretation becomes the gesture of remembering, the interpreter becomes a person who remembers and reminds us of a forgotten truth" (*Religion and Cultural Memory*, 43). Another reason is the fact that people further removed from the texts

Secondly, such an approach to the use of authoritative texts highlights the formative and normative impulses of cultural memory. The authoritative tradition is not a passive repository from which one draws. It is a power that is constitutive, even while taking different forms as various groups and people draw upon it. One does not appeal to such traditions unless they are regarded as normative.[48] And if these are normative, it can explain at least in part how texts and rituals such as those found in 1QS came about. There is thus a kind of reciprocity in the relationship between the past and the present.[49] In the context of the Qumran sectarian documents, the interaction with this tradition is very much tainted by the present reality and particular outlook of the group, which nevertheless remains profoundly shaped by its authoritative texts.

Lastly, the framework of memory allows for thinking about the various characteristics of the group and their exegesis of authoritative texts in a holistic manner. Such exegesis is done at many levels, concurrently deploying several strategies, so that one must look at the whole picture to start making sense of it. The different "mnemotechnics"[50] are necessary, complimentary, and essential to the identity of the community. Thus,

do not have access to a direct understanding of its forms and formulas, and the exegete is therefore required to interpret (see Assmann, *Cultural Memory and Early Civilization*, 49–50).

48. Thus Metso's conclusion appears warranted when she says that such a practice demonstrates how "…ultimately the community regarded its own regulations as resting on the Old Testament authority…from the point of view of the modern reader, the connection between a regulation and a citation supporting it may be artificial. The community, however, considered its laws to be in accordance with the Torah" ("Biblical Quotations," 89).

49. This is not a presentist position that would see the present and its needs as the determining factor in the shaping of the past and the way it is remembered. After all, the Deuteronomy text was in the same caves as the *Community Rule* and continued to be copied alongside the composition of 1QS. The *Community Rule*, while primarily concerned with present realities and concerns, evolved out of the Torah texts. In a way, it is a guide to the "proper" interpretation of Deuteronomy and other authoritative texts. Mary B. Spaulding's comments are appropriate here: "[the presentist model] is unable to explain adequately the continuity of practices and beliefs observed across extended periods of time in multiple cultures. If we can acknowledge the impact of the present upon the past, is there no impact of the past upon the present?" (*Commemorative Identities: Jewish Social Memory and the Johannine Feast of Booths* [London: Bloomsbury, 2009], 11).

50. "As cultural memory is not biologically transmitted, it has to be kept alive through the sequence of generations. This is a matter of cultural mnemotechnics, that is, the storage, retrieval, and communication of meaning. These mnemotechnics guarantee continuity and identity, the latter clearly being a product of memory" (Assmann, *Cultural Memory and Early Civilization*, 72).

the relationship between the community and its cultural memory is of a complex nature. Cultural memory theory emphasizes the historical and social situatedness of the act of interpretation and thus holds considerable explanatory power in this particular context and should continue to supply promising avenues for future research.

"Civilizing" the Village: Protestant Missionary Writings and the Civilizing Mission in Colonial South India

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In 1813 the addition of the "Pious Clause"[1] to the East India Company Charter removed barriers that had previously prevented Christian missionaries from settling in India. Although both Christianity and Christian missionary groups had long been present on the subcontinent, the removal of these restrictions ushered in a new era of missionary societies. In South India, where the Danish Protestant missionaries at Tranquebar had been present since 1706, the Pious Clause heralded the entry of numerous new Protestant missions. Reminiscent of the Tranquebar mission, these new missions centered their evangelical projects on the low-caste devotees of village religions and dutifully recorded their findings in letters, autobiographies, and other non-fiction works. The writings of both missionary eras focused on similar topics, with many pages devoted to the discussion of village Hinduism and its relation to caste, disease, and ritual. However, there is a clear shift in tone and style that differentiates the writings of the two eras; although the earlier writings do not promote village religion or even react to it in a neutral fashion, their anthropological style is markedly different from the emotional details and need for rescue that are emphasized in the later writings. I argue that this shift can be partly attributed to the development

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1. The Pious Clause states, "Whereas it is the duty of this Country to promote the Interest and Happiness of the Native Inhabitants of the British Dominions in India and such measures ought to be adopted as may tend to the Introduction among them of useful Knowledge and of religious Improvement . . . it is expedient to make provision for granting Permission to Persons desirous of going to or remaining in India for the above Purpose" (Eliza Kent, *Converting Women: Gender and Protestant Christianity in Colonial South India* [New York: Oxford University Press, 2004], 42). Prior to this time, missionaries were "actively discouraged from entering the East India Company's burgeoning dominions because it was feared that their proselytizing would give rise to the suspicion that the British intended to impose Christianity by force or stealth" (Ian Copland, "Christianity as an Arm of Empire: The Ambiguous Case of India under the Company, c. 1813–1858." in *The Historical Journal* 49 (2006): 1031.

of the civilizing mission; while both eras of missionary writings detailed the so-called "un-civilized" acts of Indians, the change in the writings of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries reflects the need to legitimize the civilizing mission.

I will begin with a brief introduction to the civilizing mission and village Hinduism in South India before discussing the Protestant missions of South India, focusing on the pre-Pious Clause Tranquebar Mission and the post-Pious Clause American Madura Mission. Finally, I will use writings from both eras that focus on caste, disease, and ritual to prove that the change in tone and style found in the later writings served to promote the civilizing mission. The excerpts included come from various Protestant South Indian missions, including the Tranquebar Mission, the Church Missionary Society, the London Missionary Society, and the American Madura Mission.

The Civilizing Mission and Village Hinduism in South India

The notion of the civilizing mission can be traced back to the ideologies of the French *mission civilisatrice*, which "implied that colonial subjects were too backward to govern themselves and that they had to be 'uplifted'."[2] The British civilizing mission "uplifted" its subjects through the promotion of western education, speech, and dress, as well as a concerted effort to end religious practices that were not "civilized" according to the western Christian worldview. The emphasis on civilizing, which was presented as "a moral duty to . . . ameliorate the lowly condition of its [sc. India's] cowed, ignorant peoples by introducing them to the uplifting alchemy of Western – or more specifically English – civilization,"[3] became the solution to questions concerning the legitimacy of British rule on the subcontinent.[4] The colonial government, which had previously cited a policy of non-

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2. Michael Mann, "'Torchbearers upon the Path of Progress': Britain's Ideology of a 'Moral and Material Progress' in India. An Introductory Essay," in *Colonialism as Civilizing Mission: Cultural Ideology in British India*, ed. Harald Fischer-Tiné and Michael Mann (London: Wimbledon Publishing Company, 2004), 4.

3. Copland, "Christianity as an Arm of Empire," 1039.

4. Mann, "'Torchbearers upon the Path of Progress'," 10.

interference in religion as reason for the prohibition of missionary activity, soon promoted Christianity as the best means to accomplish civilization[5]; it was believed that its mere presence would cause the disintegration of Hinduism and the demise of its associated rites and rituals.

For many, the civilizing mission was recognized as the key to the continuation of the British Empire, which had found itself diminished following the loss of the American colonies in 1776.[6] In 1820 Lieut. Col. John Macdonald stated:

> In referring to the pages of the histories of the great and polished nations of antiquity, I perceived that they *civilized* in proportion as they conquered, by *imparting a knowledge of their language, arts, and literature*. The more I studied this highly interesting subject, my conviction rose higher and higher, that ultimate conversion to Christianity, as well as the consolidation and secure maintenance of British dominion in India, could only be achieved and completely effected by a plan not only humane and liberal, but sanctioned by all past experience.[7]

Thus, until "civilization" was attained, the continued rule of the British in India was legitimized. Consequently, however, if the civilizing project *did* succeed and the Indian nation was deemed "civilized," the British claim to India would no longer exist.[8] It therefore became necessary to emphasize not only the current uncivilized nature of the Indian subjects, but also their inherent inferiority when compared to the British, in order to prove their eternal need for the presence and guidance of the colonial government.[9]

The writings discussed in this paper focus on village Hinduism and, particularly, on the goddess Māriyamman̲, whose rites and rituals are traditionally associated with village Hinduism. In the missionary literature,

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5. Ibid., 7.

6. Margret Frenz, "'A Race of Monsters': South India and the British 'Civilizing Mission' in the Later Eighteenth Century," in Fischer-Tiné and Mann, eds., *Colonialism as Civilizing Mission*, 52.

7. John Macdonald, *Some short arguments and plain facts shewing that the civilization and instruction of the natives of India furnish the surest means of upholding the stability of our oriental empire and of the introduction and speedy progress of Christianity, without arming the superstitious prejudices of the country against that cause: with an alphabetic-cipher table for secret correspondence and a few requisitive animadversions to subjects becoming daily more prominent and commanding* (London: C. Roworth, 1820), 6–7. India Office Records and Private Papers, British Library, London.

8. Mann, "'Torchbearers upon the Path of Progress'," 5.

9. Frenz, "'A Race of Monsters'," 53.

village Hinduism is often discussed in opposition to the Sanskritic Hinduism
with which many Europeans were familiar. Susan Wadley notes, "While
Sanskritic Hinduism implied pan-Indian deities and the salience of ideas
such as *karma* and *dharma*, local Hinduisms might involve the worship of
deities known only to that community and a lack of reference to concepts
such as *dharma* and *karma* as guiding principles of people's lives."[10] Within
the Protestant mission, the historical and textual nature of Sanskritic
Hinduism was often admired and the Brahmins who practiced it marked as
society's superiors, even as they were simultaneously understood as unable
or unwilling to see the "truth" of Christianity. Contrarily, practitioners of
village religion were marked as the best prospect for conversion; while their
practices were perceived of as "irrational" and "barbaric," they were also
recognized as being outside of the bonds of Sanskritic Hinduism and thus
easily "molded" to the Christian religion. Additionally, due to their lower
societal status and the nature of their practices, their conversion could be
framed in light of the goals of rescue and civilization. This narrative relied
on the notion that "pure" Hinduism consisted solely of the Vedic texts;
vernacular and village traditions were "either ignored or decried as evidence
of the degradation of contemporary Hindu religion into superstitious
practices that bore little or no relation to 'their own' texts."[11]

Many of these "superstitious practices" were connected to the worship
of the goddess Māriyamman̠, a village goddess known for her equally
fierce and protective nature. She is traditionally the goddess of smallpox
and is recognized as both its cause and cure; the disease indicates her
presence in the body and it is through worship of her that it is removed.[12]
For the missionaries, however, it was her fierce nature that was paramount,
particularly where it was on display in rituals involving blood and bodily
mortification, including *tīmiti* (fire-walking), *tīccaṭṭi* (the carrying of the fire

10. Susan Wadley, "Grama" in *The Hindu World*, ed. Sushil Mittal and Gene Thursby (New York:
Routledge), 436.

11. Richard King, *Orientalism and Religion: Postcolonial Theory, India and 'The Mystic East'*
(New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1999), 101.

12. Elaine Craddock, "Reconstructing the Split Goddess as Śakti in a Tamil Village," in *Seeking
Mahādevī: Constructing the Identities of the Hindu Great Goddesses*, ed. Tracy Pintchman
(Albany: State University of New York Press, 2001), 146.

pot), and hook-swinging.[13] In their writings, we can see that the missionaries clearly understood the connection of Māriyamman̲ and disease, but what is not apparent is evidence of Māriyamman̲'s grace, or her "power to heal, grant children, [and] make the village rich."[14] Rather, only her fierce aspects are represented; the devotees' love of Māriyamman̲ is neither expressed nor, it would seem, understood.[15] This is evident in the following quotation from Edyth Hinkley and Marie Christlieb, missionaries with the London Missionary Society, who note the connection of Māriyamman̲, disease, and ritual, but give the impression that the goddess is never a welcomed guest.

> What was that gleam of whiteness through the dark? Only a Mariamma, an idol some villagers had carried out and provided with food and cooking utensils, thus courteously indicating their desire that the deity might make itself at home at a distance from their dwellings. Probably they had cholera or small-pox in the village, and were thus seeking to rid themselves of the trouble.[16]

As we will see throughout this paper, accounts of the fierce Māriyamman̲ and her uncivilized worship were common within the Protestant missionary writings. In representing Māriyamman̲ in this light, the Protestant missionaries were able to characterize her devotees as a people in urgent need of rescue from their religion, and thus show the continued need for the civilizing mission.

Early Protestant Missions: The Danish Tranquebar Mission

The earliest Protestant mission in South India dates to the arrival of Bartholomäus Ziegenbalg and his colleague Henry Plütschau at the Danish settlement of Tranquebar in July 1706.[17] Ziegenbalg and Plütschau entered

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13. Heather Elgood, "Exploring the Roots of Village Hinduism in South Asia," *World Archaeology* 36.3 (2004): 338; Eveline Masilamani-Meyer, *Guardians of Tamilnadu: Folk Deities, Folk Religion, Hindu Themes* (Halle: Franckesche Stiftungen zu Halle, 2004), 56.

14. Masilamani-Meyer, *Guardians of Tamilnadu*, 57.

15. Craddock "Reconstructing the Split Goddess," 146.

16. Edyth Hinkley and Marie L. Christlieb, *A Struggle for a Soul And Other Stories of Life And Work In South India* (Philadelphia: The Union Press, 1907), 29.

17. Bartholomaeus Ziegenbalg, *Genealogy of the South Indian Deities: An English Translation of Bartholomaeus Ziegenbalg's Original German Manuscript with a Textual Analysis and*

during a tense period, only two years after Jesuit missionaries had tried to take control of the region. In the year after he arrived, Ziegenbalg was preemptively imprisoned by the Danish commander, who feared that the King of Thanjavur would interfere if Christian preaching took place at Tranquebar.[18] Nevertheless, the Tranquebar mission remained active from 1706 until 1845, during which time it hosted fifty-four German missionaries.[19] Although their primary goal was to convert a large number of the "heathen" Indians to Christianity, missionaries were also expected to study Tamil culture, religion, and social systems and to write to Europe with this information. The Protestant missionaries approached their study and proselytization in a new way; whereas the Jesuits privileged the written Tamil of the high-caste Brahmins, the Protestants focused mostly on spoken Tamil, even in their translations of European devotional works and the Christian Bible.[20] It was believed that the missionary enterprise could be successful only through understanding the local culture and presenting the Christian gospel "meaningfully," that is, in terms that would be understood in the Indian context. Ziegenbalg followed these tenets closely, producing *Genealogy of the South Indian Deities* (1713), an anthropological work informed by written correspondence with Indian scholars as well as Ziegenbalg's own observations, which classifies the numerous deities of south Indian Hinduism. Portions of this work will appear in translation throughout the remainder of this paper.

Later Protestant Missions:
The American Madura Mission (AMM)

In 1834, approximately 130 years after Ziegenbalg and Plütschau came to Tranquebar, the American Madura Mission (AMM) arrived in the Madurai district of modern-day Tamil Nadu. At the time, numerous Roman Catholic Indians could be found in the region, a result of the Roman

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Glossary, trans. Daniel Jeyaraj (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2005), 23.

18. Eugene F. Irschick, "Conversations in Tarangambadi: Caring for the Self in Early Eighteenth Century South India," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 23 (2005): 255.

19. Ziegenbalg, *Genealogy of the South Indian Deities*, 23.

20. Ibid., 24.

Catholic missionaries who had been present in Madurai since the sixteenth century.[21] Shortly after arriving, the AMM began to set up free schools for local children, which by 1836 included thirty-seven schools in Madurai and fifty-six in the surrounding areas.[22] Although the schools were run by the missionary society and included lessons on Christianity, they were not considered to be missionary schools in the sense that they did not have a Christian mission. In accordance with the AMM's overall sentiment against civilizing missions, conversion was not required to attend, and classes were taught in the Indian style.[23]

In 1852 the mission's policies on education underwent a major shift. Prior to this time, boarding schools had been open to both Christian and non-Christian children, with non-Christian children coming from only one caste. In the annual report, it is noted that while the purpose of the schools had previously been to educate non-Christians, the new schools intended to educate a class of "Christian helpers."[24] In 1855 a deputation from Boston resulted in the near abandonment of English education in favour of education in the vernacular, because "English education tempted graduates to seek non-mission jobs."[25] Soon after, the majority of the mission's English schools were closed.[26] By 1860, however, the mission had realized that in excluding non-Christians from their schools they were preventing them from exposure to Christianity; by 1863 non-Christian pupils were encouraged to come to the schools and, soon after, English returned as well.[27]

At this time, the mission began to adopt practices that were more in line with the "civilizing" notion of missionary work. Schools that had focused on Indian-style education were replaced with missionary schools focused on western education and customs, while projects aimed at social

21. Mary Schaller Blaufuss, *Changing Goals of the American Madura Mission in India, 1830–1916* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2003), 81.

22. Ibid., 86.

23. Melissa Lewis Heim, "Making a Life in India: American Missionary Households in Nineteenth-Century Madurai," Ph.D. diss., Boston College, 1994, 87.

24. Ibid., 234

25. Blaufuss, *Changing Goals*,102.

26. American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, *American Madura Mission: Jubilee Volume, 1834–1884* (Madras: American Madura Mission, S.P.C.K.Press, 1886), 31.

27. John S. Chandler, *Seventy-Five Years in the Madura Mission* (Madras: Lawrence Asylum Press, 1912), 239–40.

and economic issues became increasingly popular.[28] "By 1875, mission goals . . . had changed in ways that made the primary concern of mission, not individual conversions and church membership in indigenous churches, but rather a more social perspective that addressed the physical as well as spiritual needs of individuals."[29] This included a medical mission run by Frank Van Allen, who "believed that an evangelist could use the people's positive feelings about the hospital to gain audiences for preaching and to influence people to accept the Gospel."[30]

In her study on the AMM, Mary Schaller Blaufuss argues that the ideologies of the mission can be divided into two distinct periods. The first, which ran from 1830–1875, was church-centered, wherein churches were promoted as "voluntary gatherings of individuals through a system they called village congregations. These groups provided a half-way stop for people between denouncing their former religious system and being baptized and becoming a members [sic] of the church."[31] By contrast, the second period, from 1876–1916, was society-centered, wherein "[t]he effects of the mission outside the church 'bettered' Indian society, furthered Christian ethics, and made social conditions more favorable for other individuals to join the church."[32] The mission itself remained active until 1934, when the AMM transferred its authority to an organization that eventually joined the South India United Church. Although some Americans continued to work within the church in South India, this is considered by most to be the end of the mission.[33]

On Caste

The issue of caste and how it should be managed was the subject of many debates among Protestant missionaries across India. While some viewed caste as a social institution similar to the European class system and unconnected to religion, others understood it as "an integral part of

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28. Heim, "Making a Life in India," 134.
29. Blaufuss, *Changing Goals*, 129.
30. Ibid., 133.
31. Ibid., 176.
32. Ibid., 183.
33. Heim, "Making a Life in India," 496.

