Reading Packet for:

Introducing Religion: A Swift Hall Colloquium
May 1, 2015

Contents:

1. The Abercius Inscription (Margaret Mitchell)

2. Selection of Hindu texts: cosmogonic, devotional, and political (Wendy Doniger)

3. George Herbert, “Love (III)” (Richard Rosengarten)

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5. Huntington & Wangchen, “The Emptiness of Emptiness” (Dan Arnold)

6. Ernst Troeltsch, “The Absoluteness of Christianity and the History of Religions” (Kevin Hector)

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The papyrus scroll reads as follows:

"In the first place, let the reader know that the temple of Alexander the Great was built in Alexandria. The temple was dedicated to the god Ammon, and it served as a center for both religious and cultural activities.

In the second place, let the reader know that the temple was surrounded by a wall that was four miles long. The wall was made of stone and was very thick.

In the third place, let the reader know that the temple had a beautiful and sacred garden that was filled with flowers and trees. The garden was a place of peace and tranquility where people could come to meditate and pray.

In the fourth place, let the reader know that the temple was well-known for its art and architecture. The temple had a beautiful and intricate design that was admired by people from all over the world.

In the fifth place, let the reader know that the temple was destroyed by an earthquake in the year 65 AD. However, the temple was later rebuilt and remained a major tourist attraction until the 4th century AD.

In the sixth place, let the reader know that the temple is now a museum that is visited by thousands of people each year. The museum contains many artifacts and objects that were found in the temple, as well as information about the history of the temple and its significance to the people of Alexandria.

In the seventh place, let the reader know that the temple is a reminder of the rich history and culture of Alexandria. The temple is a symbol of the city's past and a testament to the ingenuity and creativity of its people.

In the eighth place, let the reader know that the temple is a place of healing and hope for many people. The temple is not only a place of worship, but also a place of comfort and solace.

In conclusion, let the reader know that the temple of Alexander the Great was a truly remarkable building that was both a place of worship and a place of beauty. The temple is a testament to the power of art and architecture, and it continues to inspire people to this day."
I PRAY TO AGNI

Appropriately placed at the very beginning of the Rig Veda, this hymn invites Agni, the divine priest, to come to the sacrifice.

Rig Veda 1.1.1

I pray to Agni, the household priest who is the god of the sacrifice, the one who chants and invokes and brings most treasure.

Agni earned the prayers of the ancient sages, and of those of the present, too; he will bring the gods here.

Through Agni one may win wealth, and growth from day to day, glorious and most abounding in heroic sons.

Agni, the sacrificial ritual that you encompass on all sides—only that one goes to the gods.

Agni, the priest with the sharp sight of a poet, the true and most brilliant, the god will come with the gods.

Whatever good you wish to do for the one who worships you, Agni, through you, O Angiras, that comes true.

To you, Agni, who shine upon darkness, we come day after day, bringing our thoughts and homage to you, the king over sacrifices, the shining guardian of Order, growing in your own house.

Be easy for us to reach, like a father to his son. Abide with us, Agni, for our happiness.

Translated by Wendy Doniger O’Flaherty.

1. The Angirases were an ancient family of priests, often identified with Vedic gods such as Agni and Indra.

CREATION HYMN

The Rig Veda imagines several quite different creation scenarios, most of which occur in the first and tenth books, the last to be composed, which already show the seeds of the philosophical speculation that was to emerge fully in the Brahmanas and Upanishads within a few centuries. The most basic form of Vedic cosmogony, or theory about the origins of the universe, is implicit in several hymns, though never spelled out: it is the formation of distinct elements out of the primeval cosmic flux, the evolution of order out of chaos. Other hymns describe creation as a result of the incest of the primeval father with his daughter, the dismemberment of a cosmic giant (“The Hymn of the Primeval Man,” p. 92), or the first oblation offered into the fire.

This short hymn, though linguistically simple (with the exception of one or two puzzling nouns), is conceptually extremely provocative and has provoked hundreds of complex commentaries among Indian theologians and both Hindu and non-Hindu scholars. Called the “Nasadiya” from its opening words (“There was neither”), in
many ways it is meant to puzzle and challenge, to raise unanswerable questions, to pile up paradoxes. It has an extraordinary humility and open-mindedness, a tolerance, a celebration of plurality, even in asking unanswerable questions about the beginnings of all things. For in the end it clearly implies that the gods cannot be the source of creation since they came after it.

**Rig Veda 10.129**

There was neither non-existence nor existence then; there was neither the realm of space nor the sky which is beyond. What stirred? Where? In whose protection? Was there water, bottomlessly deep?

There was neither death nor immortality then. There was no distinguishing sign of night nor of day. That one breathed, windless, by its own impulse. Other than that there was nothing beyond.

Darkness was hidden by darkness in the beginning; with no distinguishing sign, all this was water. The life force that was covered with emptiness, that one arose through the power of heat.

Desire came upon that one in the beginning; that was the first seed of mind. Poets seeking in their heart with wisdom found the bond of existence in non-existence.

Their cord was extended across. Was there below? Was there above? There were seed-placers; there were powers. There was impulse beneath; there was giving-forth above.

Who really knows? Who will here proclaim it? Whence was it produced? Whence is this creation? The gods came afterwards, with the creation of this universe. Who then knows whence it has arisen?

Whence this creation has arisen—perhaps it formed itself, or perhaps it did not—the one who looks down on it, in the highest heaven, only he knows—or perhaps he does not know.

**ADITI AND THE BIRTH OF THE GODS**

This creation hymn poses several different and paradoxical answers to the riddle of origins. It is evident from the tone of the very first verse that the poet regards creation as a mysterious subject, and a desperate series of eclectic hypotheses (perhaps quoted from various sources) tumbles out right away: the craftsman (the priest, Brahmanaspati or Brihaspati, lord of inspired speech); the philosophical paradox of nonexistence (which we have just encountered in the “Creation Hymn,” p. 89); contradiction (the earth born from the crouching divinity and then said to be from the quarters of the sky); and mutual creation (Aditi and Daksha, the female
THE HYMN OF THE PRIMEVAL MAN

In this hymn, the gods create the world by dismembering the cosmic giant, the Man, the primeval male, Purusha; purusha later comes to designate any male creature, indeed the male gender. He is both the victim that the gods sacrificed and the divinity to whom the sacrifice was dedicated; that is, he is both the subject and the object of a Vedic sacrifice that creates the whole universe, when the gods “spread” (v. 6) the sacrifice, stretching it out like the earth spread out on the cosmic waters. The sacrifice creates not only living creatures but the verses (of the Rig Veda), chants (of the Sama Veda), meters and formulas (of the Yajur Veda) (v. 9)—that is, the elements of the Vedic sacrifice! It also creates (v. 16) the first ritual laws, that is, the dharma, a prototypic word that here designates the patterns of behavior established during this first sacrifice to serve as the model for all future sacrifices.

Moreover, the “sacrifice” means both the ritual and the victim killed in the ritual. The Vedic chicken-or-egg paradox is repeated in a more general pattern, in which the gods sacrifice to the gods, and a more specific pattern, in which one particular god, Indra, king of the gods, sacrifices (as a king) to himself (as a god). This tautological thinking is also reflected (v. 5) in the mutual creation of the Man and Viraj (the active female creative principle, who is later replaced, as the mate of Purusha, by Prakriti or material nature). Though the theme of the cosmic sacrifice is a widespread mythological motif, this hymn is part of a particularly Indo-European corpus of myths of the dismemberment of a cosmic giant. The underlying concept is, therefore, quite ancient; yet the fact that this is one of the latest hymns in the Rig Veda is evident from its reference to the four social classes or varnas (v. 12), the first time that this concept appears in an Indian text.

The fourth social class, the servants (or Shudras), may have consisted of the people new to the early Vedic system, perhaps the people already in India when the Vedic people entered, people from a system already in place in India, or simply the sorts of people who were always outside the system. That the Shudras were an afterthought is evident from the fact that the third class, the people (Vaishyas), is sometimes said to be derived from the word for “all” and therefore to mean “everyone,” leaving no room for anyone below them—until someone added a class below them. In support of this supposition is the fact that the final combination often functioned not as a quartet but as a dualism: all of us (in the first three classes) versus all of them (in the fourth class, the non-us, the Others).

This text ranks the kings below the priests. The supremacy of Brahmins was much contested throughout later Hindu literature and may have been nothing but a Brahmin fantasy. Many texts argue, or assume, that Kshatriyas (the class of kings and warriors) never were as high as Brahmins, and others assume that they always were, and still are, higher than Brahmins. Buddhist literature puts the kings at the top, the Brahmins second, and many characters in Hindu texts also defend this viewpoint.

The French sociologist Georges Dumézil (1898–1986) argued that the Indo-European speakers—that is, the hypothetical people from whose hypothetical language, Proto-Indo-European, all Indo-European languages such as Sanskrit were derived—had been divided into three social classes or functions. At the top were kings who were also priests, then warriors who were also policemen, and then the rest of the people. But by the end of the period in which the Rig Veda was composed, a fourfold social system that deviates in two major regards from the Dumézilian model was in place: this new system adds a fourth class at the bottom, and it detaches the status of kings from that of priests, demoting kings to the second, warrior-policeman function. The kings have come down one rung from their former alleged status by no longer sharing first place with the Brahmins. This, then, would have been one of the earliest documented theocratic takeovers, a silent, totally mental
palace coup—the Brahmans forcing the Kshatriyas into second rank by dissociating them from the exercise of priesthood. Thus, even in this hymn that supposedly assumes a social charter that was created at the very dawn of time and is to remain in place forever, we can see, in the positioning of the kings in the second rank, movement, change, slippage, progress, or decay, depending upon one’s point of view.

*Rig Veda 10.90*

The Man has a thousand heads, a thousand eyes, a thousand feet. He pervaded the earth on all sides and extended beyond it as far as ten fingers.

It is the Man who is all this, whatever has been and whatever is to be. He is the ruler of immortality, when he grows beyond everything through food.

Such is his greatness, and the Man is yet more than this. All creatures are a quarter of him; three quarters are what is immortal in heaven.

With three quarters the Man rose upwards, and one quarter of him still remains here. From this\(^1\) he spread out in all directions, into that which eats and that which does not eat.

From him Viraj was born, and from Viraj came the Man. When he was born, he ranged beyond the earth behind and before.

When the gods spread the sacrifice with the Man as the offering, spring was the clarified butter, summer the fuel, autumn the oblation.

They anointed\(^2\) the Man, the sacrifice born at the beginning, upon the sacred grass.\(^3\) With him the gods, Sadhyas,\(^4\) and sages sacrificed.

From that sacrifice in which everything was offered, the melted fat\(^5\) was collected, and he\(^6\) made it into those beasts who live in the air, in the forest, and in villages.

From that sacrifice in which everything was offered, the verses and chants were born, the meters were born from it, and from it the formulas were born.

Horses were born from it, and those other animals that have two rows of teeth;\(^7\) cows were born from it, and from it goats and sheep were born.

When they divided the Man, into how many parts did they apportion him? What do they call his mouth, his two arms and thighs and feet?

His mouth became the Brahmin; his arms were made into the King, his thighs the People, and from his feet the Servants were born.

The moon was born from his mind; from his eye the sun was born. Indra and Agni came from his mouth, and from his vital breath the Wind was born.

From his navel the middle realm of space arose; from his head the sky evolved. From his two feet came the earth, and the quarters of the sky from his ear. Thus they\(^8\) set the worlds in order.

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1. That is, from the quarter still remaining on earth, or perhaps from the condition in which he had already spread out from the earth with three quarters of his form.
2. The word actually means “sprinkle” with consecrated water, but it indicates the consecration of an initiate or a king.
3. A mixture of special grasses was strewn on the ground for the gods to sit upon.
4. A class of demigods or saints, whose name literally means “Those who are yet to be fulfilled.”
5. Literally, a mixture of butter and sour milk used in the sacrifice; figuratively, the fat that drained from the sacrificial victim.
6. Probably the Creator, though possibly the Man himself.
7. Incisors above and below, such as dogs and cats have.
8. The gods.
There were seven enclosing-sticks for him, and thrice seven fuel-sticks, when the gods, spreading the sacrifice, bound the Man as the sacrificial beast.

With the sacrifice the gods sacrificed to the sacrifice. These were the first ritual laws. These very powers reached the dome of the sky where dwell the Sadhyas, the ancient gods.

9. Green twigs that keep the fire from spreading; the fuel sticks are seasoned wood used for kindling.

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**THE FUNERAL FIRE**

Just as the Vedic poets speculate in various contrasting, even conflicting ways about the process of creation, so do they vary in their speculations about death and in the questions they ask about death. The poets view death and sleep as a part of chaos, in contrast with the ordering of life in the hierarchy of social classes. (Later, some forms of Hinduism stood this value system on its head and viewed life as a terrifying chaos and death as the liberating peace of perfect order.) Surprisingly for a document so devoted to war and sacrifice, both of which involve killing, the Rig Veda actually says relatively little about death. What it does say, however, is comforting: for the virtuous, the world of death is a hazy but pleasant place.

The poet prays, “Deliver me from death, not from immortality” (7.59.12). By “immortality” the ancient sages meant not an actual eternity of life—even the gods do not live forever, though they live much longer than we do, and they never age—but rather a full life span (usually conceived of as seventy or a hundred years). Death in the Vedas is something to be avoided as long as possible; one hopes only to escape premature death, never to live forever; the prayer is that people should die in the right order, that children should not die before their parents. When it comes to the inevitable end of the life span, the Rig Veda offers varied but not necessarily contradictory images of a rather muted version of life on earth—shade (remember how hot India is), lots of good-looking women (this heaven is imagined by men), and good things to eat and drink. There is also some talk about a deep pit into which evil spirits and ogres are to be committed forever, but no evidence that human sinners would be sent there.