Hinduism which must be opposed" in order to successfully convert Indians to Christianity.[34] While Protestant missionaries in North India had disallowed caste in Christian settings since their arrival on the sub-continent, the South Indian missions allowed caste distinctions, such as restrictions against communal eating, to continue within the church even into the 1840s.[35] By 1850, however, the majority of missionaries agreed that caste was incompatible with Christianity and worked to develop ways of removing it.[36] After the mutiny of 1857–1858, this view was strengthened, as missionaries and colonialists alike viewed the revolt as resulting directly from fears over the loss of caste. As Nicholas Dirks notes, "many missionaries sought to seize the moment, suggesting that Christianity should be imposed on India as a treatment, if not a punishment, for the revolt."[37]

While the British maintained their official policy of neutrality on issues relating to native religions, missionaries sought to banish caste in their converted communities, partly because it was thought that by maintaining caste the convert was also maintaining a connection to Hinduism, which would then quickly lead them to other Hindu customs and eventually away from Christianity.[38] The Protestant missions now agreed that caste within Christianity must be abolished, but they were still, in many cases, unsure of how to accomplish this. Their efforts concentrated mainly on low-caste converts, because it was believed that high-caste Christians had already lost the social benefits of caste due to their association with lower-caste Christians. "Perversely, it was this very suffering, this ordeal by fire, that made high-caste converts 'pure' in the eyes of missionaries, as they did not gain anything materially by converting."[39]

Throughout the second half of the eighteenth century and the early nineteenth century, the missions looked for ways to successfully remove caste from the church, including requiring a renunciation of caste at baptism

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34. Duncan B. Forrester, *Caste and Christianity: Attitudes and Policies on Caste of Anglo-Saxon Protestant Missions in India* (London: Curzon Press, 1980), 6.

35. G. A. Oddie, "Protestant Missions, Caste and Social Change in India, 1850–1914," *The Indian Economic & Social History Review* 6 (1969): 262.

36. Forrester, *Caste and Christianity*, 42.

37. Nicholas B. Dirks, *Castes of Mind: Colonialism and the Making of Modern India* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2001), 131.

38. Forrester, *Caste and Christianity*, 37.

39. Kent, *Converting Women*, 44–45.

and not allowing those who adhered to caste to hold an office within the church.[40] Additionally, at the AMM the "missionaries voted to require anyone attending the communion service [to] first take part in a common meal, prepared by a pariah cook. Only about one tenth of the catechists and other Indian mission workers chose to participate in the common meal. . . . Thirty-eight out of fifty-three catechists and teachers lost their positions because of refusal to break caste."[41] Missionaries often found their parishes drastically reduced as a result of these endeavors.

Reference to caste is found throughout missionary writings, mostly concerning the issues of Hindus who want to convert but do not want to lose their caste status, and the ease with which lower-caste Hindus can be converted to Christianity. On the first point, Harriet Wilder, author of *A Century in the Madura Mission, South India, 1834–1934*, transcribes a conversation between Dr. Chester, a missionary with the American Madura Mission, and an unnamed mission-educated Brahmin. The Brahmin concedes that Hinduism is a false religion and that Christianity is the one true religion, to which Chester asks why he does not then convert. The Brahmin replies:

> Sir, I cannot forsake my caste and family . . . It is the dread of the suffering I would have to undergo if I should join the despised low- and out-caste people who are among you. After I had eaten with them and sat near them, my very shadow would be an unbearable pollution to my caste relatives. If by any means the whole Brahmin group in my many villages could be induced to become Christians together and join you in a body, no one would be rejoicing more than I. . . . But alone I can never accept the Christian religion.[42]

With regard to the latter point, Robert Caldwell, a missionary with the London Missionary Society writes:

> It might naturally be supposed that a pure and spiritual religion, like Christianity, would make little progress among a people who are so besotted as to worship devils; yet in Tinnevelly and the neighbouring provinces it has made greater progress among demonolaters than amongst the followers of the higher Hinduism. The exceeding greatness of the contrast between the fear and gloom

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40. Oddie, "Protestant Missions," 269.
41. Heim, "Making a Life in India," 100.
42. Harriet Wilder, *A Century In the Madura Mission, South India, 1834–1934* (New York: Vantage Press, 1961), 152.

of devil-worship and the light and love of the Gospel is found to attract their attention, and it is generally found to be easy to convince them of the debasing character of their own superstition, and of the great superiority of Christianity.[43]

These two examples can be seen as representative of the understanding and use of caste in the writings as a whole. The high-caste Brahmin, although he will not convert, is shown as intelligent and self-aware, even if bound to the custom of caste. By contrast, the lower castes' "devil-worship" and low place within Indian society makes them the ideal prospect for conversion; the implication is that they have a primitive mindset and do not have the fear of conversion that would be associated with losing a high caste status. It is for these reasons that the lower castes and their religion become the focus of the civilizing mission.

On Disease

The nineteenth century was party to some of the most vicious smallpox epidemics, which reoccurred with a vengeance nearly every five to seven years and in Calcutta alone claimed 11,000 lives between 1837 and 1851.[44] Although the smallpox vaccine developed in 1796 was made available in India, it was not until nearly the end of the nineteenth century that it became somewhat common for it to be utilized.[45] As has been mentioned, in many village traditions, smallpox and other maladies are understood to be both caused and cured by Māriyamman, whose fierce nature and grace are found within the pox.[46] As a result, devotees feared that use of the vaccine would cause the goddess to view them as impious, and her resulting anger would increase the severity of the disease.[47] To combat this reticence, the colonial government instituted various policies to encourage use of the vaccination, including compulsory vaccinations for infants, prisoners, and military men,

43. Robert Caldwell, *Lectures on the Tinnevelly Missions, Descriptive of the field, the work, and the results; with an introductory lecture on the progress of Christianity in India* (London: Bell & Daldy, 1857), 49.

44. David Arnold, *Colonizing the Body: State Medicine and Epidemic Disease in Nineteenth-Century India* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1993), 117.

45. Ibid., 120.

46. Craddock, "Reconstructing the Split Goddess," 146.

47. Arnold, *Colonizing the Body,* 123.

thus representing the colonial government as a humane and benevolent entity with "sympathizing hearts and healing hands."[48] Although these programs were somewhat successful, vaccination rates remained less than total even into the 1950s.[49] The British, however, did not focus on the specific reasons behind the resistance to the vaccine, but rather conceptualized "Indian society as static and traditional; immobilized by an age-old aversion to change and innovation. Moreover, having lived for so long under oppressive and despotic regimes, the Indians were not capable of understanding the benevolent motives of the British regime."[50]

For missionaries in India, the threat of illness, particularly cholera and smallpox, always loomed large; within the missionary records and diaries there are numerous references to members who succumbed to the diseases. It is perhaps for this reason that missionary writings concerning the interactions of the natives and disease are so prevalent; these rituals mark one of the few instances in which both Indians and Europeans were experiencing a similar threat. Perhaps more importantly, issues of disease were a simple venue through which both missionary and colonial groups could emphasize the need for rescue through a civilizing mission. Niels Brimnes notes, "This decontextualized construction of an irrational, non-scientific 'other' provided the civilizing mission with a target: an extensive population capable of occupying the position of reluctant beneficiaries of the blessings of European medicine."[51]

Missionary writings on Māriyamman as she relates to smallpox are varied. Some simply mention the association between the two, others involve elaborate descriptions of festivals and rituals undertaken to appease the apparently angry goddess, while still others narrate their own involvement in rescuing the heathens from these "horrific" scenes. Perhaps one of the most descriptive writers is Bartholomäus Ziegenbalg, of the Tranquebar mission, whose writings discuss the understanding of and response to Māriyamman within the village context. In 1713 he said of Māriyamman:

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48. Ibid., 136; Niels Brimnes, "Coming to Terms with the Native Practitioner: Indigenous Doctors in Colonial Service in South India, 1800–1825," *Indian Economic Social History Review* 50 (2013): 91.
49. Arnold, *Colonizing the Body,* 155.
50. Niels Brimnes, "The Sympathizing Heart and the Healing Hand: Smallpox Prevention and Medical Benevolence in Early Colonial South India," in Fischer-Tiné and Mann, eds., *Colonialism as Civilizing Mission*, 202.
51. Ibid., 203.

> She is one of the principal protective goddesses and is considered to be the goddess, as the poets say, from whom smallpox and measles come and by whom they are again removed. If anyone among the South Indians[52] gets smallpox, of which there are three kinds, they immediately say that Māriyamman is angry with this person. In some places, those who suffer from smallpox are left alone [by friends and relatives] so that the anger of Māriyamman might not come over them also. Many people die of a kind of smallpox and measles which is indeed very dangerous.[53]

He continues:

> If someone gets smallpox, that person then worships Māriyamman and requests from her healing and, for this reason, brings her offerings, because it is believed that such a worship and offering ward off these ills. Since they come from her, she can also remove them without harming those who get them, provided that they worship her and honor her with offerings.[54]

Ziegenbalg's writings on Māriyamman differ both from later missionary writings as well as his own, earlier writings concerning South Indian religion. Each of these excerpts reads as a straightforward description of the goddess and her role regarding diseases in the village context. Additionally, he references Māriyamman's ability to remove the smallpox "without harming those who get them," indicating her ability to heal the afflicted. At the time of Ziegenbalg's writing, the smallpox vaccine did not yet exist, nor did the mission to combat smallpox. Perhaps as a result of this, his writings differ from the majority of later missionary writings, which discuss rituals concerning smallpox as a defect of a weak and uncivilized people.

In 1857 Robert Caldwell of the London Missionary Society stated:

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52. In his review of Daniel Jeyaraj's translation, Will Sweetman notes that "in translating Ziegenbalg's text Jeyaraj has adopted a number of principles that give the work in translation a very different flavor. The most notable of these is his use of 'South Indian' (or, sometimes, 'Tamil') for 'Heide' or '*heidnisch*', and of 'South Indian society' for 'Heidentum' (although he sometimes uses 'heathendom' where the context would make 'South Indian society' non-sensical)." (Will Sweetman, review of *Genealogy of the South Indian Deities: An English Translation of Bartholomäus Ziegenbalg's Original German Manuscript with a Textual Analysis and Glossary,* trans. Daniel Jeyaraj, *Contemporary South Asia* 16 [2008]: 111–12.) Therefore, the use of "South Indian" in this excerpt should be understood as "heathen."
53. Ziegenbalg, *Genealogy of the South Indian Deities*, 121.
54. Ibid., 123.

> There is much ceremony, but little sincerity, in the more plausible religion of the higher classes; but the demonolaters literally 'believe and tremble.' In times of sickness, especially during the prevalence of cholera, it is astonishing with what eagerness, earnestness, and anxiety the lower classes worship their demons.[55]

Then, in 1887, he noted that

> Cholera and small-pox, the most dreadful of all pestilences, are inflicted by them [*Ammans*] alone; and what is specially extraordinary is, that small-pox is invariably called by the common people 'the sport of the *Amman*.' When a person is stricken by small-pox the expression the people use is 'the *Amman* is taking her pastime over him.' Mari-Amman is the special title of the cholera goddess, and *mari* means death personified. . . . There is no difference between the *Ammans* and the devils in regard to their appetite for blood. They all alike delight in bloody sacrifices, and all alike require frantic dances to be performed in their honour, especially in times of pestilence.[56]

Caldwell's writings portray the devotees of the goddess as simple-minded and unable to understand the true nature of the sickness they are experiencing. His language reinforces the view of the devotees as "uncivilized"; they believe the disease is "the sport of the Amman" because they are uneducated, they perform "bloody sacrifices" for the goddess, and their religion is based on the worship of devils. Additionally, he invokes the need for a rescuer as he represents their own fear (they "believe and tremble") and the anxiety their religion causes them.

Wilder, writing about the AMM, presents a narrative that begins with a devotee's understanding of Māriyamman̲, followed by a missionary response. It is presented as follows:

> "The Brahmin pujari has caused the spirit of Mariamman to take her residence in this one. We are breaking coconuts and burning camphor incense before her, because only thus will she be appeased and leave us and our children in peace. Many of us are suffering from smallpox and cholera because of her."

> "How very foolish to believe such stories! Don't prostrate yourselves before things made of clay or stone, instead of before the true God and Creator of the

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55. Caldwell, *Lectures on the Tinnevelly Missions*, 49.

56. Caldwell, "On Demonology in Southern India," *Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay* (1887): 94.

world! Look here, if I break these with my stick, what will happen? Will these images have any power to protect themselves, much less to injure you and your children?"[57]

This type of narrative is common within the literature, as it presents the "ignorant native" in contrast to the "modern westerner." Here, Māriyamma<u>n</u> worship is not represented as a demonolatry, but rather as idolatry; it is the devotees' continued insistence on worshiping stone figures of the goddess that marks the need for civilization. These passages tend to lean more towards story-telling and were most likely meant for fellow missionaries or missionary supporters to read; the second paragraph in particular shows the easily identifiable frustration of the missionary at the perceived irrational behavior he was encountering.

A similar vignette is narrated by Edyth Hinkley and Marie Christlieb on the thoughts and feelings of the native practitioner in response to the Christianity that had settled within the village. The village mentioned had been free of disease for the past two rainy seasons, but the disease returned, causing devotees to question how they had angered the goddess. Speaking as the devotee, the authors question whether her anger could be due to the "low-caste Malas" who "cut themselves off from Hinduism by having water poured over their heads while he [the Christian] muttered incantations."[58] The narrative continues as the goddess-worshiping native blames the missionaries, their school, and the converted Christians for the presence of disease in the village. The converted Christians are shown as questioning the words of their leader, but nonetheless do not stray from their religion. In the following year, when cholera returned with a vengeance, a young girl who was a pupil at the Christian school died, which eventually led all of the converted Christians to renounce the religion and to return to their former traditions. What is most interesting, however, are the final words, "But when next year's rainy season came round—though the old insanitary conditions continued—*there was not a single case of cholera in the village!*"[59] This seeming change of heart occupies an ambiguous place within our understandings of literature on the topic. Throughout, the authors' views on the worshipers of the goddess are apparent, but the

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57. Wilder, *A Century in the Madura Mission*, 40.
58. Hinkley and Christlieb, *A Struggle for a Soul,* 121–22.
59. Ibid., 128 (emphasis supplied in original).

ending at first appears to comment on the efficacy of the goddess; once the devotees returned to Hinduism, the disease disappeared. However, when this is understood in the context of their other thoughts on village religion, the remark appears to be more sarcastic in nature; they are poking fun at the villagers' understandings of disease and the belief that disease can be controlled through village rituals.

On Hook-Swinging

Throughout colonial India hook-swinging was one of the most vociferously condemned rituals, likely due to its very public presence at festivals and the bodily mortification involved. Although the process varied regionally, hook-swinging generally consisted of the insertion of two or more hooks in the back of the devotee, who would then be attached to a pole and raised from the ground.[60] In south India, the majority of swingers were low-caste men, but there are records of women as well as high-caste men taking part in the ritual.[61] Hook-swinging was most often performed in propitiation to Māriyammaṉ, as both a blood sacrifice and a manifestation of the swinger's devotion to her. "When a true devotee enacts the sacrifice by swinging on the hook, Māriyammaṉ herself appears, drawn by the devotion of her worshiper."[62]

Missionaries took issue with hook-swinging not only because it was contrary to their own mission of proselytization, but also because it was an "un-civilized" action on display in public, colonial space; they feared that it would be understood as a condoned, rather than condemned, ritual and would hamper the spread of Christianity and, thus, civilization.[63] Missionaries and colonial institutions alike often depicted hook-swingers as victims of Hinduism, suggesting that the swinger was drugged and forced to take part, "thus dispensing with the need to worry the issue of agency."[64] By the mid-nineteenth century hook-swinging was in an apparent decline and

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60. Geoffrey A. Oddie, *Popular Religion, Elites, and Reform: Hook-Swinging and its Prohibition in Colonial India, 1800–1894* (Delhi: Manohar Publishers & Distributors, 1995), 14–15.
61. Ibid., 32.
62. Craddock, "Reconstructing the Split Goddess," 155–56.
63. Dirks, *Castes of Mind*, 153, 157.
64. Ibid., 152.

heavily discouraged by the colonial government, but it was not until 1894 that it was subjected to an outright ban.[65]

As in the case of smallpox, Ziegenbalg's depiction of sacrifice and festival is rather tame when compared with later portrayals. Concerning a Māriyamman̲ festival, he wrote:

> At this festival the people are accustomed to playing all kinds of tricks and games. Some of them allow a hook to be fastened to the flesh of their backs and pulled up on a pole lying on a tall mast [framed like the wooden structure] like in a draw-well. It must cause much pain and harm. [66]

The difference seems quite obvious when it is contrasted with the following excerpt from Wilder:

> The wretched man caught hold of the rope hanging before him, to ease the strain, but soon let go and hung by the hook, bent almost double, his head and feet hanging, the muscles of his back pulled to their utmost tension. Hundreds of men drew the car over the rough ground around the temple, the victim shaken and tossed from side to side for an hour, his face the picture of exhaustion and distress. . . . He suffered little the first day. . . . On succeeding days, he had to be guarded lest he commit suicide to escape the pain.[67]

The difference in the language involved in these two depictions is immediately apparent. Ziegenbalg's writing is anthropological; he observes the phenomenon and the bodily harm it must cause, but does not include the negative descriptive elements that are found within the second. Wilder's language, including the references to the "wretched man" and the "victim," reinforces the need for rescue; the hook-swinger is not represented as having agency and there is no mention of his reasons for taking part in the ritual. While Ziegenbalg indicates that the hook-swinger "allows" the hook to be inserted, Wilder represents the entire act as a violation of the devotee's body. Additionally, while Ziegenbalg discusses a group of people ("the hook-swingers"), Wilder focuses on one specific man and his experience. Her account—which is based on a version written by Dr. Noyes, a missionary with the association—does not contain any first hand discussions with the so-called "victim" until the last few lines, which read as follows:

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65. Oddie, *Popular Religion, Elites, and Reform*, 4, 26, 99.
66. Ziegenbalg, *Genealogy of the South Indian Deities*, 121.
67. Wilder, *A Century in the Madura Mission*, 155–56.