The poems also propose many different nonsolutions to the insoluble problem of death, many different ways that the square peg of the fact of death cannot be fitted into the round hole of human rationality. These approaches are often aware of one another; they react against one another and incorporate one another, through the process of intertextuality. And there is general agreement on some points, such as that the dead person would go to the House of Clay, to be punished, or to the World of the Fathers (that is, dead male ancestors), to be rewarded. Sometimes, as in this hymn, the corpse was burned; sometimes either the ashes of the cremated corpse were buried (as in the “Burial Hymn”) or the corpse was.

The poet in another hymn addresses the corpse: “Leaving behind all imperfections, go back home again; merge with a glorious body” (10.14.8). Despite this “glorious body” with which the dead person merges, the poet of “The Funeral Fire” expresses concern that the old body be preserved, and confidence that it will be. Not only is the fire not to destroy the body, but it is to preserve it. Yet, when this poem addresses the dead man, it speaks of the ultimate cosmic dispersal of the old body, the eye to the sun, in a reversal of the dismemberment in “The Hymn of the Primeval Man.”
MAHADEVIYAKKA: A VIRASHAIVA WOMAN POET-SAIN T

In the twelfth century, a Virashaiva poet-saint named Mahadeviyakka (or Mahadevi or Mahadevyyakka, akka being an honorific for “sister”) composed poems in Kannada that simultaneously addressed the metaphysics of salvation and the banal problem of dealing with in-laws. The hagiographies tell us that she wandered naked, clothed only in her hair, until she died, still in her twenties.

The source for the poems is L. Basavaraju, AkkanaVacanagalu (Mysore, 1966). The translations are by A. K. Ramanujan.

PRONOUNCING GLOSSARY

Mahadeviyakka: muh-hah’-day’-vee-yuk’-kuh

MY BODY IS DIRT

Mahadeviyakka’s attitude toward her body is ambivalent: it is the only temple she has, and the instrument through which she will reach her god, but she despises it when she exalts the immaterial spirit.

My body is dirt,
my spirit is space:
which
shall I grab, O lord? How,
and what,
shall I think of you?
Cut through
my illusions,
lord white as jasmine.

HUSBAND INSIDE

Mahadeviyakka regarded herself as married to Shiva and tried in vain to avoid marrying a human husband. Eventually she left her husband and wandered freely as a Virashaiva saint.
WHO CARES

Husband inside, lover outside. I can’t manage them both.

This world and that other, cannot manage them both.

O lord white as jasmine

I cannot hold in one hand both the round nut\(^1\)
and the long bow.

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1. The *belavalada*, a large unripe hard-shelled nut.

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WHO CARES

This poem displays many of the characteristics that distinguish the Virashaiva *vachanās* from other devotional poetry: it expresses the real internal conflicts of a real person; it is spoken in the voice of that person, unmediated by literary conventions; it is about basic human relationships—here, a woman and her lover(s); it describes the devotee rather than the god, the subject rather than the object of worship. It also challenges conventions of purity, both in the image of a woman used by several men and in the image of a dog feeding upon the body.

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Who cares
who strips a tree of leaf once the fruit is plucked?

Who cares
who lies with the woman you have left?

Who cares
who ploughs the land you have abandoned?

After this body has known my lord who cares if it feeds a dog or soaks up water?
IF ONE COULD

This poem is often cited as Mahadeviyakka’s answer to the challenge of another Virashaiva poet, Allama Prabhu, sometimes said to be her guru. Allama was a temple drummer who went mad with grief when his young wife died but then founded one of the great Virashaiva centers, in Kalyana. Allama is said to have said to Mahadeviyakka: “As long as you carry the pollutions of the body and the five senses, you cannot even touch the Lord.” The following poem is her reply.

If one could
draw the fangs of a snake
and charm the snake to play,
it’s great to have snakes.

If one can single out
the body’s ways
it’s great to have bodies.
The body’s wrong
is like mother turning vampire.

Don’t say they have bodies
who have Your love,
O lord
white as jasmine.

PEOPLE, MALE AND FEMALE

This poem reflects Mahadeviyakka’s notorious lack of modesty, her reputation for going naked, and her assumption that gender does not matter when it comes to seeking god.

People,
male and female,
blush when a cloth covering their shame comes loose.

When the lord of lives
lives drowned without a face
in the world, how can you be modest?

When all the world is the eye of the lord,
onlooking everywhere, what can you cover and conceal?
PURUSHOTTAM NAGESH OAK

We’ve sampled the Hindu past in hundreds of documents; but how are we to anthologize the future? From present signs, the Hinduism of the future appears to be heavily politicized, and so it is appropriate that one of our final texts should be driven by an extreme political agenda. A steadily growing faction of Hinduism in the twenty-first century is the nationalist movement known as Hindutva (“Hindu-ness”), a word coined by the nationalist Vinayak Damodar Savarkar (1888–1966) in his 1923 pamphlet Hindutva: Who Is a Hindu? Hindutva is the doctrine of a number of political organizations, including the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS, “National Volunteer Organization”), the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP, “Indian Peoples’ Party”), and the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP, “World Hindu Council”). Hindutvavadis (as its adherents are called), like Christian and Muslim fundamentalists, seek to purify their own tradition of what they regard as foreign and impure elements. They want to claim India for Hindus, at the expense of other religions in India, such as Islam and Christianity. Since they ground their claims to ownership in claims of ancient origins, Hindutvavadis present a revisionist history of India, ignoring the many moments of mutual enrichment between Muslims and Hindus that we have noted throughout this anthology and capitalizing instead on the inter-religious tensions that have always smoldered in India and that erupted into volcanic communal violence after the Partition of India and Pakistan in August 1947, when hundreds of thousands died.

One of the spokespersons for this movement was Purushottam Nagesh Oak (1917–2007), who once worked and acted as an assistant to the Indian nationalist leader Subhas Chandra Bose and went on to found, in 1964, an “Institute for Rewriting Indian History.” Oak was fond of deriving non-Sanskrit religious terms from Sanskrit, such as “Vatican” from the Sanskrit vatika, “hermitage,” and “Christianity” from Krishna-niti (“ethics of Krishna”). He also argued that both the Kaaba in Mecca and Westminster Abbey were originally shrines to the Hindu god Shiva.

THE TAJ MAHAL IS A HINDU PALACE

For centuries some Hindus have claimed that the great mosque built in Ayodhya in 1572 by the first Mughal emperor, Babur, was erected over a Hindu temple commemorating the birth of Rama there. In December 1992, Hindutva factions, backed by the police, demolished the mosque, triggering violence throughout India that left more than a thousand dead, both Hindu and Muslim. A similar claim—not merely that a great Muslim monument was built on sacred Hindu grounds, but that this one was actually a Hindu monument—was made by P. N. Oak for the Taj Mahal.