> Some weeks later, Burnell met the man, with the scars of the hooks in his back.
>
> Said he, "Aiyo! It is sad to think the ceremony has been forbidden! That is the reason the rains fall so often. My ancestors for seven generations back have swung, from father to son. But the succession must stop with me. Aiyo! Aiyo!"[68]

The lack of commentary after this quotation is telling; it implies that these words give all of the information needed to understand the situation that has occurred. By placing this at the end of the chapter, Wilder has led the reader to her conclusion: the hook-swinger was injured and almost at death, yet he still did not understand why hook-swinging should be outlawed. The hook-swinger's belief that the rains are effected by his swinging is meant to show his lack of education and serve as a reminder of why the civilizing mission is necessary. Unsurprisingly, neither Ziegenbalg nor Wilder focus on the possibility of any positive ritual outcomes.

One of the most complete descriptions of hook-swinging comes from the Reverend Henry Fox of the Church Missionary Society. He notes that the hook-swinger was "a man of the very lowest of all the subdivisions of castes" and "was employed as a substitute by some richer man who cared more for his skin than for his money, and who had during the past year, been induced by illness to make a vow to the Ammaváru, that he would swing at her festival, in case she cured him.[69] The hook-swinger is immediately defined by his caste and a perceived lack of agency; he is not taking part in the ritual entirely of his own volition, but rather, in exchange for a monetary reward. In the Christian context, this act of paying for the blessings of the goddess serves to increase the depravity of the situation and the individuals involved; the richer man, in particular, is implied to be of low moral character.

Fox continues his narration of the events as the "poor victim" prepares himself to be swung. Although the spectators believe the man to be in a possessed state, Fox notes that he was "altogether presenting a very disgusting and degraded appearance," which was made worse by "the liquor and excitement."[70]

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68. Ibid., 156.

69. Henry W. Fox, *Chapters on Missions in South India* (London: Seeleys, 1848), 79.

70. Ibid., 80.

> After a short time, during which one sheep was swung, and another had its head cut off at a blow, as a sacrifice to the idol, it came to the man's turn to be swung; the car was rolled back a couple of hundred yards from the temple, the man dancing and skipping before it all the way; he was then brought under the end of the horizontal beam, and the executioner drew near with his hooks. He first struck, but not smartly, the part of the back which was to be pierced, and then pinched up the flesh two or three times, in order to get a good hold of it: after fixing on a little moveable lancet to the hook, he ran it through the skin of the small of the back of the man, taking up the flesh about an inch wide and a quarter of an inch in depth; with a little twisting and wrenching, in consequence of the shanks of the hooks being joined together, the second hook was similarly inserted. At this time several men with drums kept up a great noise, and the crowd round about shouted as they saw the hooks applied. It is their belief, and common saying, that the man does not feel any pain, in consequence of the protection of the good goddess; but on this occasion I heard the cry of pain which the poor man uttered as the hook entered his skin, clear above all the noise of the bystanders; and the expression of pain in his face, was not to be concealed by all the daubing upon it.[71]

Unlike Wilder, Fox includes a full description of the person undergoing the ritual, the reasons for the ritual, and the perceived efficacy of the ritual. Fox's inclusion of the hook-swinger's background—and the important detail that he is not doing it for his own edification, but for a wealthy man who will receive the benefit of the ritual—serves the focus of a civilizing mission well. In contrast to Wilder's portrayal, Fox's "victim" would be less sympathetic in the Christian view; first, Fox makes it clear that the hook-swinger is under the influence of alcohol, and second, he shows the hook-swinger as "dancing and skipping" before the hooks are applied. Fox does show some sympathy for the hook-swinger when he says that he heard the "cry of pain which the poor man uttered" and when he refers to the hook-inserter as "executioner." However, I would argue that where Wilder creates a sympathetic victim, Fox's intent is to show the reader that the Hindu people need to be saved from *other* Hindus, such as the depicted hook-swinger and the priest who is conducting the rite. While it may be too late to save the hook-swinger from the depravity of the ritual, he serves an important role as a marker of the ignorance of the lower castes and their need for rescue by the west. The additional focus on the wealthy man who is swinging by proxy, meanwhile, becomes indicative of India's lack of morals and civility as a whole, implying

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71. Ibid., 80–81.

that the civilization and rescue of the lower castes of India will only take place through the work of western missionaries.

On Animal Sacrifice

Similar to hook-swinging, missionaries saw animal sacrifice as a marker of the degradation of Hinduism. The practices involved, including the beheading of the animal and the placing of it before an image of the goddess, were taken as evidence for the innate, demon-like, and bloodthirsty nature of both the goddess and her devotees. By extension, those who took part in these rituals were often denigrated as "savages" due to the anomaly these traditions presented when compared with those found in the missionaries' Christianity. However, rather than avoiding scenes of "devil-worship," missionaries devoted large portions of their work to detailing and discussing the acts of sacrifice. Ritual animal sacrifice was most likely practiced more often than other rituals, including hook-swinging, which may also explain the ubiquitous nature of writings on the subject.

In his early twentieth century book *The Village Gods of South India*, Reverend Henry Whitehead devotes an entire chapter to the "Modes of Worship in the Tamil Country." The twenty-three pages are focused almost entirely on depictions of animal sacrifice from various Tamil regions in South India. Whitehead discusses the rituals of fifteen different locales, focusing on the shrine of the local goddess as well as any festivals dedicated to her and the animal sacrifices that occur as part of her worship. Whitehead often points to the perceived ignorance of the devotees. For example, he states, "The idea, so naively expressed . . . that the goddess actually drinks the blood of the victims, is not uncommon."[72]

Although there are hints of his disapproval of animal sacrifice, they are rarely stated overtly. This can be attributed to the intended audience of the text, as Whitehead does not need to convince his western readers that animal sacrifice is an inappropriate action, rather, his purpose is to show its widespread nature. Thus, passages similar to the following two are quite common:

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72. Henry Whitehead, *The Village Gods of South India* (Calcutta: Association Press [Y.M.C.A.], 1921), 94.

> People who have made vows, in times of sickness or distress, or in order to secure some boon, bring their victims [animals] to the shrine. . . . If the animal is a sheep or goat, it is then seized by the offerer and his friends, some of whom catch hold of its hind legs … and its head is cut off with one stroke of the chopper by one of the pujaris.[73]

> At the festival of Mariamman . . . [w]hen sheep are sacrificed, the blood is collected in earthen vessels, mixed with boiled rice, and then sprinkled in the enclosure of the shrine and in the four corners of the main streets.[74]

Ziegenbalg offers similar statements:

> At this festival swine, goats and cocks are sacrificed in her honor; in front of her temple the heads of animals are cut off and the blood flows out. Her devotees give the heads to the priests and eat up the rest.[75]

Robert Caldwell offers a more thorough understanding of the reasons for ritual sacrifice. He notes that the sacrifice is performed as propitiation to the goddess in order to remove or prevent hardships.

> The sole object of the sacrifice is the removal of the devil's anger, or of the calamities which his anger brings down. It should be distinctly understood that sacrifices are never offered on account of the sins of the worshippers, and that the devil's anger is not supposed to be excited by any moral offence. The religion of the demonolators, such as it is, has no connexion with morals.[76]

Caldwell's explicit statement that the sacrifices are not motivated through a need for penance immediately serves to separate Christian practices from the 'demonolatry' of village religion. In so doing, he prevents any identification with the Hindu devotees and instead marks them as an "other" in need of conversion. With regard to the ritual itself, Caldwell notes that "the rationale of the rite is sufficiently clear. It consists in offering the demon life for life—blood for blood. . . . Accordingly, a goat is sacrificed; its blood is poured out upon the demon's altar, and the offerer goes free."[77] Although he does not agree with the efficacy or appropriateness of the action, he points towards a reason behind it, suggesting that the devotee is not simply

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73. Ibid., 93.
74. Ibid., 94.
75. Ziegenbalg, *Genealogy of the South Indian Deities*, 121.
76. Caldwell, "On Demonology in Southern India," 103.
77. Ibid., 104.

following custom (as Whitehead suggests throughout his book), but rather that the entire ritual is the result of a reasoned process. This is an important distinction in the context of the civilizing mission, as it implies that the lower caste Indians are capable of reason, and by extension that if they are introduced to Christianity they will be easily converted.

Conclusion

The increasing reach of the colonial enterprise in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was mirrored within the missionary networks on the subcontinent. As missions quickly changed their purpose from one focused on conversion to one focused on the civilization of the natives, missionary interactions with the people of the village and their religion changed as well. Within the missionary writings of the time, we can see key points on which the narrative of "civilizing" was predicated, including the notions of the ignorance of the village devotee, the medical need of the smallpox ridden, the depravity of village rituals and, above all, the obligation to rescue through conversion to Christianity.

Thomas Aquinas and *Caritas*: Biblical Theology, Christian Virtue, Prophetic Discourse

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In this essay I probe the views of three modern scholars and the claims they make about the love-command in the Christian tradition. I do so with a view to comparing their perspectives to what Thomas Aquinas says about love (*caritas*). In the first section I try to imagine how Aquinas might respond to Anders Nygren's *Eros och Agape* (1930–1936). I focus on the limitations of Nygren's approach when compared to the many senses in which *agape* is used in the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible. I argue that Acquinas's discussion of *caritas* is richer and more faithful to Scripture than Nygren's description of love. The second section considers William Moran's view of love in Deuteronomy. Moran was a biblical scholar who specialized also in Assyriology. I try to show that Moran's understanding of covenantal love relies too much on the model of a diplomatic treaty and how Acquinas's teaching about *caritas* and happiness illuminates the *feeling* of love for God. The third section engages Richard Rorty's critique of religious discourse in the public sphere. Rorty was a liberal philosopher in the analytic tradition, and in his view religious zeal inevitably leads to cruelty and the exclusion of "the other." For this reason, Rorty would exclude all talk of Christian love from public policy debates. With the help of Acquinas's account of love and the common good, however, we might be better able to discern and confront particular forms of cruelty that Rorty himself was content to ignore.

Nygren's Account of Love *versus* The Septuagint's Use of *Agape*

The Swedish Lutheran theologian Anders Nygren published an influential account of Christian love in *Agape and Eros.* Nygren emphasized a sharp break between God's love for human beings and their capacity to

respond to him in love.[1] According to Nygren, *agape* is revealed in the boundless generosity shown by God in sending his Son to redeem humanity. For Nygren, *caritas* as described by Thomas Aquinas gives far too much credit to the human ability to obey God's commands and to the human desire to see God. Nygren finds *caritas* suspect, because on his reading, it closely resembles the Greek conception of *eros*, an acquisitive and egocentric kind of love that is motivated by selfish human needs.

However, the binary opposition that Nygren set up between *agape* and *eros* is overly simplistic.[2] *Agape*-love has many dimensions, contrary to Nygren's portrayal of *agape* as always and everywhere the same, coming down from above. For a strong sign that *agape* is multi-dimensional, let us consider how the Septuagint uses the Greek word *agape* for a wide range of experiences:

> For ***the conjugal/romantic love*** between Isaac and Rebecca (Gen 24:67), and the *love* Jacob feels for Rachel (Gen 29:18).[3]

> For ***the love that parents feel toward their children***: Abraham's *love* for Isaac (Gen 22:2), and Jacob's *love* for Joseph (Gen 37:3-4).[4]

> For ***the love that human beings have for God***: "and doing mercy unto thousands, for those who *love* me and keep my ordinances" (Exod 20:6).[5]

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1. There are two English translations of Anders Nygren's influential work, *Agape and Eros: The Christian Idea of Love*, trans. A. G. Hebert (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1939); Anders Nygren, *Agape and Eros: The Christian Idea of Love*, trans. by Philip S. Watson, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982); trans. of Anders Nygren, *Den kristna kärlekstanken genom tiderna: Eros och Agape*, 2 vols. (Stockholm: Svenska Kyrkans Diakonistyrelses Bokförlag, 1930–1936).

2. Amy Laura Hall, "Complicating the Command: Agape in Scriptural Context," *Annual of the Society of Christian Ethics* 19 (1999): 97–113. See also Gary Badcock, "The Concept of Love: Divine and Human," in *Nothing Greater, Nothing Better: Theological Essays on the Love of God*, ed. Kevin J. Vanhoozer (Grand Rapids; Eerdmans, 2001), 30–46.

3. Jack M. Sasson, "The Servant's Tale: How Rebekah Found a Spouse," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 65 (2006): 241–65.

4. Steven A. Rogers, "The Parent-Child Relationship as an Archetype for the Relationship between God and Humanity in Genesis," *Pastoral Psychology* 50 (2002): 377–85.

5. Albert Pietersma and Benjamin G. Wright, eds., *New English Translation of the Septuagint* (Oxford University Press, 2007), 65. An electronic version of the *NETS* is available online: http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/nets/edition/.

For ***loving one's neighbor***: "and you shall *love* your neighbor as yourself" (Lev 19:18).[6]

For ***the love of family***: When Obed was born to Ruth and Boaz, the women of Bethlehem said to Naomi: "He shall be to you a restorer of life and shall sustain your gray head. For your daughter-in-law, who *loves* you, who is better to you than seven sons, has borne him" (Ruth 4:15).

For ***loving mercy and the good***, as in Amos 5:15, "We have hated evil things and *loved* the good things," and also in Micah 6:8, "Has it been told to you, O man, what *is* good or what the Lord seeks from you, but to do judgment to *love* mercy, and to be ready to walk with the Lord, your God?"[7]

The witness of the LXX, then, suggests that *agape* may be much more like Aquinas' account of *caritas* than Nygren is willing to concede. God's grace is not opposed to human nature.[8] Rather, the infused virtues of faith, hope, and love bring human nature to fulfillment, so that human beings can flourish in friendship with God.

There is a sense in which Christian love and hospitality should be extended to all, but an honest acknowledgement of the limits of my resources shows me that I cannot hope to be the benefactor of *every* person.[9] Aquinas describes *caritas* as an ordered love. Our obligation to love others is not always and everywhere the same. Acquinas speaks of a hierarchy of loves, but his reflections on this hierarchy do not merely follow the pattern of our natural impulses to "love those who love us." Certain forms of preferential love are a legitimate part of the Christian life.[10] The Christian is called to love God first of all; to love herself; to love and honor her parents, but also

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6. *NETS*, 99.

7. *NETS,* 799. See also Walter Brueggemann, "Walk humbly with your God: Micah 6:8," *Journal for Preachers* 33, no. 4 (2010): 14–19. Juan I. Alfaro, *Micah: Justice and Loyalty* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989), 68–69.

8. "Moreover, the perfection of a virtue is not contrary to the inclination of nature" (Thomas Aquinas, *De Caritate*, Art. 8, ad. 7). Online: http://dhspriory.org/thomas/english/QDdeVirtutibus2.htm#8.

9. Leo Tolstoy vividly describes how he came to realize his own limits as a benefactor in *What Then Must We Do?* trans. Aylmer Maude (Hartland: Green, 1991), chapter 10.

10. Søren Kierkegaard consistently rejects the possibility of a role for preferential friendships in the Christian life in *Works of Love* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1946), 39. Gene Outka also argues for "equal regard" rather than "special relations" (*Agape: An Ethical Analysis* [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972], 7).

to leave them when she marries and to show a preferential love for her husband and their children; to love those who are preeminently holy; to show love to a hungry person and to those who are in prison, even to love the enemy.[11]

Acquinas' interpretation of the order of charity recognizes the importance of different spheres of life and acknowledges the need for different schemes of priority, depending on the immediacy of various needs and the different connections that people share.[12] In certain situations, a person might even be obligated to help a stranger before helping one's own father. The place to begin, however, is with *caritas*, the love we are called to have for God.

Acquinas: Whether *Caritas* is Friendship?

Acquinas had a gift for asking fruitful questions, questions that illuminate the moral and spiritual landscape, and help us see things that might otherwise remain hidden. His simple question about the nature of *caritas* is like that: Is love for God a form of friendship?[13]

First, Acquinas considers various arguments against the view that caritas is a form of friendship. Aristotle says that friends want to be together and enjoy one another's company (*Eth. nic.* 8.5). In Isa 6 and many other passages of Scripture, however, that does not seem to be possible, because God is said to be transcendent, dwelling "far above us." Moreover, according to Acquinas, friendship is characterized by mutuality and reciprocity (cf. *Eth. nic.* 8.5). But in Matt 5:44, Christ teaches us to love our enemies, even though there is little prospect of them returning our good will. It is very important that Christ's followers try to love their enemies, Acquinas says, but that kind of one-sided love is not the kind of friendship-love that he counts as the *most* important.

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11. Jean Porter, "De Ordine Caritatis: Charity, Friendship, and Justice in Thomas Aquinas' *Summa Theologiae*," *The Thomist* 53, no. 2 (1989): 197–213.

12. Stephen Pope. *The Evolution of Altruism and the Ordering of Love.* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 1994), 64.

13. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* II-II, Q. 23, art. 1. "Whether Caritas is Friendship?" (all translations of the *Summa theologica* (*ST*) are taken from New Advent's online edition: http://www.newadvent.org/summa/index.html.

Acquinas considers a third class of objections based on Aristotle's identification of three foundations of friendship. (1) Friends can bond over some activity or project that interests them both. Team-mates in sports may have that kind of relationship, or two people may discover that they like the same style of music. But these kinds of friendships typically fade away as soon as one person's interests change. (2) People can become friends because they are useful to each other, as often happens in business or in political campaigns. But here, too, instrumental friendships usually run their course after a short time. (3) Aristotle says the highest form of friendship is when both people are seriously committed to the life of moral virtue. Jerome and Paulinus seem to have had that kind of friendship when they exchanged letters with each other about the Scriptures, both of them fearing God and sharing a faith in Christ. Aquinas would certainly not be opposed to this kind of friendship, either, but he wants his students to focus their imaginations on a paradigm for friendship that is even deeper and more meaningful than the friendship between Jerome and Paulinus.[14]

Jesus' saying in John 15:15 most clearly expresses the idea that the love between God and human beings is a form of friendship.[15] In the final hours that Jesus and his disciples had together on earth, just before his arrest and crucifixion, what did he say to them? "I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father." That is the kind of closeness and mutual love between Jesus and his friends that is at the heart of the Christian life.

Acquinas: Whether *Caritas* Can Be Lost?

In John 15 Jesus is just about to lay down his life for his friends, and they declare that they are also willing to lay down their lives for him. Peter is the first to say to Jesus, "Even if I must die with you, I will not deny you." Jesus seems to know their limits and their frailty, however, and he says

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14. See a pair of very helpful essays by Joseph Bobik, "Aquinas on *Communicatio,* the Foundation of Friendship and *Caritas,*" *Modern Schoolman* 64 (1986):1–18; idem, "Aquinas on Friendship with God," *New Scholasticism* 60 (1986): 257–71.

15. Anthony Keaty, "Thomas's Authority for Identifying Charity as Friendship: Aristotle or John 15?" *The Thomist* 62 (1998): 581–601.

to Peter, "This very night, before the cock crows, you will deny me three times." Indeed, soon after Jesus was arrested, they all forsook him and fled.

That night of terrible fear in which Peter denied that he ever knew Jesus could have been the end of their friendship. The dream they shared of God's Kingdom, had it not died with Jesus on the cross? Peter seems to have thought so. In John 21 we see Peter returning to his old way of life. He goes back to the Sea of Tiberias, back to his fishing nets. Then something astonishing happens. A stranger comes walking along the shore and calls out to the fishermen as if he knows them. John is the first to recognize that this is not really a stranger, but Jesus. They cook some of the fish on the fire, and share a meal together. Jesus takes Peter aside where they can talk together more privately, and almost immediately their conversation turns into something of a dialogue on love.

While we do not normally "see" the nuanced quality of their dialogue in English, in Greek there is a subtle difference between ἀγαπᾶν (to love selflessly) and φιλεῖν (to love as a brother or as a friend).

15 Ὅτε οὖν ἠρίστησαν λέγει τῷ Σίμωνι Πέτρῳ ὁ Ἰησοῦς, Σίμων Ἰωάννου, **ἀγαπᾷς με** πλέον τούτων; λέγει αὐτῷ, Ναί, κύριε, σὺ οἶδας ὅτι **φιλῶ σε**. λέγει αὐτῷ, Βόσκε τὰ ἀρνία μου. 16 λέγει αὐτῷ πάλιν δεύτερον, Σίμων Ἰωάννου, **ἀγαπᾷς με**; λέγει αὐτῷ, Ναί, κύριε, σὺ οἶδας ὅτι **φιλῶ σε**. λέγει αὐτῷ, Ποίμαινε τὰ πρόβατά μου. 17 λέγει αὐτῷ τὸ τρίτον, Σίμων Ἰωάννου, **φιλεῖς με**; ἐλυπήθη ὁ Πέτρος ὅτι εἶπεν αὐτῷ τὸ τρίτον, Φιλεῖς με; καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ, Κύριε, πάντα σὺ οἶδας, σὺ γινώσκεις ὅτι **φιλῶ σε**. (John 21:15–17)

Jesus asks Peter, "Do you love (ἀγαπᾷς) me?" Peter replies, "Lord, you know that I love (φιλῶ) you." In modern Biblical scholarship, the use of these two different verbs is commonly taken to be no more than a Johannine preference for linguistic variation.[16] Another reading is possible, however, one that interprets the difference as Jesus calling Peter to a deeper commitment. The

16. Among those who see "a difference in style only" are Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel according to John* (2 vols.; Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1966–1970), 2:1102–3; George R. Beasley-Murray, *John* (WBC 36; Waco: Word Books, 1987), 394; James Barr, "Words for Love in Biblical Greek," in *The Glory of Christ in the New Testament: Studies in Christology in Memory of George Bradford Caird*, ed. L. D. Hurst and N. T. Wright (Oxford: Clarendon, 1987), 3–18; and Leon Morris's chapter "Variation—A Feature of the Johannine Style," in *Studies in the Fourth Gospel* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1969), 293–319.

"friendship love" of John 15 is not to be discarded, but so long as Peter remains only at that level of love for Jesus, he will probably fall short as a disciple. Jesus wants Peter to love him more deeply. He is summoning Peter to respond to him with an *agape* type of love.[17]

If we accept this more traditional interpretation, Peter's anguish is somewhat more evident, because he knows how miserably he failed Jesus in that crucial moment (John 18). Jesus does not condemn Peter, however. He restores his friend and gives him a task: "If you love me, feed my sheep." When Acquinas writes about Peter's failure in John 18, he discusses it under the heading of a question: Whether charity is lost through one mortal sin? Aquinas notes that when Leo the Great comments on Peter's failure, he takes a gentle approach: "Our Lord saw in Peter not a conquered faith, not an averted love, but constancy shaken. Tears abounded where love never failed, and the words uttered in trepidation were washed away by the fount of charity."[18] William of Thierry agrees with Leo, "Charity in Peter was not quenched, but cooled" (*De nat. et dig. amoris* 6). Aquinas thinks Peter's failure was more serious than that, however. Peter did lose *caritas*, he says, but he soon got it back. And after this encounter between Jesus and Peter in John 21, in which their fellowship with each other is restored, it is easier to trust in the words of 1 John 4:18 about perfect love that drives out fear.[19]

The Background of Covenantal Love in Deuteronomy: Diplomatic Treaty or Family Relationship?

George Mendenhall recognized that a fruitful comparison could be made between treaty agreements in the Ancient Near East and the covenants between God and Israel in the Old Testament. The basic features of the treaty genre include: (1) preamble, (2) historical prologue, (3) stipulations,

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17. Biblical scholars who favor this "spiritual formation" interpretation include David Shepherd, "'Do You Love Me?': A Narrative-Critical Reappraisal of ἀγαπάω and φιλέω in John 21:15–17," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 129 (2010): 777–92; K. L. McKay, "Style and Significance in the Language of John 21:15–17," *Novum Testamentum* 27 (1985): 319–33; Ceslas Spicq, *Agapé dans le Nouveau Testament* (3 vols.; Paris: Gabalda, 1958), 3:230–37; and William Hendriksen, *Commentary on the Gospel of John* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1970): 494–500.
18. *ST* II-II, Q. 24, art. 12.
19. Scott Bader-Saye, "Thomas Aquinas and the Culture of Fear," *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics* 25 (2005): 95–108.

(4) deposition, (5) divine witnesses, (6) curses and blessings.[20] These forms were used to seal alliances between powerful kings and their vassals.

> A "covenant" is an agreement enacted between two parties in which one or both make promises under oath to perform or refrain from certain actions stipulated in advance. As indicated by the designation of the two sections of the Christian Bible—Old Testament (= covenant) and New Testament—"covenant" in the Bible is the major metaphor used to describe the relation between God and Israel (the people of God). As such, covenant is the instrument constituting the rule (or kingdom) of God, and therefore it is a valuable lens through which one can recognize and appreciate the biblical ideal of religious community.[21]

The Shema in Deuteronomy 6 is one of the most recognizable expressions of covenantal love:

> Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord; and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. And these words which I command you this day shall be upon your heart; and you shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.[22] (Deut 6:4–7)

As William Moran studied the love command in Deuteronomy in the light of this vassal-treaty background, it seemed to him that the emotional core of love did not play a substantial role in forming these covenants, and this led Moran to wonder: Does Deuteronomy teach that love for God can be *commanded*?[23] If so, that would mean that it is very different from the emotional feelings of *eros* or romantic love, and different too from the feelings of *philia*, or friendship. Moran answered this important question in the affirmative. Yes, human love for God is commanded in Deuteronomy.

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20. See the survey by Gary Beckman, "Hittite Treaties and the Development of the Cuneiform Treaty Tradition," in *Die deuteronomistischen Geschichtswerke: Redaktions- und religionsgeschichtliche Perspektiven zur "Deuteronomismus"-Diskussion in Tora und Vorderen Propheten*, ed. Markus Witte et al. (BZAW 365; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2006): 279–301.

21. George E. Mendenhall and Gary A. Herion, "Covenant," in *Anchor Bible Dictionary* (6 vols.; New York: Doubleday, 1996), 1:1179; cf. George E. Mendenhall "Covenant Forms in Israelite Tradition," *Biblical Archaeologist* 17 (1954): 49–76.

22. From this point on, scriptural quotations are from the Revised Standard Version, Catholic Edition (RSVCE).

23. William L. Moran, "The Ancient Near Eastern Background of the Love of God in Deuteronomy," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 25 (1963): 77–87.

Love for God is shown in the act of being loyal to this *one* God. To love God means that we walk in his ways (Deut10:12) and keep his commandments (Deut 19:9). What covenant partners may *feel* or not feel for each other is of much less importance than what they have promised to do for each other and the deeds they perform in order to fulfill those promises.

In the last decade, however, Moran's political/diplomatic account of covenantal love has been challenged by other scholars, because it seems to rule out the possibility that human beings might have a passionately felt love for God. Jacqueline Lapsley's essay "Feeling Our Way: Love for God in Deuteronomy" is emblematic of this shift.[24] Following the lead of Frank Moore Cross, she observes that the treaty language itself should be understood as an extension of fraternal love and family closeness, which are prior to diplomacy.[25] Lapsley also looks carefully at the tenth chapter of Deuteronomy, where she finds that Israel is allowed an intimate glimpse into God's heart. He *chose* long ago to love Israel's forefathers, and it was he who led Israel out of its bondage in Egypt. Israel is God's "treasured possession," and he calls on them to respond to his love by transforming their *hearts* and turning to him in love (Deut 10:16).

Acquinas: *Caritas* and the Desire for God

While Moran's interpretation of the love command moved the discussion in the direction of Kantian ethics and the obligations of duty, Lapsley and Cross have helped to make the scholarly discussion of covenantal love more open to *caritas* and the desire for "friendship with God." Now it is in that context that I would like to focus on what Aquinas might contribute to this discussion about love for God as something that fulfills the desires of the human heart.

Acquinas believes that human beings always shape their actions toward some end.[26] We can easily imagine some people pursuing selfish ends even at the expense of other people, but we can also imagine the motives of some

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24. Jacqueline Lapsley, "Feeling Our Way: Love for God in Deuteronomy," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 65 (2003): 350–69.
25. Frank Moore Cross, "Kinship and Covenant in Ancient Israel," in *From Epic to Canon: History and Literature in Ancient Israel* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1998), 3–21.
26. *ST* I-II, Q. 28, art. 6.

other people who pursue ends that are more just and show more concern for the good of others. So we can ask: What is the best end, the one that transcends all other desires? The best end for human beings cannot be wealth, power, glory, or the pleasures of the body, as all of these are fleeting and can be snatched away from us quickly, as the story of Job teaches us.[27] Moreover, the highest good ought to be something that can be shared by all people, otherwise it would be partial in scope and incomplete.[28]

The proper end of human life is to be in right relationship with God, says Aquinas, to love God above all things: "Now it is charity that unites us to God, who is the last end of the human mind, since *he that abideth in charity abideth in God, and God in him* (1 John 4:16). Therefore the perfection of the Christian life consists radically in charity."[29]

Perhaps a few words are needed at this point to help bring out what Acquinas means by "radical" in this context. One of the maxims of ancient Greek philosophy was "nothing in excess." Acquinas, too, regards temperance (self-control, moderation) as a very important virtue.[30] Temperance is the virtue that restrains physical pleasures, especially those associated with eating, drinking, and sex. However, temperance also applies to less tangible forms of desire. Consider three of the virtues that are subsidiary to temperance: meekness helps us restrain anger, clemency helps us restrain our desire to punish others for wrongs they have done, and studiousness helps us restrain vain curiosity.[31]

However, in the love command as we find it in Deut 6 and Mark 12:30, love for God is without moderation. Scripture teaches us to love God "with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength."[32] Or, as Bernard Lonergan puts it, being in love with God is experienced as love that is unrestricted, without limit, without qualifications, conditions, or reservations.[33]

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27. David Elliot, "The Christian as Homo Viator: A Resource in Aquinas for Overcoming Worldly Sin and Sorrow," *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics* 34 (2014): 101–21.

28. *ST* II-II, Q. 58, art. 5.

29. *ST* II-II, Q. 184, art. 1.

30. *ST* II-II, Q. 141, art. 2. See also Shawn Floyd, "Aquinas on Temperance," *The Modern Schoolman* 77 (1999): 35–48.

31. *ST* II-II, Q. 157, art. 3.

32. *ST* II-II, Q. 27. art. 6.

33. Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 104–6.

Here again, a few words of explanation might help us grasp Acquinas's claim that charity/*caritas* is the *form* of all the virtues.[34] When he says that charity is "the *form* of all the virtues" he means that charity is the highest virtue and that all the other virtues find their deepest meaning when they are shaped and guided by charity. "Charity is the mother and root of all the virtues."[35] It is charity that unites and gives direction to all the other virtues—faith, hope, wisdom, justice, courage, and temperance—helping us in our pilgrimage to fulfillment in God.

While charity is primarily love of God, it also includes love of neighbor.[36] God is to be loved above all else, and all other things are to be loved in relation to God.[37]

> For since our neighbor is more visible to us, he is the first lovable object we meet with, because *the soul learns from those things it knows to love what it knows not*, as Gregory says in a homily (*In Evang*. xi). Hence, it can be argued that if any man loves not his neighbor, neither does he love God, not because he is more lovable, but because he is the first thing to demand our love: and God is more lovable by his goodness.[38]

Mercy is a constituent part of *caritas*, since mercy is "man's compassionate heart for another's unhappiness."[39] Mercy begins as a feeling or disposition similar to grief over another person's suffering. Certainly there are some merciful actions that are beyond the scope of obligation, but a wide range of merciful actions—physical, emotional, and spiritual—do present themselves to us as obligations. A person who consistently refused to show mercy to others could justly be called "hard-hearted." And what hope would there be for a society that turned its back on merciful practices? [40] Paul says in Gal 5:22 that the gifts of the Holy Spirit are being poured into our

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34. *ST* II-II, Q. 23. art. 8.

35. *ST* I-II, Q. 62, art. 4.

36. Meghan J. Clark, "Love of God and Neighbor: Living Charity in Aquinas' Ethics," *New Blackfriars* 92 (2011): 415–30.

37. Ibid., 419.

38. *ST* II-II, Q. 26, art. 2.

39. *ST* II-II, Q. 30, art. 1.

40. Alex Tuckness and John M. Parrish, *The Decline of Mercy in Public Life* (Cambridge University Press, 2014).

hearts: love, joy, peace, kindness, and gentleness, and they are not meant to be hoarded there for own private benefit.

Religious Zeal as Suspect: Richard Rorty

So Aquinas teaches that love for God and neighbor must take root deep in the Christian's heart. When sociologists look at religion, however, they are rather more impressed by the ambiguity of religion. Religion, they say, can be creative and have prosocial effects, or religion can be destructive and have harmful effects on society. We do well to be alert to both possibilities.

For Richard Rorty, however, the destructive effects of religious zeal eclipse any of the good that religion might do. That is the one great lesson that liberal democracies ought to learn from the history of the wars of religion. Early in the sixteenth century, Hernando Cortes brutally slaughtered thousands of Aztecs in Mexico under the banner of the cross.[41] France was devastated by a series of wars in which Protestants and Catholics killed each other on account of their religious differences.[42] In the seventeenth century, England's disastrous civil war was also fueled by competing religious beliefs.[43]

Seeing that religious zeal is responsible for so much of the bloodshed and cruelty that plague the world, says Rorty, we should do whatever we can to eliminate it from our public life. The pragmatic aims of democratic deliberation do not require any kind of religious justification. The overall goal of procedural democracy is to let everyone have their say, and religious zeal is always threatening to usurp that process. *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity* describes the ironic pluralist as one who recognizes that disagreements about the socially constructed good will probably always persist in public life. An ironic pluralist hopes for a resolution of these conflicts that he can live with, but he understands how important it is to be

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41. Inga Clendinnen, "Fierce and Unnatural Cruelty: Cortés and the Conquest of Mexico," *Representations* 33 (1991): 65–100.

42. For an excellent historical introduction to these conflicts, see Mack Holt, *The French Wars of Religion, 1562–1629* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

43. Charles Prior, "Religion, Political Thought and the English Civil War," *History Compass* 11 (2013): 24–42.

open to the other sides of an argument.[44] That is how progress is achieved in politics. As for religious commitments, if we cannot root them out of our hearts altogether, we ought to at least keep them confined to the sphere of our private lives, with other desires that are merely "preferences." Let literature and the voice of the "strong poet" replace religious dogma, and let our public life be characterized by a romantic version of polytheism.[45] According to Rorty, it is much better to embrace that kind of openness and diversity than to zealously proclaim the need to obey the Biblical command to "love God with all your heart."

Zeal *versus* Compassion: The Stories of Elijah and Elisha

We might be surprised, though, to find that many of the same issues raised by Rorty are already being discussed in the Hebrew Scriptures. We catch a glimpse of this ongoing point/counterpoint in the stories of Elijah and Elisha. Elijah burned with heroic zeal for the God of Israel and for the true worship of that one God. Elijah challenged Queen Jezebel's prophets to a contest on Mount Carmel. Could they call upon *their* gods to send down a fire that would consume the sacrificial bull on their altar?

> And it was at noontime, Elijah ridiculed them, and said, "Cry out in a loud voice, for he is a god! Perhaps he is conversing, or pursuing [enemies] or relieving himself, perhaps he is asleep and will awaken!" And they cried in a loud voice, and gashed themselves, according to their custom, with swords and with spears, until blood poured on them. And as noonday passed they prophesied until the time of the [afternoon] offering, but there was no voice, no one answered and no one heeded. (1 Kgs 18:27–29)

Then it was Elijah's turn.

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44. Richard Rorty, *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 91–95.

45. Richard Rorty, "Pragmatism as Romantic Polytheism," in *Philosophy as Cultural Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 47–21.

> And at the going up of the [afternoon] offering, Elijah the prophet came near and said, "Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, today let it be known that You are God in Israel, and I am Your servant, that by Your word I have done all of these things. Answer me, O Lord, answer me, and this people will know that You are Lord God, and You will turn back their heart." And there fell a fire of the Lord, and consumed the burnt-offering and the wood and the stones and the dust, and the water that was in the trench it licked up. And all the people saw, and fell on their faces and said, "The Lord, He is The God, The Lord, He is The God." (1 Kgs 18:36–39)

Whereupon Elijah had all of Jezebel's prophets put to the sword.[46]

Elisha was the hand-picked successor to Elijah, but his attitude toward people of other religions turned out to be very different from that of his master. Naaman was a great general from Syria, but he suffered from leprosy. None of the doctors could help him, but a little slave girl from Israel suggested that he go to see Elisha in Israel. How often does a great military leader follow the advice of a little girl? But Naaman did go to see Elisha, and Elisha told him to go and wash himself seven times in the Jordan River (2 Kgs 5:1–19). Then he would be cured.

Naaman became angry, because he thought that his suffering was being mocked by the prophet. However, his servants convinced him to do as Elisha said, and he was astonished to find that it worked. Now I know, said Naaman, that Israel's God is the one true God. But when I return to Syria, the king will require me to go into the House of Rimmon and bow down with him in that temple. What shall I do then?[47] Here is Elisha's chance to prove his own love for The Lord, to demand that Naaman conform to Israel's ways, or else suffer the same consequences as Jezebel's prophets. But what does Elisha say? "Go in peace." Already in the story of Elisha and Naaman, then, there is an implication that it is possible to love God deeply, without humiliating the one who is different from us; to show compassion and to be faithful to God, without imposing our views on others.