In a series of four books, Oak argued that the Taj Mahal, in Agra, is not a Muslim mausoleum but an ancient temple to the Hindu god Shiva that King Paramardi Dev built in 1155, and that it eventually became a palace that the Mughal emperor Shah Jahan commandeered from Jai Singh, the Maharaja of Jaipur. Though Oak’s arguments have led neither to widespread violence nor (as he himself lamented) to general acceptance, and there is much indignant mockery of his agenda by more liberal Hindus, his theories are widely cited by Hindutvavadis—both in India and in the

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American diaspora—as part of a broader political agenda. The Hindutva movement co-opted certain Enlightenment discourses of the scientific study of history as part of a postcolonial discourse meant to “Europeanize” Indian thought, proving that Hindus have always been just as “scientific” as Europeans. At the same time, however, Hindutvavadis attempt both to challenge European archaeological findings and to assert the historical reality of religious texts, as when they succeeded, in September 2007, in ending a major government project to build a canal through the area that was where, they said, Rama, in the Ramayana, built a bridge to what is now Sri Lanka. (The debate continues.) Moreover, matters of “history” and “religion” in India, including Hindu-Muslim infighting, occur largely through the medium of lawyers, and legalistic nit-picking. All of this is reflected in Oak’s argument.

Oak cites a crucial passage from the court records of Shah Jahan describing what Shah Jahan got from Jai Singh: “[T]here was a tract of land (zamini) of great eminence and pleasantness toward the south of that large city, on which there was before this the mansion (manzil) of Raja Man Singh, and which now belonged to his grandson Raja Jai Singh.” Oak alone reads this passage to mean that Shah Jahan commandeered not merely the land but also the building that had previously been situated on it, and that that building was not a “mansion” but the Taj Mahal. This flies in the face of massive evidence, which is summarized as follows by the 2010 Encyclopedia Britannica entry on the Taj Mahal:

Building commenced about 1632. More than 20,000 workers were employed from India, Persia, the Ottoman Empire, and Europe to complete the mausoleum itself by about 1638–39; the adjunct buildings were finished by 1643, and decoration work continued until at least 1647. In total, construction of the 42-acre (17-hectare) complex spanned 22 years.

Oak further argued that “Taj Mahal” is not a Persian (from Arabic) phrase meaning “crown of palaces,” as linguists would assert, but a corrupt form of the Sanskrit term “Tejo Mahalaya,” which signifies a Shiva temple. Oak maintained that persons connected with the repair and the maintenance of the Taj Mahal have seen the Shiva linga and “other idols” that were sealed in the thick walls and in chambers in a secret red stone level below the marble basement. In 2000 India’s Supreme Court dismissed Oak’s petition to declare that a Hindu king had built the Taj Mahal and reprimanded him for bringing the action. The following excerpt from the introduction to his second book about the Taj Mahal spells out the further implications of his theories.

PRONOUNCING GLOSSARY

Ajmer: ahj´-mayr
Anangpal: uh-nang´-pahl
Babur: bah´-boor
Badshahnama: bahd´-shah´-nah´-muh
Fatehpur Sikri: fah´-teh-poor sih´-kree
Gwalior: guuh´-lee-yor
Jaipur: jai´-poor
kabar: kah´-bar
makabra: muh-kah´-bruh
Mansingh: mahn´-sing´
Mohammad Ghaus: moh-hah´-muh
gows´
Moinuddin Chisti: moh´-ih-noo-din´
chis´-tee
Mulla Abdul Hamid Lahori: moo´-luh
ahh-dool´ hah-mid´ lah-hoh´-ree
Mumtaz: moom´-tahz
Nizamuddin: nih-zah´-moo-din´
Purushottam Nagesh Oak: poo-roo-
shoh´-tum nah´-gaysh´ ohk
Rajasthan: rah´-jah-stahn´
Rajput: rahj´-poot
Shahjahan: shah´-jah-hahn´
Shilpashastra: shil´-puh-shahs´-truh
Introduction

Unlike this book and its forerunner, titled Taj Mahal Was a Rajput Palace, which are research works, all other books and accounts of the Taj Mahal written during the last 300 years are based on pure fantasy. We were surprised to learn after meticulous inquiry that despite the plethora of printed hocus-pocus churned out on the Taj Mahal all the world over there is not a single book containing a well-documented, comprehensive account of the origin of the Taj Mahal quoting exhaustively only contemporary authorities. Subsequent hearsay accounts are hardly worth any notice for historical research, since one writer's opinion is as good as any other's.

Since the Taj Mahal is a building-complex of world renown the absence of a single coherent and unquestionably authentic account is indeed surprising. How and why have universities and research institutions the world over bypassed such a stupendous and attractive subject like the Taj Mahal? Why do all accounts of the Taj Mahal content themselves with merely lisping the selfsame, confused, irreconcilable and slipshod, imaginary details about its origin, the period of construction, the expense incurred, the source of the money spent, the designers and workmen, the date of Mumtaz's burial in it, and every other facet?

Perhaps it is just as well that no scholarly body ever succeeded in producing a coherent and authoritative account of the building of the Taj Mahal. Whosoever attempted to do any research on the subject got lost in such a maze of inconsistent and contradictory accounts that he found himself helplessly repeating the same old abracadabra. He had to be content with placing before the reader loose bits of inconsistent, anomalous and contradictory versions on every point. All aspects of the Shahjahan legend regarding the Taj Mahal being suspect, it was but natural that attempts at compiling an authoritative account of the origin of the Taj Mahal should miserably fail. Nobody ever succeeded in or hoped to say the last convincing word on the origin of the Taj Mahal. All previous attempts were bound to fail since they were all based on a wrong notion. Starting with wrong premises, they could not arrive at the right conclusion.

We are going to prove in the following pages that the Taj Mahal—meaning "the Very Crown Among Residences"—is an ancient Hindu palace and not a Muslim tomb. We shall also show how all the loose bits of information—whether factual or concocted—dished out on the platter of the Shahjahan legend, fall in place and fully support our research. Just as the solution to a mathematical problem may be tested for its accuracy by various methods, similarly, sound historical research provides a consistent and coherent story reconciling all apparent inconsistencies.