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46. Patricia Berlyn, "Elijah's Battle for the Soul of Israel," *Jewish Bible Quarterly* 40 (2012): 52–62.

47. Stuart Lasine, "'Go in Peace' or 'Go to Hell'?: Elisha, Naaman and the Meaning of Monotheism in 2 Kings 5," *Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament* 25 (2011): 3–28. See also the chapter devoted to the story of Elisha and Naaman in Richard S. Briggs, *The Virtuous Reader: Old Testament Narrative and Interpretive Virtue* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010), 135–66.

Evangelium Vitae: From a Culture of Death
to a Civilization of Love

St. Thomas pushes our discussion a step farther, however, when he asks, "Whether fraternal correction is an act of charity?" (*ST* II-II, Q. 33, art. 1). If we saw that a person on a journey was about to take a wrong turn and head down the wrong road, we should call out to him and warn him. Certainly if we did not call out to that misguided person, we would be guilty of not acting in a loving way.

In the case of legalized abortion, I take this to mean that Christians have a responsibility to speak out against a law that allows someone to take the life of an unborn child: Turn back! Do not do this! Rorty's primary political goal is to avoid cruelty, but he is willing to overlook the cruelty of abortion, which has ended the lives of millions of unborn children in the United States. One reason why it is so easy to do away with unborn children is because they have no voice. According to The United States Supreme Court and those who follow Rorty, the unborn child has no legal standing as a person. In a society guided by utilitarianism and the quest for an advantage over others with whom we compete, an "unwanted child" is regarded as "inconvenient," a drag on the quest for prosperity. Who will miss these little children if they are "eliminated" quietly, since they contribute nothing "useful" to society?

John Paul II was an advocate—indeed more than an advocate, a prophet—for a Civilization of Love. *Evangelium Vitae*, the Gospel of Life, is his call to leave the culture of death behind. He identifies abortion as the most widespread and dangerous practice of the "culture of death," one that causes grave harm to the common good. In *Evangelium Vitae*, Pope John Paul II offers a reflection on the story of Cain and Abel in Genesis. Cain is embittered because God prefers the offering of his brother Abel over his own offering. After he leaves the altar, Cain does not take the opportunity to amend his way of life, or to prepare a more worthy offering for the next time he comes to worship. Instead, he nurses resentment in his heart, and when he sees an opportunity to strike, Cain eliminates his rival.

Then God comes to confront Cain and asks him a very simple question: "Where is your brother Abel?' 'What?" says Cain. "Am I my brother's *keeper*?" Cain's rude exaggeration says in effect: "People *keep* cattle, sheep, and bees in the way You are suggesting, Lord. I know where my *animals*

are, so I can make use of them, but I do not keep track of *Abel's* whereabouts in that way. So, why are you asking *me*?"[48] But God has not put this question to Cain because He lacks information about the location of Abel's lifeless body. His question is meant to awaken Cain's conscience about his brother, the one that he was obligated to love: "Your brother's blood is crying out to me from the ground!"[49] That is how Cain, the first murderer, comes to symbolize the culture of death.

According to Matt 18:6, it would be better for a person to have a millstone hung around his neck and to be cast into the sea, than to harm one of God's little ones. By Acquinas's account, we can say that Jesus says this because of: (1) his zealous love for God the Father, the same kind of zeal that motivates him to undertake the cleansing of the temple, (2) his love for little children, his desire to protect them from harm, and (3) his love—shown in the form of a warning—for those who might be contemplating actions that will harm others and their very own souls.

Caritas: Biblical Theology, Christian Virtue, Prophetic Discourse

Clearly, whoever wants to speak about the Christian vision of love enters into a complex and ongoing discussion. The dialogue is many-layered and if we want to understand it well, we have to take account of many sources. Every question that is raised has received more than one kind of answer. Every answer that is proposed invites further commentary and interpretation.

The field of Biblical Theology suggests that some of the key texts for understanding the nature of *caritas* are the story of Cain and Abel in Genesis, The *Shema* in Deut 6, the prophetic narratives of Elijah and Elisha, Jesus' teaching about love in the Synoptic Gospels, the richly nuanced discussion found in the Johannine traditions, and Paul's letter to the Galatians. My own imagination has been captured by Acquinas's account of *caritas* as a virtue.

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48. Cf. Kenneth Craig, "Questions Outside Eden (Genesis 4:1-16) Yahweh, Cain and Their Rhetorical Interchange," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 86 (1999): 107–28; Paul Riemann, "Am I My Brother's Keeper?" *Interpretation* 24 (1970): 482–91.

49. Pope John Paul II, *Evangelium Vitae*, No. 8. Online: http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/ encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_25031995_evangelium-vitae_en.html

Therefore it is natural for me to regard Nygren's treatment of agape-love as incomplete, as too "vertical" and in need of the "horizontal" corrective provided by Acquinas' account of neighbor-love.

While Mendenhall and Moran see Deut 6 as a formal diplomatic treaty, faithful worshiping communities are much more likely to be moved on a deep emotional level by the words of The Shema. According to Acquinas, this One God fulfills the desires of the human heart, and all our actions find their deepest meaning when they are oriented to God as the final end. While Mendenhall and Moran are not "wrong" about the treaty model, Acquinas gives us an account that this is more grounded in direct human experience and more faithful to the feelings that Christians have in their life-long encounter with scripture.

Richard Rorty's conception of liberal democratic debate presents another kind of challenge to any form of deeply felt *caritas*. His admonition to people of faith is: Leave your faith at home, in the private sphere. Do not let it intrude in the forum of public debate, where all arguments should be "secular" and "free" from religious discourse.

Why do I characterize this conflict between religious commitment and Rorty's restrictions on religious discourse as a "prophetic" encounter? Because the prophet Amos heard a similar argument from Amaziah the priest, when his message about God's love and justice began to annoy the king:

> And Amaziah said to Amos, "O seer, go, flee away to the land of Judah, and eat bread *there,* and prophesy *there*; but never again prophesy at Bethel, for it is the king's sanctuary, and it is a temple of the kingdom." (Amos 7:12–13)

When Jeremiah the prophet delivered his message on the steps of the Temple in Jerusalem, the priests responded in a similar way. He was banned from the Temple precincts and ordered not to come back. In Jer 20:9, however, we get a vivid sense of how hard it was for him to remain quiet:

> If I say, "I will not mention him,
>   or speak any more in his name,"
> there is in my heart as it were a burning fire
>   shut up in my bones,
> and I am weary with holding it in,
>   and I cannot.

At some point, then, it appears to be inevitable: the Christian vision of *caritas* feeds sacred discontent in the public sphere, and provides a strong motive to seek social change where it is needed. In the opening paragraph of *Redemptoris Missio*, John Paul II says: "The mission of Christ the Redeemer, which is entrusted to the Church, is still very far from completion. . . . Woe to me if I do not preach the Gospel! (1 Cor 9:16)."[50]

50. Pope John Paul II, *Redemptoris Missio* (7 December 1990). Online: http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_07121990_redemptoris-missio.html

Internet Evangelization and the False Dilemma of Innovation and Tradition in the Analysis of Digital Religious Practice

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Beginning in 2008, a Mormon social media experiment began at the Referral Mission Center in Provo, Utah: the first online-only mission, and the official headquarters of the "Chat with a Mormon" feature on the Mormon.org website. A report in the press detailing the ongoing efforts of the program a few years later reported that one teenage convert, compelled by his close relationship with the internet missionary responsible for his conversion, flew to Salt Lake City to meet him for the first time "in real life." The boy, however, was left somewhat disappointed by the encounter: "real life may have brought them face-to-face, but in that moment it lacked the intimacy of the Internet, with its seamless harmony and easy honesty."[1] How might the evangelist, and the scholar of religion, understand this sentiment?

The question is made more acute by a variety of other manifestations of the phenomena often referred to as "internet evangelization." The Internet Evangelism Coalition (IEC), for example, a cadre of organizations brought together by the Billy Graham Evangelistic Center, instituted Internet Evangelism Day in 1999, to be held once a year on the last Sunday in April in order to inform fellow Christians about the vast potential that the Coalition sees for outreach through digital media. Members of the IEC include organizations that have historically been dedicated to Christian media production and use; executive organizations include the American Tract Society, Campus Crusade for Christ, *Christianity Today,* the Christian Broadcasting Network, and the Billy Graham Center. And so the question persists: What method or frame is best suited for the analysis of internet evangelism?

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1. Bianca Bosker, "Hook of Mormon: Inside The Church's Online-Only Missionary Army," *Huffington Post* 9 April 2014.

The Methodology of Virtual Ethnography

To conduct such research, one must first engage with the broad contemporary field of digital anthropology, a category which refers to any number of instances of the incorporation of digital technologies into "traditional" anthropological methods throughout a variety of subfields and projects: archaeology, physical, linguistic, and cultural anthropology, archival and museum collections of cultural heritage materials, ancient site maps and models, and the like.[2] Digital *ethnography*, however, functions as a more specific but also more variously employed moniker. Cultural anthropologists Natalie Underberg and Elayne Zorn, for example, understand digital ethnography as a method of cultural and narrative representation. Their work aims primarily at further developing methods for the creation, design, and improvement of expressive, interactive digital projects which allow anthropologists to "tell innovative cultural stories and re-create aspects of ethnographic methodology for a diverse audience."[3] This understanding of digital ethnography as both the process and product of "ethnographic story-telling" parallels the emergence of multimedia or multisensory ethnography, but what I consider, and employ, in this project more closely resembles what Underberg and Zorn term "cyberethnography," that is, the ethnographic examination of online and virtual worlds, resources, and cultures.[4] More commonly, however, this scholarly practice is referenced as virtual ethnography, virtual anthropology, or netnography.

A significant body of anthropological literature ascribes these labels and attends to the methodology of virtual ethnography generally speaking.[5]

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2. Natalie M. Underberg and Elayne Zorn, *Digital Ethnography: Anthropology, Narrative, and New Media* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2013), 4–6.

3. Ibid*, 10.

4. Ibid., 13.

5. Vide Christine Hine, *Virtual Ethnography* (London: Sage, 2000); eadem, *Ethnography for the Internet: Embedded, Embodied, and Everyday* (Huntingdon: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2015); Luciano Paccagnella, "Getting the Seats of Your Pants Dirty: Strategies for Ethnographic Research on Virtual Communities," *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication* 3, No. 1 (June 1997); Daniel Miller and Don Slater, *The Internet: An Ethnographic Approach* (Oxford: Berg, 2000); Martyn Hammersley and Paul Atkinson, *Ethnography: Principles in Practice* (London: Routledge, 2010); Tom Boellstorff, *Coming of Age in Second Life: An Anthropologist Explores the Virtually Human* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008); Thomas R. Lindlof and Milton J. Shatzer,

These works are largely concerned with the pragmatic considerations of a traditional technique challenged by an "object of study [that] is simultaneously in multiple places, partially linked, and under continual transformation."[6] Privacy, identity, commercialism, trust, ownership, space, time, and access present complex new challenges for the field. The delineation of a community, the conduct of fieldwork, the function of anonymity, the relevance of informed consent, the observation of visual and linguistic cues, and the applicability of other key investigative and ethical principles are being reconceptualized in this light, with an emphasis on the ephemeral and mutable nature of this new context for human activity. The blurred boundaries between oral and written, between public and private, between participation and observation, provide rich fodder for an extensive reevaluation of "traditional" ethnographic practices.

Many scholars of religion have likewise forged through these complexities, often with a similar stress on innovation and novelty, to conduct analyses of online religious communities and activities.[7] In his

"Media Ethnography in Virtual Space: Strategies, Limits, and Possibilities," *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media* 42 (1998): 170–89. R. Kozinets, *Netnography: Doing Ethnographic Research Online* (London: Sage, 2010); Venessaa Paech, "A Method for the Times: A Meditation on Virtual Ethnography Faults and Fortitudes," *Nebula* 6 (2009): 195–215.

6. Casper Bruce Jensen, "Virtual Ethnography and the Study of Partially Existing Objects: The Case of ICT4DEV" (paper presented at the Virtual Ethnography in Contemporary Social Science Workshop, Virtual Knowledge Studio, Amsterdam, Netherlands, 2006).

7. Vide Gregory Grieve, "Imagining a Virtual Religious Community: Neo-Pagans on the Internet," *Chicago Anthropology Exchange* 7 (1995): 98–132; idem, "Virtually Embodying the Field: Silent Online Buddhist Meditation, Immersion, and the Cardean Ethnographic Method," *Online— Heidelberg Journal of Religions on the Internet* 4 (2010): 35–62; S. Jenkins, "Rituals and Pixels: Experiments in an Online Church," *Online—Heidelberg Journal of Religions on the Internet* 3 (2008): 95–115; Ally Ostrowski, "Cyber Communion: Finding God in the Little Box," *Journal of Religion and Society* 8 (2006): 1–12; Helen Gerth, "Zoroastrians on the Internet, A Quiet Social Movement: Ethnography of a Virtual Community," (M.A. Thesis, University of Nevada Las Vegas, 2009); Douglas Estes, *SimChurch: Being the Church of the Virtual World* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009); Heidi Campbell, *Exploring Religious Community Online: We Are One in the Network* (New York: P. Lang, 2005); Randolph Kluver and Yanli Chen, "The Church of Fools: Virtual Ritual and Material Faith," *Online—Heidelberg Journal of Religions on the Internet* 3 (2008): 116–43; Nadja Miczek, "Online Rituals in Virtual Worlds: Christian Online Service between Dynamics and Stability," *Online—Heidelberg Journal of Religions on the Internet* 3 (2008): 144–73; Ralph Schroeder, Noel Heather, and R. M. Lee, "The Sacred and the Virtual: Religion in Multi-User Virtual Reality," *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication* 4 (December 1998).

ethnographic analysis of an online Christian fundamentalist community, for example, R. G. Howard documents the emergence of what he describes as a wholly new religious movement which bears little resemblance to dominant modes of religiosity or majority traditions.[8] This characterization, however, parallels the difficult questions posed by anthropological discourses on the methodology of virtual ethnography: What is a virtual community? Where is it? "Is it micro or macro? Real or virtual? Material or discursive? Technical or political?"[9] This mode of analysis indicates the struggle of the digital medium to overcome its reputation as somehow less traditionally sacred or *real* and more innovative or, worse, more inauthentic or "partially existing"[10] than the material predecessors from which it apparently diverges.

Using the efforts at internet evangelization by theologically conservative Protestants in America as a case study, I submit a different response to those polarized questions of ethnographic method, and a rejoinder to Howard's characterization of a definitively original religious movement. An analysis of the migration of the complex desire to evangelize from offline to online contexts reveals that strands of *both* continuity with Christian mission history *and* innovation or departure from it are readily noticeable. That is, I intentionally rely on contextualization within historical patterns of American mission(s) to suggest that internet evangelism is not merely a putatively new means of reaching potential converts that encourages unprecedented strategies or behaviors, but neither is it a simple matter of mapping traditional mission methods onto internet networks. In light of this complexity, scholar of communication and religion Jeremy Stolow identifies the fruitlessness of tracing whether religious groups either "succeed" or "fail" to transmit their religious messages, pointing to the ways in which such an approach leaves unexamined "how negotiations over meaning . . . play a constitutive role in all communicative acts."[11] I similarly argue that analyzing digital activity ahistorically, seeing the format as solely determinative of its instantiations and predicating such analysis on the quality of transmission, overlooks the ways in which

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8. Robert Glenn Howard, *Digital Jesus: The Making of a New Christian Fundamentalist Community on the Internet* (New York: New York University Press, 2011), 3.

9. Ibid.

10. Ibid.

11. Jeremy Stolow, "Religion and/as Media," *Theory, Culture, and Society* 22 (2005): 124–25.

these evangelists are both explicitly and implicitly characterizing internet evangelization as consonant with their history. Contrary to perceptions of digital media's supercession of materiality, authority, sacrality, or tradition, this characterization occurs simultaneously with their demonstration of an awareness of the vast potential of the digital medium for pioneering new mission strategies.

Sociologist Christine Hine, among others, has articulated similar cautions regarding the tendency to view online activity as "inherently threatening to the provision and consumption of authentic information, or as heralding the end of reality."[12] Furthermore, such views are misguided because they all too easily lead to a view of technology as a "killer app" that will gradually phase out or replace religion, or at the very least traditional modes of religious practice, authority, or identity. The persistence of these supersessionist predictions rests in part upon the assumptions of technological determinism, which posits the radical changes brought about by new media technologies as having a formative influence on culture and human activity.[13] Thus a significant impetus for conducting my analysis of internet evangelism as both continuous with Christian mission history *and* unique or innovative within it is to further dispel the mistaken doctrine of technological supersession, the idea that emergent media technologies "kill" older formats or threaten to replace traditional religion/religious practice in a straightforward model of elimination.[14] In doing so, it follows Stolow's suggestion that "technology . . . forms the gridwork of orientations, operations, and embedded and embodied knowledges and powers without which religious ideas, experiences, and actions could not exist," in contrast to an instrumental view which understands technology or media as a

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12. Christine Hine, *Virtual Ethnography* (London: Sage, 2000), 150.

13. The most well-known proponents of such theories are likely Walter J. Ong (*Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* [London: Methuen, 1982]) and Marshall McLuhan (*Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* [New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964]).

14. Geoffrey Nunberg ("The Places of Books in the Age of Electronic Reproduction," *Representations* 42 [1993]: 13–37), Elizabeth L. Eisenstein (*The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe* [Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005] and *Divine Art, Infernal Machine: the Reception of Printing in the West from First Impressions to the Sense of an Ending* [Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011]), and Marilyn Deegan and Kathryn Sutherland *Text Editing, Print and the Digital World* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), among many others, have already begun the effort to counter these deterministic ideas.

"container" for the dissemination of religious ideas, or as a competitive "other" to religion. In fact, it is this "and" in the pleonasm "religion and media" itself, this ontological spiritual/technological divide, that is precisely what makes technology appear to be "potentially threatening for authentic human experience."[15]

What all of this suggests is not that the ethnographic method is inherently deficient; indeed, it seems uniquely suited, in all its adaptive complexity and reflexivity, for research "within the virtual collectives of our times: nebulous, shaded and polymodal."[16] My point is, rather, that when so employed, and with one eye pointed to the past, ethnography can apprise the researcher of strands of both continuity with history *and* innovation or departure from it. As such, my undertaking here is less a traditional ethnography than it is a hermeneutic exercise that attempts to demonstrate the ways in which historical perspective can reveal the complex imbrications of both creativity and tradition at work in digital religious practice.