1. A series of four books: first, Taj Mahal Was a Rajput Palace (New Delhi: P. N. Oak, 1965); second, The Taj Mahal Is a Hindu Palace (Bombay: Pearl Publications, 1968) [from which the present selection was taken]; third, Taj Mahal Is a Temple Palace (New Delhi: P. N. Oak, 1974); fourth, Tajmahal—The True Story; The Tale of a Temple Vandalized (Houston, TX: A. Ghosh, 1989).
In this book we have reproduced in photostat a passage from Shahjahan’s court chronicle, the Badshahnama, which disarmingly admits that the Taj Mahal is a commandeered Hindu palace. We have also quoted the French merchant Tavernier, who visited India during Shahjahan’s reign, to say that the cost of the scaffolding exceeded that of the entire work done regarding the mausoleum. This proves that all that Shahjahan had to do was engrave Koranic texts on the walls of a Hindu palace; that is why the cost of the scaffolding was much more than the value of the entire work done. We have cited the Encyclopaedia Britannica as stating that the Taj Mahal building-complex comprises stables and guest and guard rooms. We have quoted Mr. Nurul Hasan Siddiqui’s book admitting, as the Badshahnama does, that a Hindu palace was commandeered to bury Mumtaz in. We have cited Shahjahan’s fifth-generation ancestor Babur to prove that he lived in what we call the “Taj Mahal,” 100 years before the death of the lady for whom the Taj is believed to have been built as a mausoleum. We have also quoted Vincent Smith to show that Babur died in the Taj Mahal. In addition to these proofs we have scotched the Shahjahan legend in every detail and cited other voluminous evidence proving conclusively that the Taj Mahal is an ancient Hindu palace.

The overwhelming proof that we have produced in this book should once for all silence all doubters of the correctness of our finding and convince them that the whole world can go wrong where one man proves right. This has happened time and again in human history. Galileo and Einstein, for example, shocked contemporary humanity out of their rusted dogma-shells.

It was by sheer luck that we happened to find corroboration for our earlier finding on the Taj Mahal, in the Badshahnama, Mr. Siddiqui’s book, Tavernier’s travel account and Babur’s Memoirs. But we wish to take this opportunity to alert posterity and our contemporaries interested in research and tell them that the proofs set out in our earlier book (Taj Mahal Was a Rajput Palace) were more than enough to convince all those well versed in judicial procedure, and logic, that the Taj Mahal existed much before Mumtaz’s death whose tomb it is supposed to be.

Even if Mulia Abdul Hamid Lahori (the author of the Badshahnamah) and others had prevaricated, the evidence we marshalled in our earlier book was enough to question their veracity and impel us to seek their motives. This is

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4. The Padshah Nama, the corpus of court records of the reign of Shah Jahan, in Persian. The portions written by Mulla Abdul Hamid Lahori and by Amin-e-Qazwini contain the crucial passages; Oak cites Lahori but not Qazwini, though Qazwini is regarded as the definitive source of information on Shah Jahan’s early years. See W. E. Begley and Z. A. Desai, Taj Mahal: The Illumined Tomb (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1985), pp. 42–43.

5. Jean Baptiste Tavernier visited the court of Shah Jahan in the seventeenth century and left a detailed, but not always accurate, travel narrative. But this passage from the 2010 Encyclopedia Britannica narrative contradicts Oak’s assertions:

"It was built by the Mughal, emperor Shah Jahan (reigned 1628–58) to immortalize his wife Mumtaz Mahal ("Chosen One of the Palace")." The name Taj Mahal is a derivation of her name. She died in childbirth in 1631, after having been the emperor’s inseparable companion since their marriage in 1612. The plans for the complex have been attributed to various architects of the period, though the chief architect was probably Ustad Ahmad Lahawri, an Indian of Persian descent. The five principal elements of the complex—main gateway, garden, mosque, jama masjid (literally “answer”, a building mirroring the mosque), and mausoleum (including its four minarets)—were conceived and designed as a unified entity according to the tenets of Mughal building practice, which allowed no subsequent addition or alteration.

6. But this passage from the 2010 Encyclopaedia Britannica narrative contradicts Oak’s assertions:


8. Vincent Arthur Smith (1843–1920) was a leading historian of India.

a lesson worth imbibing by the lay public, and by researchers who have to wade through a mire of falsified and distorted accounts.

We confess that we have not been able to find out which ancient Hindu king built the Taj Mahal as his palace though we have hazarded a hypothesis that it could be Anangpal around 372 A.D.—but that was never the object of our quest. That is a subsequent task. It was first and foremost necessary to open the eyes of everybody to the fact that the Taj Mahal is a Hindu palace.

We have in this book proved to the hilt that the Taj Mahal has been built to its minutest detail according to the ancient Hindu science of architecture of the Hindus, for the Hindus and by the Hindus. Now that we have firmly established it in this and in the earlier book, the topic should encourage further research to trace the history of the Taj Mahal prior to Man-singh’s and Babur’s possession of it until we get to the original Hindu builder. Jaipur royal records in the Rajasthan Archives at Bikaner or in the possession of the Jaipur ruling house might possess valuable clues.

We had to face a veritable barrage of scoffs and sneers and other worse reactions when we first published our findings. But we are unshaken in our conviction. Those jeers and sneers came from all quarters. Particularly painful were those emanating from eminent students of history. Most expressed nothing but vehement contempt either audibly or through various acts of commission and omission. The lay public looked on dazed in disbelief, and looked up to history teachers and professors, as if they are oracles, for cues whether to laud or condemn us.

It is painful to note that scholars who felt themselves committed to the Shahjahan legend of the Taj Mahal, either by having authored books on the topic or guided post-graduate students along the beaten track, or by virtue of their bureaucratic and academic standing, showed a marked tendency to remain strait-jacketed in their beliefs. Obstructionist and obscurantist objections were flung at us. Many angrily asserted that we had not proved our case. But that was a most unscholarly attitude. A true devotion to academic research should have urged them to give a second thought to the matter. If they were right, the revision would have worked to their own advantage, because it would have bolstered up their own earlier belief by giving them an opportunity to fill up the holes which we had pointed out. If they were in the wrong their holding on to their earlier dogmas was unwarranted. They thus failed to be guided by the maxim that, “If you are in the right you can afford to keep your temper; if in the wrong you cannot afford to lose it.”

There is another maxim for the genuine researcher, that any loopholes pointed out in an existing belief should lead to immediate intensified research rather than anger and hate against one who questions traditional beliefs. Trying to find fault with one who questions hackneyed beliefs is neither good ethics nor good scholarship. Finding fault with the method by which the discovery has been arrived at is worse. For all we know the method employed may be unorthodox or even occult. But what others should worry about is the end product or the result. They may later ask to be enlightened on the meth-

1. Anangpal Tomar was a king of Delhi in the eighth century C.E.
3. Man Singh (1550–1614) was a Hindu king of Jaipur and close friend of the Mughal emperor Akbar (whose name means “Great”). See also P. N. Oak, Who Says Akbar Was Great? (New Delhi: P. N. Oak, 1968).

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ods used, but refusing to examine the conclusion by caviling at the method is missing the wood for the trees.

Luckily for us much water has flown down all the rivers since we first mooted our finding, and today our discovery is not looked upon—at least by some—as fantastic, quixotic, eccentric or just chauvinistic. The matter does not end with merely admitting the Taj Mahal to be a Hindu palace. That finding has a very far-reaching bearing on both Indian and world history.

The Taj Mahal has all along been wrongly believed to be the very flower of the mythical Indo-Saracenic architecture. Now that we have proved it to be an ancient Hindu palace it should not be difficult for readers to regard with a little more respect and attention our finding explained in the book *Some Blunders of Indian Historical Research* that all mediaeval mosques and tombs in India are conquered and misused Hindu palaces and temples. Thus Mohammad Ghaus’s tomb in Gwalior, Salim Chisti’s mausoleum in Fatehpur Sikri, Nizamuddin’s *kabar* in Delhi, Moinuddin Chisti’s *makabra* in Ajmer, five all erstwhile Hindu buildings lost to Muslim conquest and use.

The other corollary to our finding on the Taj Mahal is that the Indo-Saracenic theory of architecture is a figment of the imagination. It should be deleted forthwith from history books and text books of civil engineering and architecture.

A third corollary is that the dome is a Hindu form of architecture.

A fourth corollary is that buildings in India and West Asia which have a resemblance to the Taj Mahal are products of Hindu architecture (*Shilpha-shastra*), just as in our own times we find Western architecture to be in vogue all over the world.

During our discussions with university teachers and book-reviewers we came across some curious objections to our thesis. Having read the earlier book they objected to our methodology as being argumentative, deductive and lawyer-like.

This raises a very interesting point. Do they mean to say that deductive logic and lawyer-like arguments, having no place in or being detrimental to arriving at correct conclusions in historical research, should be altogether avoided? Their objection amounts to asserting that the conclusions arrived at by deductive logic or by the adjudicative process are all wrong.

We then ask whether Man did not arrive at his present state of knowledge in every branch of human inquiry with the help of his logical faculty? How else did he progress? Take the case of geography. Thousands of years before Man could send up spacecraft to photograph the earth did he not correctly conclude that the earth was round, by sheer logic? This should thoroughly expose the hollowness of the objection. Logic is justly called the science of sciences because it treats of reasoning which is the basis of all knowledge, from which history can claim no exemption.

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5. These are all Muslim holy places in India.
LOVE (III)
by George Herbert

Love bade me welcome, yet my soul drew back,
    Guilty of dust and sin.
But quick-ey'd Love, observing me grow slack
    From my first entrance in,
Drew nearer to me, sweetly questioning
    If I lack'd anything.

"A guest," I answer'd, "worthy to be here";
    Love said, "You shall be he."
"I, the unkind, the ungrateful? ah my dear,
    I cannot look on thee."
Love took my hand and smiling did reply,
    "Who made the eyes but I?"

"Truth, Lord, but I have marr'd them; let my shame
    Go where it doth deserve."
"And know you not," says Love, "who bore the blame?"
    "My dear, then I will serve."
"You must sit down," says Love, "and taste my meat."
    So I did sit and eat.
The Emptiness of Emptiness
An Introduction to Early Indian Madhyamika *

C. W. Huntington, Jr.
With
Geshé Namgyal Wangchen

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The Sixth Stage
In the Generation of the Thought of Awakening:
The Directly Facing (Abhimukhi *)

[Introduction]

(1) [At the stage called] "The Directly Facing," [I fixed in balanced concentration (samadhi*)] and directly facing the Dharma of a perfect buddha, [the bodhisattva] who perceives the nature of conditionality (idampratyayata*) abides in perfect wisdom and thereby attains cessation.3

(2) Just as an entire group of blind men is easily conducted to its destination by a single person gifted with sight, so in this case also [perfect wisdom] goes on to the [stage of] the conquerors, taking along with it the [previous five] qualities that are without the eye of discrimination.4

(3) The approach to be explained here is established in accordance with the original way of the noble Nagarjuna*, because he comprehended the profound nature of things through reason as well as through scripture.5

(4) Even as a common man one may hear about emptiness and experience an inward joy again and again—he comes moistened with tears born from that joy, and the hair on his body standing erect.

(5) The seed of a perfect buddha's discrimination lies within such a person. This person is a proper vessel for teachings on reality, it is to him that the truth of the highest meaning is to be taught, and he possesses the qualities which must accompany that [instruction].

(6) Always he lives morally, gives offerings, practices compassion, and fosters patience. He applies the merit from these [virtues] toward his awakening for the liberation of all living beings.

(7) He is devoted to the perfect bodhisattvas. A person who is expert in this profound and vast way, who has by degrees obtained the stage called "The Joyous," and who is intent on this [stage]—he alone should attend to this path.9
[The Non-Origination of All Things (Sarvadharmanupada *)]

(8a–b)10 The same [entity] does not arise from [itself], and how can it arise from another? Neither does it arise from both [itself and another], and what exists without any cause?

[Spontaneous Production (Svata Upada*):
The First Alternative]

(8c–d) It would be entirely pointless for an [entity] to arise from itself, and it is moreover unreasonable to suppose that something already produced might be produced all over again.11

(9) If one presumes that an entity already produced is produced all over again, then either the production of the sprout, for example, would not occur in the context of everyday experience,12 or else the seed would reproduce until the end of all existence.13 How could such an entity ever perish?14

(10) According to you [who maintain this first alternative], there is no difference between the seed as generative cause and the sprout as effect, in terms of their shape, color, flavor, efficacy,15 or ripening. And if [the seed] abandons its former intrinsic nature and assumes an essence different from that, then in this case how would it possess any reality at all?16

(11) If, as you maintain, the seed associated with a particular sprout is not different from that sprout, then either that which is termed the sprout, like the seed, would never be perceived,17 or the seed would look just like the sprout because the two would be identical. It follows that this [thesis] is unacceptable.

(12)18 Insofar as its effect is visible only when the cause has disappeared, the identity of the two is also unacceptable even in the context of everyday experience. Therefore, this conception of an entity arising out of itself is unreasonable both in terms of the reality [expressed in the truth of the highest meaning] and from the perspective of everyday experience.19

(13) If one maintains this notion of self-production, then it follows that cause (janaka) and effect (janya), or agent (kartr*) and action (karma) would [by the same criterion] be identical. They are obviously not identical, however, and therefore self-production is not an acceptable thesis, for it entails these erroneous consequences which have been explained in even greater detail [in the Madhyamakasutra*].

[Production from Another (Parata Upada):
The Second Alternative]20

(14)21 If one entity arises in dependence on another,22 then pitch darkness can arise from a flame. In fact, [if this were the case, then]
anything could arise from anything, because it is not simply [the cause] which is different from [its effect]—all non-causes as well are different [from that effect]. 23

(15)24 [Objection] That which is capable of being produced is thereby designated as the effect, and that which is capable of engendering it—even though it is different [from this effect]—is the cause. [And furthermore, because] a thing is produced from [some other thing] which belongs to the same continuum and which is itself a producer, therefore it is not the case that a rice sprout grows from a barley seed, for example.25

(16) [Response] You do not assume that a barley seed, or a seed of the Kesara, the Kimsuka*, or any other flower seed produces a rice sprout, because they do not possess the capability to do so, because they are not included in the same continuum [with the rice sprout], and because they are not similar to it. In just the same way, because of the fact that it is different [from the sprout], the grain of rice lacks [the characteristic features of that sprout].26

(17)27 Granted that the sprout and the seed do not exist simultaneously, how then can the seed be different [from the sprout] when there is [no existing sprout] for it to be contrasted with? It follows that [according to your own analysis] the sprout cannot be produced from the seed. This thesis of production from another must then be rejected.28

(18) One may assert that just as we can see that the ascent and descent of the two ends of a scale's balance occur simultaneously, in much the same way the production of an effect and the destruction of its cause [can also be said to occur simultaneously].29 However, even if [the movements of a scale's balance] are simultaneous, in the case [of causality] there is no such simultaneity. The example is consequently inappropriate.