Applying an Ethno-Historical Hermeneutic to Internet Evangelization

Indeed, the practice of internet evangelism is alive with paradox, in that it appears to contain within it concurrent patterns of both consonance with historical methods and divergence from them. For example, many evangelicals today continue to read Jesus' "Great Commission" to his apostles to "make disciples of all nations" in the Gospel of Matthew as a call to action, inspiring their delivery of the good news to the ends of the Earth digitally. This activity participates in a legacy begun in the late eighteenth century by the "father of modern missions," author of the renowned pamphlet *An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians* in 1792,

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15. Jeremy Stolow, "Introduction," in *Deus in Machina* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2013), 5, 13, 17.
16. Venessaa Paech, "A Method for the Times: A Meditation on Virtual Ethnography Faults and Fortitudes," *Nebula* 6 (2009): 196. Vide Laura Robinson and Jeremy Schulz, "New Avenues for Sociological Inquiry: Evolving Forms of Ethnographic Practice," *Sociology* 43 (2009): 685–98; Matthew Williams, "Avatar Watching: Participant Observation in Graphical Online Environments," *Qualitative Research* 7 (2007): 5–24; Tom Boellstorff, *Ethnography and Virtual Worlds: A Handbook of Method* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012).

and founder of what would become the Baptist Missionary Society, pastor William Carey (1761–1834). Citing the ability of other missionary groups (i.e. Catholics) to access and navigate foreign lands, Carey saw no reason to suspect that Jesus' charge to the apostles in Matthew had expired, was impracticable, or that "you were born into the religion you deserved," as did the dominant reading of the Great Commission at the time. One early episode of resistance to Carey's interpretation saw the venerable John Ryland, Sr. reportedly dismiss the young pastor, saying, "Young man, sit down. When God pleases to convert the heathen, he will do it without your aid or mine!"[17] Protestant missions since, however, both in Europe and in America, have quite enthusiastically taken Carey's advice. Thus in some sense internet evangelization is simply a renewed attempt at achieving a long-held imperative: the fulfillment of the Great Commission. In a broader sense, however, Carey's perspective is characterized historiographically as a particularly modern one; he is well-known precisely because his views (although predated by similar Jesuit missions) represent a "modern" departure from previous Christian thought on missions, which saw the command to evangelize as having expired once the first generation of Christians had completed the task. Internet evangelization, then, is both traditional, in that it is conceptualized as fulfilling a command as old as Christianity itself, but also innovative or modern, in that the commission has only been explicitly interpreted as a permanent directive since Carey's intervention in an age of dynamic, eschatological Messianism—and has only been taken up in digital formats within the last few decades.

A second strand which illuminates elements of both continuity and divergence is the notion of many internet evangelists, church leaders, and pastors that the internet allows unprecedented access to places that might otherwise be inaccessible—politically, financially, logistically, or otherwise. As the World Wide Web increasingly lives up (or perhaps catches up) to its global name, many laud the capability of the internet to enable contact with people in areas which are otherwise inaccessible to missionaries, especially those regions which have political or legal restrictions prohibiting them. Online Mormon missionaries, for example, appreciate unencumbered

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17. Quoted in Timothy George, "Evangelical Revival and the Missionary Awakening," in *The Great Commission: Evangelicals and the History of World Missions,* ed. Martin I. Klauber and Scott M. Manetsch (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2008), 50.

access to neighborhoods their offline counterparts have struggled to reach, for political reasons but also due to unwelcoming or dangerous environments. Frustrations abound, however, including the unreliability or nonexistence of usable networks, the prohibitive cost of technological equipment and infrastructure, and the perception of the internet as an "upper class" phenomenon. "What kind of witness would it be," scholar of Christianity and media Quentin Schultze asked early internet users, "for rural missionaries to launch into computer communication in the midst of this type of cultural context?"[18] Recent data from the Oxford Internet Institute appears to support his case; while broadband access is available to Americans at no more than 2 to 3% of their average yearly income, there are countries in Africa and the Middle East, for example, where comparable services cost more than 100% of one's yearly wages.[19] The issue is not just logistical, then, but also political—and more specifically, postcolonial. While many practitioners see cybermission as a mode of access to such locations that is less bounded than more traditional ones, a red thread of Western advantage, for which missionaries have historically been critiqued, persists in perceptions of internet access as reserved for the upper classes of a given society. Reference to the discourse regarding a global digital divide is not meant to imply that all missionaries were, and continue to be, overt imperialists advancing the ambitions of (neo)colonial projects and attitudes of racial, religious, political, and economic superiority.[20] Rather, it points to the subjection of internet evangelism to anti-colonial,

18. Quentin J. Schultze, *Internet for Christians: Everything You Need to Start Cruising the Net Today* (Muskegon, MI: Gospel Films, 1996), 74.

19. Mark Graham and Stefano de Sabbata, "Broadband Affordability," *Internet Geographies at the Oxford Internet Institute* (2014). Online: http://geography.oii.ox.ac.uk/?page=broadband-affordability.

20. A tremendous field of literature, a comprehensive review of which cannot be conducted here, intervenes in this debate. Vide esp. Brian Stanley, The Bible and the Flag: Protestant Missions and British Imperialism in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries (Leicester: Apollos, 1990); Andrew N. Porter, *Religion Versus Empire?: British Protestant Missionaries and Overseas Expansion, 1700–1914* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004); Lamin O. Sanneh, *Translating the Message: The Missionary Impact on Culture* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1989 [rev. ed. 2009]); Jean Comaroff and Joan Comaroff, *Of Revelation and Revolution: Christianity, Colonialism, and Consciousness in South* Africa (2 vols.; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991); Ryan Dunch, "Beyond Cultural Imperialism: Cultural Theory, Christian Missions, and Global Modernity," *History and Theory* 41 (2003): 301–25.

anti-Western, and anti-imperial critiques as an aspect of continuity with past missionary enterprises—one which exists in constant tension with the internet's unprecedented power to connect people across time and space, but also across income level and geopolitical context.

Certainly social media, video content, and mobile technology are extraordinary in their ability to produce, disseminate, and manipulate media content. For digital missionaries, this implies a considerable amount of benefit and adaptation; in other words, it may be difficult to deny that we are in the midst of a technological, and therefore missiological, revolution. Many Christians are calling upon their Twitter followers and Facebook friends to "follow me as I follow Christ," and websites like *StickyJesus* function as "equipping hubs for online outreach," providing archives full of content to share via a number of outlets, blog posts to guide one's evangelistic work online, and a suggested tweet for each day.[21] Indeed, in some ways this is a highly revolutionary missionary moment, and has resulted in similarly pioneering shifts in praxis. The success of the aforementioned Chat-with-a-Mormon venture, for example, is in large part responsible for the recent reversal of the LDS Church's stance on digital media. The lifting of the ban on internet access and digital devices was reportedly an effort to further employ this "heaven-sent resource in the most productive way possible": for evangelization, that "holiest of Mormon duties."[22] While Mormon missionaries of the traditional style typically convert an average of six people during their one- to two-year mission assignment, online missionaries at the Provo center claim to average about thirty per year, with a 95% retention rate that is more than triple that of "offline" converts.[23]

However, many Mormon missionaries also emphasize that part of their acceptance of digital tools is fueled by their continued adherence to a fundamental dictum: go where the people are. Thus in many ways, as was the case with the Great Commission, the use of digital tools and the World Wide Web is in fact understood as a continuation of historic patterns

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21. Toni Birdsong and Tami Heim, *@stickyjesus: How to Live Out Your Faith Online* (Nashville, Tenn: Abingdon Press, 2012). The companion website is available at www.stickyjesus.com.
22. R. Scott Lloyd, "Members and Missionaries to Partner in Work of Salvation" *Church News* 23 (June 2013). Online: https://www.lds.org/church/news/members-and-missionaries-to-partner-in-work-of-salvation.
23. Bosker, "Hook of Mormon."

of seeking out potential converts (although the Church does point out that droves of people now seek *them* out via their website.) Additionally, the use of a supposedly secular medium for the purposes of the Church is not new by any means. The Mormon Church, for one, has embraced media as a way to utilize "secular" techniques for the benefit of mission many times throughout their history; such was the case when, 200 years ago, the Church engaged in the mass-production and distribution of its Bibles. Furthermore, planning, preparation, mass media, and publicity have been perpetual elements in American evangelicalism, pervading the efforts of preachers from George Whitefield and Charles Finney down through Dwight Moody, Billy Sunday, and Billy Graham. Moody especially attempted to employ the power and reach of modern mass media to serve the cause of mass evangelism, recognizing that "a great enemy of church life, the secular press, could be harnessed to further the purposes of the church."[24] In a paradigmatic testimony to both the historical legacy upon which they draw and the revolutionary power and novelty of the internet from which they benefit, the IEC claims that internet evangelists reach the equivalent of "an entire Billy Graham crusade" in a single day.[25]

Concerns about digital media, and the internet in particular, appear to stem from fears of the anonymity, disconnect from reality, and depersonalization often associated with their use. Online missionaries, however, make a conscious choice explicitly to identify themselves as Christian in an internet culture in which anonymity is often considered the dominant mode of being. This self-identification involves actively eschewing the "self-sealing" tendencies that some scholars have identified as common among those using the internet.[26] This insular phenomenon is variously and colloquially referred to as the "feedback loop" or "filter bubble," and signifies both the deliberate creation of "homogeneous enclaves of belief" online as well as the less agentive (and even unwitting on the part of the user) construction of a digital experience tailored to introduce like-minded people and provide personalized content by websites like Google

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24. Bruce J. Evensen, *God's Man for the Gilded Age: D.L. Moody and the Rise of Modern Mass Evangelism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 187.
25. Sarah Eekhoff Zylstra, "Do Digital Decisions Disciple?" *Christianity Today* 59, No. 2 (March 2015): 17.
26. Howard, *Digital Jesus,* 14–18.

or Facebook.[27] That is to say, online missionaries in fact actively avoid the supposedly common tendency of "deploy[ing] even the most powerful communication media to limit . . . exposure to the diversity of ideas those media have made available."[28] The world outside the feedback loop, however, can be a harsh and unreceptive environment for the missionary message. Everything from humorous quips or rants to outright antagonism and anger confront the missionary as they work to make connections with those lost and looking for salvation. This is compounded by widespread perceptions that the atheist community is particularly active, vocal, and dominant on the web, so much so that news reports often identify "the internet as church for atheists,"[29] and acerbic social media content derides the faithful as "the punching bags" of the internet. Christian self-identification and the challenges that arise as a result, however, can hardly be seen as new, despite their manifestation in these new forums. Missionaries have encountered resistance and disparagement since the earliest apostles in the first centuries of the Common Era. Anti-missionary impulses pervaded Chinese discourse before, during, and after the Boxer Rebellion of 1898, for example, and continued resistance to missionizing today pervades both popular sentiment in America and official legislation in some European countries.[30]

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27. Ibid, 17.

28. Ibid, 4.

29. Dan Gilgoff, "'Where was God in Aurora?' Comments show Internet as Church for Atheists," *CNN.com*, 1 August 2012.

30. For example, the Swiss government in 2010 implemented a ban which would, by 2012, phase out and effectively ban all religious missionaries coming from the United States and other countries not part of the European Union or European Free Trade Association. This especially affected the Mormon Church (LDS), which has sent its representatives to Switzerland since 1850, and was criticized by a small, vocal group of US lawmakers. The official policy (in 2012) required that missionaries to Switzerland obtain a religious visa, the requirements of which include "proof the foreigner does not displace a citizen from a job, has formally completed theological training . . . will be financially supported by the host organization . . . have sufficient knowledge of, respect for, and understanding of Swiss customs and culture; be conversant in at least one of the three main national languages; and hold a degree in theology." LDS missionaries, it states explicitly, are ineligible for visas because they do not possess theology degrees, as are those with ties to groups deemed "radicalized" or who have formerly engaged in "hate preaching" or "fundamentalism." ("Switzerland 2013 International Religious Freedom Report," United States Department of State, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, online: http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/222487.pdf)

Other instances of the simultaneity of innovation and tradition abound in internet-based proselytizing activity; one might look at the fascinating testimonials provided by many internet evangelists and their respective organizations,[31] and discuss these testimonials as a continuation of a long-standing evangelical tradition of public recitation of conversion or born-again narratives. Indeed, the role of digital media in both maintaining and innovating "the perceived effectiveness" of group interaction, "the permissible familiarity of exchange, the frequency and intensity of contact, and the efficacy of customary tests for truth and deception"[32] represents a significant new avenue of potential inquiry.

Conclusion

My suggestion is not only that, as others have argued, "conventional techniques must innovate and transform to accommodate a polysemous eco-system and population."[33] Part of my purpose is also an affirmation of the notion that researchers should avoid the treatment of cyberspace as "disembedded" or "placeless," and would do better to focus on the uses and shaping of the internet by real users in a variety of "real"-world contexts. This corresponds, in many ways, to predictions regarding the effects of "cyberspace," namely a problematization of perceived dualisms like real/virtual, true/fictional, authentic/fabricated, technology/nature, and representation/reality.[34] Virtuality must be analyzed in refutation of those arguments which cast it as a disembodied and thus "less real" version of reality; studies of digital religious communities or activity should likewise not be viewed through the binary oppositions of the virtual to the real, the religious to the mediated, or the innovative to the historical.

The mere recognition of the complication of these binaries, however, must be proceeded by its manifestation in contemporary research methods. Such work is being conducted to some degree, as in Timothy Hutchings' ethnographic study of online Christian communities which rightly

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31. See, for example, "Does Digital Evangelism Work?" *Internet Evangelism Day* (accessed July 2015). Online: http://www.internetevangelismday.com/results.php.
32. Paech, "A Method for the Times," 209.
33. Ibid, 195.
34. Rob Kitchin, *Cyberspace: The World in the Wires* (Chichester: J. Wiley, 1998).

recognizes the significance of four layers of digital activity: "online churches deliberately replicate familiar elements of everyday activity, become part of the everyday, remain carefully distinct from the everyday, and become distinctively digital."[35] I suggest that an additional, although certainly not contradictory, frame through which to view such complex activity is to couple these contemporary perspectives and accounts with historical perspective and data. Proper attention must be devoted to the ethno-historical subtleties of digital media use, an attempt I have made by trying briefly to unpack the ways in which internet evangelism simultaneously is seen as maintaining tradition as well as radically enhancing, altering, or improving upon it. This is something akin, although not identical, to Hine's description of her analysis of the role of the internet in scientific research databases, one which was "ethnographic in spirit, but expanded its scope to embrace the historical and the autobiographical in an eclectic mix of methodological strategies intended to work out why, and for whom, particular technological solutions made sense at particular times."[36]

The Christian community, or any religious community for that matter, perhaps has a vested interest in characterizing their online activity as an extension of traditional methods; as Jeffrey Shandler observes, "new communications media can instigate innovations and possibilities in religious practice, including when their use is characterized as extending or maintaining traditions, rather than diverging from precedent."[37] This is only reiterated by the resistance from some church leaders on the subject of internet evangelism specifically because they do *not* see it as consonant with the traditional Christian culture or message.[38] But it is these and

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35. Timothy Hutchings, "Creating Church Online: An Ethnographic Study of Five Internet-Based Christian Communities" (Ph.D. diss., Durham University, 2010), 2.

36. Christine Hine, *Ethnography for the Internet: Embedded, Embodied, and Everyday* (Huntingdon, GBR: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2015), 31, 125. Gabriella Coleman also notes, albeit briefly, that "to grasp more fully the broader significance of digital media, its study must involve . . . attention to history" ("Ethnographic Approaches to Digital Media," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 39 [2010]: 488).

37. Jeffrey Shandler, *Jews, God, and Videotape: Religion and Media in America* (New York: New York University Press, 2009), 4.

38. These perspectives are evident in the proposal for a new World Council of Churches affirmation on mission and evangelism released in 2012, for example, which explicitly describes internet ministry as a phenomenon directed at and suited for youth or, as another example, in the LDS' initial instructions to its first cadre of Internet missionaries to simply funnel potential converts to

other characterizations themselves which I suggest should constitute the crux of our analytic interest. My argument thus takes cues from a more constructionist approach in focusing on Christian characterizations of digital mission as part of the ongoing construction of the virtual world, and therefore, it is a case for taking those characterizations seriously (although not uncritically), through both the lens of history and the critical discourse of the present.

If, as Stolow argues, religion cannot be accessed and understood apart from the mediations in which it is embedded, we cannot see these practices as divorced from history (or reality) simply because they are instantiated in an emerging media format. Furthermore, doing so would ignore a model of analysis not unfamiliar to students of the study of the book, in which users of a newer technology will often use it to perform older functions, only more quickly, with more efficiency, or in greater quantity, before developing unique and innovative functions exclusive to that format.[39] Such is the case with the Mormons, whose self-reported retention data claims that their offline methods actually function more efficiently in a digital context. As the opening anecdote featured in the press surrounding the opening of the Referral Mission Center in Utah intimated, vulnerability and self-disclosure are facilitated discursively through digital media. We might see internet evangelization, then, as both immaterial and real, both innovative and deeply connected to historical (physical) patterns of mission and conversion, both a field for traditional ethnography in its study of human communities and relationships but also a new challenge to its methods.

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local physical missions. Vide Gavin Feller, "To Any (Body) Who Will Listen: The Evolving Role of Media Technology in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints' Missionary Communication Strategy," (Ph.D. diss., Florida Atlantic University, 2013).

39. This traditional model appears similar to the one Hutchings employs, with greater nuance, in his attention to the four "layers" of online church creation.

Book Reviews

The Letter: Law, State, Society and the Epistolary Format in the Ancient World.
Uri Yiftach-Firanko (ed.). Legal Documents in Ancient Societies 1. Philippika,
Marburger altertumskundliche Abhandlungen 55,1. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz
Verlag, 2013. Pp. 310.
Reviewed by Aaron Ricker, *McGill University*

The conventions of letters are such a common, automatic part of our lives, it feels
like they must always have been around. Most of us are as likely on any given day
to wonder about the evolution of the letter as we are to wonder about the previous
life stages of our sun. Of course letters, like stars, do in fact have evolutionary
histories, constituting both an important part of our own human story and the subject
of ongoing, interesting investigative scholarly work. Yiftach-Firanko's *The Letter*
contributes to this cumulative scholarly project of understanding by collecting
thirteen papers from the first international colloquium of the Legal Documents
in Ancient Societies group, held in 2008 at the American Academy in Rome. The
resulting book naturally bears the positive and negative earmarks of an ambitious
international collaboration. On the negative side, the English sections suffer from
grammar issues and typos, especially in the Foreword and Introduction. It's also
a shame that almost none of the many manuscript types and details discussed in
the papers are represented visually. It seems doubtful that the inclusion of a few
carefully selected images would have been too costly an addition to this already
somewhat expensive volume (56€). On the positive side, *The Letter* clearly does
the work that the widely international LDAS group exists to do (as described on p.
11), which is "to enhance collaboration among students of everyday communication
in the Ancient Near East, the Ancient Egypt, the Greek and Hellenistic world, and
the Roman State down to late Antiquity." The span of time and space covered in
The Letter's review ranges from the first real (royal) "letters" of the Ancient Near
East (stretching as far back as the twenty-first century BCE), through the Classical
and Hellenistic environments of Greek oratory and *poleis* politics, to the long-lived
Egyptian and/or Roman "contracts in epistolary form" (p. 155) of Late Antiquity.
Before weighing in on the character and value of the volume as a whole, I shall very
briefly summarize the foci of the 12 papers, since there are no chapters and since
they appear in *The Letter* in roughly chronological order according to empire.