(19)30 [Objection] What is being produced is "turned toward" production and does not yet exist, while what is being destroyed is "turned toward" destruction although it still does exist. [Response] How is this similar to the example of the scale?31 And furthermore, this sort of production in the absence of an agent is entirely illogical.32

(20) If there is a difference between visual cognition and its own simultaneously existing generators—the eye, the perception, and the other coappearing factors, and [visual cognition itself already] exists, then what is the necessity for its [repeated] arising? And if you say that it does not already exist, then the fault entailed by this [thesis] has been previously explained above.33

(21) Let us suppose that the producer is a cause that produces an effect different [from itself]. In this case, are we to believe that it produces something which exists, which does not exist, which both exists and does not exist, or which neither exists nor does not exist? If
[the effect already] exists, then what need is there for a producer? If it does not exist, then what could a producer do to it? 34 And in either of the last two cases the same question arises.35

[Exposition of the Two Truths]

(22) [Object] Everyday experience, which is grounded in immediate perception, is considered to be authoritative, therefore what is to be accomplished here by these demands for reason? Furthermore, any normal person knows that one thing is produced from another. Production from another is taken for granted as a matter of course—what possible necessity is there for reason?36

(23)37 [Response] All entities bear a dual nature, which corresponds to the entity as apprehended through either a correct or an incorrect perception. The object revealed through correct perception is real [in the highest, soteriological sense], while that revealed through incorrect perception is referred to as "the truth of the screen."38

(24) Incorrect perception is classified according to two categories: first, that which derives from an unimpaired faculty; and second, that which derives from a defective faculty. The understanding of those people equipped with defective faculties is considered erroneous in relation to the understanding of one whose faculties are in good order.39

(25)40 Understanding based on apprehension by any of the six unimpaired faculties is true by the standard of everyday experience, while any remaining unrefined concepts (vikalpas), are false according to this same criterion.41

(26) [For example,] the concepts of non-Buddhists (tirthikas*), who are overcome with the sleep of spiritual ignorance—as for instance [their belief in] a self—and other concepts which arise in conjunction with magic, mirages, and so on: [Each of these is grounded in an object which is] nonexistent even from the perspective of everyday experience.42

(27)43 Just as the apprehension of an eye afflicted with ophthalmia does not invalidate any knowledge derived from a healthy eye, so the understanding of those from whom stainless knowledge is concealed does not invalidate that understanding which is itself without stain.44

(28)45 Delusion is a screen (samvrit*) precisely because it obstructs [awareness of the] intrinsic nature46 [of all things], and on its account, what is merely fabricated appears to be real. The sage declared that this is the truth of the screen, and that entity which is [pure] fabrication is a [mere] screen.47

(29)48 Under the influence of ophthalmia one forms a false image of hairs and so forth, while an unimpaired eye spontaneously perceives
what is real. [The distinction between the two truths] must be understood in an analogous fashion. 49

(30) If everyday experience were authoritative, then common people would perceive the reality [expressed in the truth of the highest meaning]. What necessity would there be for those others, the saints? And what would be accomplished by following their path? It is unreasonable for such foolishness to be accepted as entirely authoritative.

(31) Everyday experience is not authoritative in every respect, and therefore it does not contradict the reality [expressed in the truth of the highest meaning]. However, the objects encountered in everyday experience are taken for granted on the consensus of that experience, and any attempt to negate them may be effectively countered by relying on the testimony of just that everyday experience.50

(32) Worldly people merely sow the seed, and yet they claim, "I produced that boy," or they imagine, "That tree was planted [by me]." Therefore production from another is not viable even by the standards of mundane experience.51

(33) The seed is not destroyed at the time when the sprout [is produced], because the sprout is not different from the seed; and yet, because the two are not identical, so it may not be asserted that the seed exists at the time when the sprout [is produced].52

(34) If [an entity exists] in dependence on an intrinsic distinguishing characteristic, then through negation of that [distinguishing characteristic] the entity would be destroyed, and emptiness would be the cause of its destruction. This is not the case, however, because entities do not [intrinsically] exist.53

(35) When the entities [taken for granted in the context of everyday experience] are examined, they are found to have no intrinsic distinguishing characteristic other than the mark of the reality [expressed in the truth of the highest meaning]. Therefore the conventional truth of everyday experience is not to be critically examined.54

(36) "Self-production" and "production from another" [have been demonstrated as] untenable when dealing with the reality [expressed in the truth of the highest meaning], and according to the same reasoning these [two alternatives] are untenable for conventional purposes as well. Through what sort of proof will you defend your [concept of] production?

[The Nature of the Empirical World As Expressed in the Truth of the Highest Meaning]

(37–38) It is no secret that empty entities like reflections and so forth depend on a collocation [of causes and conditions], and that a cognition
tual processes have the intrinsic nature of reified thought, because their objective supports are [themselves] without any objective support. And all reified thought whatsoever has the intrinsic nature of spiritual ignorance, because it grasps at nonentities. So it is said: 'Reified thought itself takes the form of spiritual ignorance' "(sarva * hi bhuddhir alambaniralambanataya* vikalpasvabhava* vikalpa ca sarva eva-vaitiyasvabhava* avastugrahitvat* yad aha* / vikalpa* svayam evayam* avidyarupatam* gatah* iti i). Spiritual ignorance in the form of reified thought is one of several mental afflictions (klesas*) that are associated with the experience of evil, usually subdivided into four principal types: (1) klesamara*: evil experienced through the mental afflictions of clinging, antipathy, pride, attachment to philosophical views, and doubt or incurable cynicism; (2) skandhamara*: evil that comes from the reified concept of a real, substantial self to abide within or among the psychophysical aggregates; (3) mṛtyumara*: the transient nature of all things, experienced most dramatically as death; and (4) devaputramara*: the anthropomorphic personification of evil.