Ancient Near Eastern Contexts. Sophie Démare-Lafont (after helpfully and colorfully sketching the third-millenium BCE legendary origins and "written-speech" character of the Ancient Near Eastern royal letter form) reviews the development of Neo-Sumerian, royal Mari, and Neo-Assyrian royal administrative correspondence beginning in the twenty-first century BCE, tying the permutations of what she admits to be very dry and artificial epistolary formal habits to the very unique (and sometimes precarious) lives of courtly professionals. Dominique Charpin reviews the form and function of Mesopotamian judicial letters as living "voices" and "witnesses," at a time (in the early second millenium BCE) when the letter was blossoming in variety of length, form, purpose, and social stratum. Eva Cancik-Kirschbaum reviews the form of the Middle-Assyrian legal summons, situating the seemingly abstract and exaggerated "orality" of its conventional written language within its reconstructed real-world function in legal and courtly settings.

Greek and Persian Contexts. Paola Ceccarelli reviews conceptions of the letter as preserved in the rhetoric of Attic orators, concluding that letter-writing was seen as a private convenience that "has to be kept under control" when it touches government and the public domain (p. 104), party due to questions of secrecy and authenticity, and party due to the frequency with which barbarian monarchs were expected to interfere with *polis* business by means of personal autocratic letters. Edward Harris argues against the scholarly conclusion (based on the language of business letters) that "business agent" was a recognized profession in ancient Greece. James Sickinger, in addressing the evolving relationship between official letters and Greek epigraphy in stone, expands and nuances Ceccarelli's point about the traditional cultural association of government business by letter with "autocratic" foreign monarchs (as opposed to the more public processes and decrees of the "democratic" Greek *poleis*). Ingo Kottsieper's paper treats an example of government business by letter that would surely have been seen by such "free Greeks" as an Oriental case in point: the Aramaic correspondence of the Persian satrap Aršames. Kottsieper's review illuminates the ways in which the collection's formal idiosyncrasies serve the kinds of hierarchy and security appropriate to a system of autocracy at a distance.

Greco-Roman Egyptian and later Roman Contexts. The remaining six papers all deal with the history of the *cheirographon* (a debt contract taking the form of a letter, innovatively bypassing the need for witnesses by virtue of being written in the debtor's own hand), so I will be even more brief: Mark Depauw, Katelijn Vandorpe, Sophie Kovarik, and Andrea Jördens focus on the appearance, codification, and significant local permutations of the cheirographic form, within the religious, social, and legal contexts of Egypt's Ptolemaic and post-Ptolemaic centuries (from the second century BCE through to the eighth century CE). The shift of focus to include non-Egyptian territories that begins with the papers of Kovarik and Jördens is extended by Éva Jakab and Johannes Platschek. Jakab moves the focus to Pueoli

and the *tabulae* of the bank of the Suplicii. Jakab uses these archives to show that in Roman law the *cheirographon* lost its epistolary character and to argue against the common habit of treating *cheirographon* as a synonym for the *epistula* legal document form (which does maintain a letter form, and which carries weight only as legal documentary evidence, not as a personal declaration of obligation). Platschek outlines the Roman procedural means used by debtors and creditors to settle questions of debt repayment involving the Roman act of question-and-answer *stipulatio* (an agreement often recorded in the form of a *cheirographon*, and the settling of which could include the legal use of informal letters).

In closing, I offer my evaluation of the volume as a whole. The stated goal of the colloquium (and thus the collection) was to "pinpoint evolution in the position of the letter as a legal document" (p. 11), and in this, the project succeeded admirably. As a legal tool, "the letter" as investigated and presented here shows a remarkable power and elasticity, in terms of time, place, and use. As such, Yiftach-Firanko's *The Letter* is potentially a valuable resource for anyone studying the history of law or legal theory. From a Religious Studies point of view, this collection could also add some welcome perspective and depth (in terms of theory, approach, and historical detail) to scholars working with epistolary questions and contexts like those addressed in John L. White's *Light from Ancient Letters* (1986), Stanley K. Stowers's *Letter Writing in Greco-Roman Antiquity* (1986), or Luther M. Stirewalt's *Studies in Ancient Greek Epistolography* (2001). In terms of general topical orientation and even general interest, the "Introduction" alone (provided by Sophie Démare-Lafont, Michele Faraguna and Uri Yiftach-Firanko) offers a great deal of interesting and strangely affecting information; for example, the fact that Sumerian letter tablets were spoken of as having "mouths" and as being "killed" by destruction and "resurrected" by rewriting, or the fact that early Mesopotamian security measures included writing the same message twice—once on the legally binding tablet and once on its breakable clay "envelope." Such details show a good editorial eye for the curious human and technological dimensions of what the deceivingly familiar letter form has been expected to look like—and been trusted to do—in some of the less familiar real-world contexts of antiquity.

Reading Backwards: Figural Christology and the Fourfold Gospel Witness. Richard
B. Hays. Waco: Baylor University Press, 2014. Pp. xxii, 155.
Reviewed by Daniel A. Giorgio, *McGill University*

In *Reading Backwards: Figural Christology and the Fourfold Gospel Witness*, Richard
Hays provides us with a kind of "progress report" of his more wide-ranging study
still in germination. This work focuses on the canonical Gospels and is a sequel to
his earlier book on Paul, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (1989). Here,
Hays' specific topic is to offer an account of the narrative representation of Jesus
according to the rereading of Israel's Scripture by the four Evangelists; an exercise
in intertextual close reading.

In his introductory chapter, Hays argues that the canonical Gospels embody
and enact *figural Christological interpretation*, and clarifies that this figural reading
does not need to presume that Old Testament authors were conscious of predicting or
anticipating (prefiguration) Christ. Hence, figural correspondences are retrospective
rather than prospective; the death and resurrection of Jesus makes Israel's Scripture
"to be comprehensively construed as a witness to the gospel" (p. 16).

The second chapter focuses on the Gospel of Mark, that is, on the Evangelist's
"mysterious story enveloped in apocalyptic urgency" (p. 17). Richard Hays insists
on both: the citation of Isaiah 40 in the opening lines of this Gospel suggesting that,
in Jesus, Isaiah's promised new exodus is being enacted. He stresses the importance
of Mark 4:21–25 as a hermeneutical directive for the Gospel, since it would be
drawing the readers' attention to a hidden Christological signification that may be
discerned by attentive listeners. The narrative style involves hints and allusions that
project Jesus' story onto the background of Israel's story; and this superimposition
of the two stories on one another creates extraordinary new patterns that lead us into
acknowledging Jesus as the embodiment of the God of Israel.

In the next chapter, on Matthew's reading of Scripture, Hays elaborates on how
Matthew provides explicit explanations of Mark's hints and allusions, especially on
how Matthew presents Jesus as the embodied presence of God. The Evangelist's
identification of Jesus as *Emmanuel* (God's presence) "establishes the structural
framework on which the story is built" (p. 38), as it appears in the beginning, middle,
and end of the story (Matt 1:23; 18:20; 28:20). In short, the prophecies in the infancy
narrative and throughout the entire Gospel connect both the history and future
restored destiny of Israel to the figure of Jesus through figural correspondences.

According to Hays' understanding of Luke's narrative, the words spoken on
the road to Emmaus in Luke 24 point out to the deepest truth about Jesus: he is
the Redeemer of Israel. The Gospel of Luke contains intertextual references that
are implicit correspondences, allusions and echoes that do not function as direct
typological prefigurations of events in the life of Jesus. Instead, "they create a

narrative world thick with scriptural memory" (p. 59), where Luke regularly weaves together different strands of material.

Hays' chapter on the Gospel of John studies some of the Evangelist's *images* and *figures* evoked from Israel's Scripture. Richard Hays' understanding of the way that Scripture functions in John is that of the identity of Jesus as being "deeply imbedded in Israel's texts and traditions—especially the traditions centered on the Temple and Israel's annual feasts," e.g., Passover and *Sukkoth* (p. 82). Crucial to the Fourth Gospel is its prologue situating Jesus in relation to Jewish scriptural traditions about *creation* and *wisdom* while also transforming these traditions through the claim that the *Logos* was made flesh in Jesus.

In his last chapter, Hays turns to the task of highlighting what we can learn from reading the Gospel's common fourfold witness. He insists on the importance and benefits of reading Scripture along with the Evangelists, for whom "to produce richly intertextual narrative accounts of the significance of Jesus" was "Their way of pursuing what we call 'doing theology'" (p. 103).

As for the weaknesses of this book, I would point out first, with most reviewers, Hays' apparent ranking of the Synoptic Gospels with regards to their way of narrating the divine identity of Jesus: with Luke offering the most adequate one, followed by Mark, and lastly Matthew. It is difficult to know whether that conclusion (possibly Hays' own preference) and its arguments will succeed in convincing the majority of New Testament scholars—perhaps mainly because of Hays' approach to the Synoptic issues, which shares the Markan priority consensus and Matthew and Luke's dependence on Mark, but places no weight on the hypothetical Q source (p. xiv). Second, again with most reviewers, one can also highlight Hays' lack of attention to Second Temple Jewish interpretive traditions that may have influenced the Evangelists in their understanding of Israel's Scripture, although Hays provides a few extra-canonical references (e.g., to Philo and *1 Enoch*) in his chapter on the Gospel of John.

Hays' successful effort, it seems to me, to validate and encourage figural reading of the Old Testament will be greatly welcomed among many laic readers, scholars, and the clergy. Indeed, Hays' last chapter focusing on retrospective readings of the Old Testament—where he suggests ten ways (based on the Evangelists' hermeneutic) that might teach us how to read Scripture (e.g., conversation of the imagination; importance of "story," reader competence to discern the *metaleptic* character in references and allusions)—provides readers with fresh and helpful insights. Another great contribution found in Richard Hays' work is his convincing suggestion and understanding—against conventional views of modern New Testament criticism—that "we should stop talking about 'high' and 'low] Christologies in the canonical Gospels" (p. xxi), since through drawing on Old Testament images, "all four Gospels portray the identity of Jesus as mysteriously fused with the identity of God" (p. 108).

Readers will also most certainly appreciate Richard Hays' impeccable literary style, his exploring creativity in reading both the Old Testament and New Testament, and what appears to be a touch of sarcasm/humour here and there (e.g., pp. 4, 5, 60, 97).

The Invention of Peter: Apostolic Discourse and Papal Authority in Late Antiquity.
George E. Demacopoulos. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013.
Pp. 262.
Reviewed by Shaun Retallick, *McGill University*

Co-director of the Orthodox Christian Studies Center at Fordham University,
George E. Demacopoulos has produced a very interesting and innovative study on
the development of the Roman papacy in late antiquity, challenging the standard
view that papal power experienced an "inevitable and unbroken rise" up to the
Middle Ages (p. 2). In this way, Demacopoulos joins the critics of Erich Caspar
(1930–1933) and Walter Ullmann (1970) whose landmark works have been
critiqued for anachronistically reading the strong late medieval papacy back into late
antiquity (pp. 7–8). In particular, Demacopoulos places his work among more recent
revisionist approaches, viz., Charles Pietri's linking of texts, rituals, and objects to
the production of the "Petrine idea" in the fourth and fifth centuries (1976), and
Kristina Sessa's assessment (2012) that late antique papal interventions in private
space produced an irregular success rate (pp. 9–10). While building on some of their
themes, *The Invention of Peter* goes further, provocatively seeking to identify how
"papal actors" bolstered claims to authority by linking themselves to the Apostle
Peter, efforts that involved shaping and using "Petrine discourse"—the figure of
Peter as found in "texts, ideas, rhetoric, practices, institutions, etc." (p. 5). One of
this work's major theses, moreover, is that this discourse usually peaked not when
papal authority was strong, *contra* the standard view, but when papal authority was
being challenged (pp. 2, 11; e.g., pp. 41, 46, 74, 80–82, 89, 124). Since this discourse
was utilized by many persons under multiple mediums, it underwent considerable
transformations in antiquity, the most significant of which occurred between the
pontificates of Leo I (440–461) and Gregory I (590–604). The foci of this study,
therefore, are newly translated papal sermons, letters, treatises, and biographies
from the vast corpus of this period (chs. 2–5).

Demacopoulos' methodology includes the use of discourse analysis alongside
other historical methods. Citing Elizabeth Clark as an example, he notes that scholarly
analyses of early Christian history have progressively embraced the "linguistic turn"
of literary and cultural theorists (p. 3). In his analysis, Demacopoulos specifically
notes his reliance on the approaches of Michel Foucault (p. 3), and helpfully explains
his use thereof, as well as technical terms and concepts (pp. 3–7). This is particularly
helpful for those unfamiliar with Foucault. As part of this methodology, the author
notes his intention to preclude assessment of the truth of historical claims: "whether
or not the bishops of Rome were 'right' or 'honest' or 'true' to interpret the Petrine
legacy" as they did (p. 5). This goal is fitting given the use of Foucauldian discourse
analysis; however, references to such clearly proved difficult to avoid.

After the introduction, this work is divided into five chapters, followed by a postscript, conclusion, and two appendices. Chapter one provides historical back-drop by showing how various "legends, rituals, and material representations of Peter" took shape in connection with the Roman bishop up to the fourth century CE. While Demacopoulos includes many "standard" texts in early papal history (e.g., *1 Clement*, book 3 of Irenaeus' *Adversus haereses*, Cyprian's *De Unitate*), he also provides interesting discussion of less common apocryphal and pseudonymous works, such as the *Martyrdom of Peter* and the extant *Acts of Peter* (pp. 16–21). Significantly, as Demacopoulos argues, parts of these narratives, especially relating to the Apostle's death, become "fixtures of the subsequent Petrine legends" (p. 17).

Chapter two opens the focus of this study with the complicated ways that Pope Leo shaped the Petrine discourse. Through select homilies given in Rome, and correspondence to persons across Christendom, Demacopoulos demonstrates that Leo's use of the "Petrine topos" corresponded directly to his given audience and historical context. For instance, in his homilies, strong Petrine discourse was used mainly when other bishops were present, and especially during his early papacy (441–43); "something akin to a rhetorical marking of his ecclesiastical territory" (p. 45). Later, Demacopoulos discusses Leo's use of Petrine discourse during the Christological controversies surrounding the Synod of Ephesus (449 CE) and Council of Chalcedon (451 CE) (pp. 59–72). When addressing Chalcedon's reception of Leo's *Tome*, the author provides surprisingly little analysis of the conciliar fathers' famous line, "Peter has spoken through Leo" (p. 70). He convincingly argues that the fathers' use of the Petrine topos in this way helped legitimize the *Tome*'s Christology. However, while he sees in this passage "an appropriation of Roman self-aggrandizement" (p. 70), he does not seem to accept in it even an implicit (however disingenuous) recognition of Roman authority. This is surprising, especially since the acclamation mirrors Leo's own claims that Peter continued to work through him as his successor (cf. *Sermo* 2).

In chapter three, Demacopoulos focuses on the pontificate of Gelasius I (ca. 492–496) who famously asserted the pope's ultimate supremacy: as heir of Peter, he ruled over all bishops and as the chief priestly authority, he ruled over all secular rulers (cf. *Ad Anastasium*). Opposing the standard historical interpretation (e.g., Caspar, Ullmann), Demacopoulos reasserts his thesis that Gelasius's bold assertions did not reflect a strong papacy, but, rather, were "born of frustration" at a time when he "enjoyed little tangible authority either at home, or abroad" (p. 74; cf. pp. 89–95). Through this analysis of numerous Gelasian texts, mainly epistles, which he historically contextualizes, Demacopoulos provides an important contribution to scholarship. As he observes, they are "shockingly understudied," and aside from *The Invention of Peter*, "only a few paragraphs" have ever been translated into English (pp. 73–74). Particularly valuable, therefore, are two works in the appendices,

Epistle 12 and *Tractate* 6, translated for the first time into English by Matthew Briel (pp. 173–89).

Chapter four approaches the Petrine discourse from two sixth century vantage points, beginning with the Laurentian schism (498–506/7 CE): a conflict between rival papal claimants, Symmachus and Laurentius, following the 498 papal election. After providing a synopsis of the schism and related historiography (pp. 103–7), Demacopoulos focuses on how the rivals molded the Petrine discourse by producing polemical revisionist histories of popes and Rome. In some tracts, for instance, Symmachus's credentials are bolstered with associations with Saint Peter and past holy popes (p. 107). Interestingly, it was in this context—perhaps soon after Symmachus's death in 514 CE—that papal biography was born with the first tracts of the famous *Liber Pontificalis* (p. 108).

In the second part of chapter four, the focus shifts to the legislative corpora of Emperor Justinian (527–565), especially the 134 laws known as *Novellae*. Within them, Demacopoulos argues, Justinian manipulated Petrine discourse; he accepted some papal claims to authority but ignored most in order to advance his imperial ends. For example, the *Codex Justinianus* contains a letter from Pope John II who strongly asserts papal supremacy. As Demacopoulos shows, though, the letter was not included in the codex to help bolster this papal agenda. Rather, it was a concession to John, who in the same letter affirms the *Theopaschite Formula* (i.e., "one of the Trinity suffered on the Cross"). Justinian had sought consensus on this issue and its affirmation in John's letter was the main reason it was included (p. 125; cf. 123–24).

In chapter five, Demacopoulos analyzes Pope Gregory I's (r. 590–604) theological works, correspondence, and use of holy space (e.g., relics, shrines), situating him among his predecessors. While his theological corpus is vast, Gregory "surprisingly" does not make any "extended theological justification of Peter's authority" (p. 135). Rather, his major interest is pastoral, and he often uses the Apostle as an example of holiness, humility, good leadership, and teaching (cf. pp.136–39). For example, instead of glossing over Peter's mistakes (e.g., denial of Christ), Gregory discusses them to stress for pastors the importance of compassion and mercy (pp. 137–38). In the context of correspondence, Gregory, like Leo and Gelasius, developed and asserted Petrine discourse most strongly when his authority was in question, but his approach was less confrontational. For instance, he typically invoked or alluded to Petrine authority only after diplomatic efforts had failed (p. 135), and often as part of a "soft power" approach. For instance, in an effort to stop simoniacal practices and theft from Roman estates in the Gallic Church, Gregory, in a letter to Childebert II (*Ep*. 6.6), appealed to the Merovingian king's "love . . . for St. Peter" in defending the Apostle's (i.e., Gregory's) property (pp. 149–50).

While Gregory's use of rhetorical Petrine devices to bolster his authority was limited, he more frequently used holy objects and space associated with the Apostle

to achieve the same goal. According to Demacopoulos, this approach was based in Gregory's belief that Peter continued to act in the Church, and that he performed miracles through his relics and tomb. Therefore, Gregory distributed more than a dozen relics of Peter to patrons, and regularly had oaths sworn on the Apostle's tomb (pp. 140, 150–52). In this novel way, he used the Petrine topos to his own ends.

The Invention of Peter is well written, the methodology and approach are very interesting, and chapters are clearly organized. However, in defending the book's provocative theses, some examples purportedly showing Roman claims to authority being rejected are not altogether convincing. For instance, Marcian's choice of Chalcedon for the council rather than Italy (*contra* Leo's request) need not be interpreted as an "implied rejection of Roman authority" (p. 68); summoning the council was at Marcian's discretion, and the location was a pragmatic choice. This is a minor critique, though. Overall, Demacopoulos has provided an important contribution to scholarship on the turbulent history of the late-antique papacy that is accessible for the educated lay reader.

The Adamantine Songs (Vajragīti) by Saraha: Study, Translation, and Tibetan Critical Edition. Lara Braitstein. Treasury of the Buddhist sciences. New York: American Institute of Buddhist Studies at Columbia University, 2014. Pp. xvi, 236. Reviewed by Julia Stenzel, *McGill University*

Adamantine songs (*vajragīti*) are poems that express the spiritual experiences and realizations of the great adepts (*mahāsiddhas*) of South Asian Buddhist tantric traditions. While the songs' outer form emerged from folk literary and musical traditions, their content is firmly rooted in Buddhist philosophies of emptiness (*śūnyatā*). Despite the importance of yogic songs in Indian and Tibetan Buddhist traditions, there has been relatively little Western scholarship on the literary genre or on individual poet-yogis. Lara Braitstein's study, translation, and Tibetan critical edition of Saraha's adamantine songs are therefore a welcome addition to the research field.

The great adept Saraha, also known as the great Brahmin, is considered one of the Indian founding fathers of the Great Seal (*mahāmudrā*) meditation tradition. His legacy has been preserved in Tibetan Buddhism, where he is venerated by all schools of the Later Propagation. Tibetans preserved his writings in their canons. The Tibetan Derge canon contains twenty-four works attributed to him; three of these form the trilogy of adamantine songs.

Part 1 of *The Adamantine Songs* begins by introducing Saraha as a charismatic, yet elusive figure, comparing his traces in Indian, Tibetan, and Western scholarship. Despite a lack of verifiable historical data, Saraha occupies an important place in Tibetan literature and ritual practice up until the twenty-first century, as Braitstein demonstrates with a recent liturgy composition that focuses on Saraha as its central figure. Yet, the sincere veneration for Saraha did not prevent Tibetan scholars from transmitting several humorous anecdotes about Saraha being scolded by his female companions and teachers.

The introduction then broadens to contextualize Saraha's role, and that of Indian siddhas in general, within Indian Vajrayāna Buddhism. Braitstein draws interesting parallels to poet saints of the Śaiva, Sufi, and Tamil Bhakta traditions, thus giving her readers glimpses into the poetic-spiritual life of medieval India between the fifth and twelfth century. Even though siddhas are now claimed as founding fathers by institutionalized traditions, it seems more likely that they were looking for truth beyond the boundaries of religious institutions. The opening lines of the *Adamantine Songs* show Saraha as a free-thinking spirit who seeks to find truth beyond sectarian identification. In one swoop, Saraha criticises spiritual seekers, Buddhist and non-Buddhist alike.

Hey! Wearing matted-locks, grasping at self and agent,
Brahmins, Jains, hedonists, materialists accepting a real basis for things,
Claim omniscience but don't even know themselves.
They are deluded and far from the path of liberation,
Vaibhāṣikas and Sautrāntikas, Yogācārins and Mādhyamikas, etc.
Criticise each other and argue,
Ignorant of the space-like equality of appearances and emptiness itself, they turn
their backs on the innate. (p. 125)

The remainder and major part of Part 1 is a detailed introduction to siddha literature, which includes, besides adamantine songs, also couplets (*dohā*) and performance songs (*caryāgīti*). The songs presented in this book form a trilogy, named respectively Body Treasury, Speech Treasury, and Mind Treasury. They take a threefold perspective on the highest spiritual achievement of the yogic path, the so-called Great Seal (*mahāmudrā, phyag rgya chen po*), alternatively named the Innate (*sahaja, lhan cig skyes pa*).

Because of their esoteric content and their symbolic language, adamantine songs are difficult to understand and necessitate the explanations of commentators. It is a peculiar fact that there is not a single commentary for Saraha's adamantine songs whereas his other great opus, the dohā trilogy, received tremendous attention from commentators. Braitstein draws extensively on these commentaries to elucidate key themes of the adamantine songs. Her analysis of Saraha's symbolic terminology deserves special attention. In her translation, she coins the terms "recognition" and "decognition" for the Tibetan *dran pa* and *dran med*. In a careful analysis of possible meanings found in the *Abhidharmasamuccaya,* the *Khanda Sutta,* various dictionaries, and commentaries by contemporary Tibetan teachers, Braitstein argues convincingly that the more commonly known translation of *dran pa* as mindfulness or recollection do not make sense in the adamantine songs. In other contexts, mindfulness refers to a positive, deliberate mental effort that is said to be conducive to attaining awakening. Saraha, however, describes *dran pa* as "incorrect conventional perception" (p. 99). "Recognition that relies on signs is the cause of wandering," he states in the Speech Treasury (verse 44, p. 160), equating the mind's capacity to apprehend appearances ("signs") with the root cause for conditioned, cyclic existence, with all the pain of bondage and suffering that this entails. Its opposite, *dran med*, is "the nature of non-conceptuality" (verse 62, p. 137), a "realm of experience where meditative equipoise is great bliss" (p. 101). It is obvious that Saraha is not talking here about a simple loss of mindfulness, or a swoon, but about a mindlessness that is free of subject-object duality. The eminent translator of Saraha's dohā trilogy Herbert Guenther had rendered these same terms as "memory,

and nonmemory."[1] Braitstein's coinage of a new terminology, recognition, and decognition, opens new paths of reflection on previous translations and scholarship regarding these concepts, and shows how the great adepts redeployed terms known in early Buddhism with new meaning according to their own yogic methods. A similar case of hermeneutics can be seen with another great adept, Maitrīpa, who in the eleventh century reinterpreted the negatively connotated non-attention as a positive meditation practice of mental non-engagement (*amanasikāra*, *yid la me byed pa*). It would have been a worthwile deepening of Braitstein's discussion on symbolic terms to draw out parallels between Saraha's and Maitrīpa's hermeneutics.

Part 2 of the *Adamantine Songs* presents the English translation of the trilogy, and Part 3 a critical Tibetan edition. Braitstein bases her work on four canonical sources and one non-canonical text collection, with the Derge Tengyur (*sde dge bstan 'gyur*) as a working basis. Her work is the fourth monograph on Saraha's literary legacy, next to Guenther's *Royal Song of Saraha* (1973), *Ecstatic Spontaneity* (1993), and Kurtis Schaeffer's *Dreaming the Great Brahmin* (2005). Braitstein's contribution is thus of indispensable value for all those wishing to immerse themselves in the study of Indian and Tibetan siddha literature, and particularly that of the great adept Saraha.

1. Herbert V. Guenther, *The Royal Song of Saraha, A Study in the History of Buddhist Thought* (Berkeley, California: Shambhala Publications, 1973), 6.

Autobiography of an Archive: A Scholar's Passage to India. Nicholas Dirks. Cultures of History. New York: Columbia University Press, 2015. Pp. viii, 390.
Reviewed by Darry Dinnell, *McGill University*

Nicholas Dirks has produced a number of seminal works in the field of South Asian Studies, most notably *The Hollow Crown* (1987) and *Castes of Mind* (2001). Blending ethnography and archival history, these investigations treated South Asian polity, caste, and British colonial influence upon each, implicating colonial systems of knowledge in the construction of kingship and caste. With *Autobiography of an Archive*: *A scholar's passage to India,* Dirks draws back upon these and other writings in an arrangement of essays spanning his career, many of them semi-autobiographical.

The contents of this volume are eclectic, including prefaces, addresses, and even paragraphs from works in progress, in addition to previously unpublished and published chapters and papers. Some of the selections are quite familiar. The third chapter, for example, is the preface to the second edition of *the Hollow Crown*, while the fourth and sixth chapters, "Castes of Mind" and "The Policing of Tradition" respectively, represent early versions of portions of *Castes of Mind*. These chapters provide digested forms of those books' larger arguments and may be helpful for those just familiarizing themselves with Dirks' corpus.

The title of the first section, "Autobiography," belies its subject matter at least in part, for while the essays presented therein are seasoned with first-person narratives in which Dirks describes his flustered first visits to colonial archives, they collectively historicize the idea of the archive itself, especially as it calls attention to the relationship between documentation and imperial power (p. 47). Archives can destroy the past as easily as they create it, Dirks explains, and it was this realization that inculcated his "ethnographic imperative"—a commitment to a rich anthropological frame of reference that seeks to address the gaps in colonial knowledge (p. 49). Strategies for the implementation of such an approach are taken up in the second chapter, "Autobiography of an Archive," which recounts Dirks' early forays into reading "native" or "local" texts as history while researching south Indian kingship for *The Hollow Crown* (p. 50). Here Dirks provides a first-hand account of undertaking what his thesis supervisor Bernard Cohn would have called ethnohistory, a methodology that seeks to reconstruct indigenous discourses with an unwavering sensitivity to temporal and cultural context. In doing so, Dirks affords himself an opportunity to express an abiding appreciation for British officer Colin Mackenzie— whose vast archival collection he utilized for several of his studies— and distinguish him as a proto-ethnohistorian, of sorts.

The ethnohistorical approach informs the next section, entitled "History and Anthropology." Most notable here is chapter five, "Ritual and Resistance," in

which Dirks examines everyday manifestations of subversion among ethnographic communities and uses these to interrogate the persistent anthropological presupposition of order (pp. 109–10). This assumption, Dirks submits, has allowed for an overemphasis upon and over-determination of what ritual actually does. "By historicizing the study of ritual[s]," he writes, we see that "they often occasion more conflict than consensus" (p. 116). Drawing from a south Indian festival to the god Aiyanar and its attendant spirit possessions, Dirks argues that ritual dramas are as much *lived* in their on-the-ground context as they are *acted* (as per Victor Turner), and given their very tangible social consequences, they are as much a space for disordering transformations as they are for maintaining order.

The third section, "Empire," deals with pivotal moments in the political history of the British in India. The primary focus across these essays is statesman Edmund Burke, key figure in Dirks' *Scandal of Empire* (2006). In particular, Dirks focuses upon how Burke endeavoured to refine British imperialism in regards to a nascent Indian sovereignty while neglecting to critique the notion of empire itself (p. 195). From Burke's example, Dirks posits that it is crucial for scholars across fields of politics, history and criticism to "write empire back into the history of the West" (p. 198). Dirks attempts to do just this in the previously unpublished reflections that form the eighth and ninth chapters. "Bringing the Company Back In" contemplates the dual identity of the British East India Company as both a corporation and a sovereign state, suggesting that the permeability of monopoly and empire it exemplifies could mark the Company as something of a cautionary tale in present-day debates regarding, for instance, moral responsibility as it relates to states and expanding global markets (p. 210). In "The Idea of Empire," Dirks concludes that Burke's ideas on sovereignty still have a critical place in imagining a post-imperial world, possibly even providing models for solving the aforementioned problems of globalization, among others (p. 227).

The fourth section concerns itself with "the Politics of Knowledge." In a reflective piece entitled "In Near Ruins," Dirks moves through a panoply of philosophical and literary citations for purposes of situating the documentation of civilization in the examination of its ruined remnants. These ruins signify, in Dirks' assessment, the subaltern people and places who "resist universalization," perpetually reminding us of the imperfections of modernity (pp. 246–47). Anthropology, Dirks insists, need not bear the taint of its origin in colonialism and the ruins associated therewith; rather, given the very substance of its study—culture—it can actually play a central role in critiques of the West (p. 247). After a piece honouring Indian sociologist G. S. Ghurye, the section ends with an evaluation of South Asian Studies at present. Dirks traces via a select group of scholars the discipline's gradual transition away from an early captivation with ancient Indian civilization and languages towards the postcolonial and culturally-based historical

perspectives of the post-1990s. While recent years have seen an assault on the area studies paradigm in general, Dirks remains optimistic for South Asian Studies on account of its burgeoning interdisciplinary potentialities, as well as the increasing number of South Asians entering the field (pp. 286–87).

Nick Dirks is not just an academician but also an administrator, currently serving as chancellor at Berkeley. Accordingly, his closing section, "University," culls together many of the preceding insights in the service of formulating improvements for post-secondary education in America. The first essay provides a retrospective of Columbia anthropologist Franz Boas and praises his commitment to interdisciplinary ventures both for faculty and for student curricula in anthropology and history, among other subjects (p. 295). In the essay to follow, "Scholars and Spies," Dirks extends Boas' century-old lamentations alleging the "prostitution" of scholarly research to government interests, observing in the same vein how American South Asian Studies were largely borne out of U.S. strategic interests following World War II (pp. 304–5). Given the legacies of that historical intertwinement, Dirks concedes that, when encountering a massively globalized world, "neither area studies nor the disciplines we have in place are fully equipped" (p. 318). He proposes the fostering of a new "worldly knowledge" that is as sensitive to the localized contexts out of which knowledge arises as it is to the global setting into which that knowledge is disseminated (p. 319). Dirks completes the volume with some reflections *contra* Allan Bloom's reactionary polemic *The Closing of the American Mind* (1987), which bemoaned the disappearance from universities of a core curriculum of uniquely Western cultural texts. Not surprisingly, Dirks refutes Bloom's excoriation of student-sullying relativistic disciplines such as history and anthropology. Dirks can personally attest that engagement with other cultural and temporal contexts—in his case, colonial and contemporary India—was immensely beneficial in terms of "understanding both my own circumstances and the assumptions as well as the habitus of my life" (p. 326). Correspondingly, Dirks argues for the sustained relevance of a liberal arts education, and concludes that a balance needs to be struck between the general education that Bloom would champion and the single-mindedly profession-oriented training that preoccupies many post-secondary institutions and students today (p. 331).

In spite of the occasionally diffuse nature of the subject matter both within and between its sections, *Autobiography of an Archive* tells the story of a scholar unremitting in his attention to context, both for himself as a product of the post-Vietnam politico-cultural milieu and for his discipline as a product of (at least one) empire. As such, Dirks solidifies himself as an exemplary model of a postcolonial scholar. Moreover, the sheer breadth of his avenues of inquiry—each of them deliberated with considerable sophistication and erudition—further establishes

Nicholas Dirks as a veritable intellectual force well beyond the disciplinary boundaries of South Asian Studies.

Human Beings – Not for Sale. Anne Burghardt (ed.). Leipzig: Evangelische
Verlagsanstalt, 2015. 77 pp.
Reviewed by Matthew Oseka [岳誠軒], *Kowloon, Hong Kong*

The above collection of popular essays is one of the four booklets which have
recently been published on behalf of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF)
as a memorial to the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. It consists of seven
contributions (by Friederike Nüssel, Ebise Dibisa Ayana, Tamaabiny, Munib A.
Younan, Gustavo Driau, Ulla Siirto and Douwe Visser), a preface, an introduction,
and a Bible study. Although a series prepared under the auspices of the LWF to
commemorate the forthcoming Reformation jubilee cannot be construed as a purely
academic contribution, it shall be reviewed as exemplary of one of the existing
approaches to the that anniversary.

Human Beings – Not for Sale and three other booklets in that series are
conspicuous for their firm commitment to the local context of theological reflexion
and for their genuine dedication to social issues. Nevertheless, the booklet under
review as well as the entire series is deeply flawed in historical terms.

In *Human Beings – Not for Sale* only Friederike Nüssel's essay, titled "The
Human Condition – A Lutheran Perspective" (pp. 7–14), might be termed as
strictly theological, yet speaking of the Lutheran (i.e., pertinent to the Wittenberg
Reformation) anthropology, the author cites Luther alone to the exclusion of Philip
Melanchthon's contribution to the origin of the Protestant theology as an academic
discipline. It should be noted that Melanchthon to a considerable degree enunciated
what is now commonly known as a doctrinal legacy of the sixteenth-century
Wittenberg Reformation. Between 1518 and 1519, Melanchthon formulated the
Reformation concept of the free will, of the Law and Gospel distinction, of the
forensic nature of justification, of the Christian freedom and of the means of grace
(*Corpus Reformatorum* 21:11–48, 48–60), which subsequently solidified into his
Loci communes theologici of 1521. In fact, by 1519/1520 Luther was vague about
those topics, being focused on defending the idea of justification through faith.

Finally, the question arises why Melanchthon's contribution, so essential to
the emergence and development of the Protestant theology, has been downplayed
in LWF memorial publications for the general public. Needless to say that at least
in the Reformed tradition Melanchthon's legacy was held in high esteem, and the
impact of his pristine though ever-evolving *Loci* on Calvin's *Institutio Christianae
religionis* (1536) was undeniable. As a matter of fact, prior to the appearance of the
Book of Concord (1580), a bilingual (Latin-German) *Corpus Philippicum* (1560)
consisting solely of select theological writings by Melanchthon was recognised as
representative of the doctrinal heritage of the Wittenberg Reformation.

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For first-time citations, a full bibliographic reference should be given in a note.

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, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1996), 21–45.

3. Pierre Hadot, *The Veil of Isis*, trans. Michael Chase (Cambridge, Mass.: 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.

Ancient texts may be cited parenthetically or in noted references. Citations should include the author's name, the title of the work, and the numerical references (book, chapter, verse, etc.) using Arabic rather than Roman numerals, separated by periods. When a translation is not that of the author of the article, the translation should be cited in full as a modern work.

3. For questions of style, punctuation, and spelling not covered here, please refer to the *Chicago Manual of Style*, 16th ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010); and the *Canadian Oxford Dictionary*, 2nd ed. (Oxford University Press, 2004).

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