Stage Six
1. MAB, 73: "This stage is [called] 'The Directly Facing' because [the bodhisattva] directly faces the Dharma of a perfect buddha."
2. Conditionality is the same as dependent origination (pratityasamutpada*). "Things are by nature similar to a reflection" (MAB, 73).
3. The reference here to "cessation" (nirroha) is multifaceted. The reader should consult Conze 1962, 113–116 and 236, for a brief discussion of the meaning of this concept in VM and AK.
4. "Discrimination" (Tib. blo; Skt. māt) is here synonymous with "wisdom" (Tib. shes rab; Skt. prajña*). The same simile is used in BCA 9.1 and AS, 87.3.
5. MAB, 77: "This treatise, which bears the fruit of teachings in perfect accord with [the concept of] dependent origination, should be revealed only to one who has through previous meditative cultivation planted the seeds of emptiness in his [psychophysical] continuum—it is not for any others. This is because even though they may hear about emptiness, these others [derive from such teachings] the most meaningless notions stemming from misconceptions about emptiness. On the one hand, those who are relatively unintelligent [simply] abandon the teachings on emptiness and travel on to bad migrations; while on the other hand, [strict rationalists] imagine that emptiness means nonexistence. Relying on this erroneous interpretation, they develop and propagate nihilistic philosophical views."
6. Cf. SBS, fol. 14 (p. 387): prthagjanatve* 'pi nisamya* sanyatam* pramodam antar labhate muhur mukh* / prasadjasravaniputa*- (pramodajasravinayata*) lokanah* tanuvhotphullatanas* ca jayate* // Here and in following citations from SBS, the parentheses contain La Vallée Poussin's reading where it differs from the one adopted by Bendall.
7. Ibid., yat tasya sambuddhadiyo 'sti bijam* tattvopadesasya* ca bhajana* sah* / akhyeyam* asmai paramarthasyatam* tadanvayas* tasya guna* bhavanti //
8. Ibid., fol. 15 (p. 387): silam* samadaya* sadaiva vartate dadati* danam* karunam* ca sevate / titiksate* tattusalam* ca bodhaye prat(pari-?)namayaty* eva jagadvimuktaye //
9. *MAB*, 81: "That is to say, he who desires the stage [called] 'The Joyous.' This [path] has the characteristics that are about to be explained. Now, in order to furnish information on the nature of the right view of things there are [passages] in the suttas *, as for example the words of the *Aryadasabhumika* *(DB, 31): 'Sons of the conquerors, the bodhisattva who has completely fulfilled the path at the fifth bodhisattva stage passes on to the sixth bodhisattva stage by virtue of [his comprehension of] the ten [types of] sameness of all things. What are these ten? (1) All things are the same insofar as they lack any causal sign (*nimitta*); (2) all things are the same insofar as they lack any distinguishing characteristic (*laksana*); (3) likewise they are unoriginated; (4) unborn; (5) isolated; (6) pure from the beginning; (7) devoid of conceptual diffusion; (8) neither accepted nor rejected (cf. La Vallée Poussin 1907, 278 n. 2, about *avayuha* and *niravayuha*); (9) all things are the same insofar as they are like a mirage, a dream, an optical illusion, an echo, the moon in water, a reflection, or a magical creation; and (10) all things are the same assofar as they are exempt from the duality of existence and nonexistence. Comprehending in this way the intrinsic nature of all things, he [develops] great patience (*mahakṣaṇa*) in accord [with his understanding] and so reaches the sixth bodhisattva stage, 'The Directly Facing.' Therefore, the master [Nagarjuna*] determined in this connection that through rational instruction in the sameness of things as regards their non-origin, the other [types of] sameness would easily follow, and so he placed [the following verse] at the beginning of his *Madhyamikasastra* : "Neither from itself, nor from another, nor from both, and certainly not devoid of cause; no things whatsoever are produced at any time or in any place." MS 1.1 is here cited by Candrakīrti* as an introduction to MA 6.8. After presenting the four alternatives, he proceeds to analyze the implications of each one in greater detail.

10. Cf. PSP, 13: *tasmad* *dhi tasya bhuvane na guṇo* *sti kas* *cij jatasya* janma punar eva ca naiva yuktam /

11. *MAB*, 82: "'An [entity] refers to that which is being produced or that which accomplishes the action of production, that is, to the sprout. 'From itself' means from the individual essence of just that [entity] which is being produced. Therefore the sense of the statement is as follows: 'This sprout's own individuality is not produced from its own individuality.' Why is this? Because there is nothing to be gained from an existing sprout's own individuality arising from the same existing individuality, just because [this individuality] has already—previously—come into existence."

12. *Jig rten* 'dir is supplied in *TKP*, 152. In other words, such an assumption would contradict direct perception.

13. *MAB*, 83: "If one asserts that the seed already produced is produced again, [then in this event] what obstacle would there be to its being born all over again? And yet, the continual reproduction [of the seed] must be stopped somehow so that the sprout can be produced." Cf. *TKP*, 152: "Just this seed would be reproduced without interruption until the end of all existence."

14. *MAB*, 83: "It may be supposed that the contributing conditions associated with the production of the sprout—the water, time, and so forth—transform the seed and give birth to the sprout; and this sprout [then] destroys the seed, since it would be contradictory for it to exist simultaneously along with [its] creator. In this way the abovementioned fallacy would be avoided, and
because the seed and the sprout would still be different [from each other], production from self would indeed be possible.... This [argument] also is inadmissible, however.... Because the seed and the sprout are not different, it is unreasonable that the sprout should destroy the [seed], which would be tantamount to its destroying its own individuality."

15. Tib. mar; Skt. vīrya*. La Vallée Poussin 1907–1911, pt. 2, 281 n. 5, calls the term problematic, and suggests that it is some kind of medico-magical potential for healing. "Flavor" (rasa) and "ripening" (vipaka*) are also medical terms.

16. If a cause and its effect are absolutely identical, then on what grounds are we to distinguish between the two of them, and how is it that they appear to be different?

17. MAB, 85: "Since, appearing as the sprout, the individuality of the seed would not be perceived as it is in its essence, so, because of its not being different from the seed, the individuality of the sprout should also not be perceived—just as the seed's individuality [is not perceived]."

18. Cf. SBS, fols. 18–19 (p. 390): loko 'pi caiskyam anayor iti nabhyupaiti* naste* 'pi pasyati* yatah* phalam esa* hetau / tasman* na tavavata idam* na tu lokatas* ca yuktam* svato bhavati bhava* iti prakalpyam //

19. MAB, 86: "For just that [reason], the master [Nagarjuna*] made a distinction [between soteriological and conventional perspectives in this matter] and repudiated production in a general way, stating that it is not from self."

20. MAB, 87: "It may be said that entities do not arise out of themselves: This is certainly the case, and the [first] alternative is reasonable. But you have [also] said: 'How can it [arise] from others?' (6.8a), and that is not reasonable." Candrakirti* devotes more space to this second alternative than to any other, probably because it most closely conforms to common sense and empirical observation (see 6.22). The Prasangika* directs these arguments toward the following Buddhist schools: the Svatantrika-madhayamika*, the Yogacara*, the Sautrantika*, and the Vaibhasika*. With the exception of the Sankhya* (included under the first alternative), the Jain (the third alternative), and the Carvaka* (the fourth alternative), all non-Buddhists are included in this category.

21. Cf. SBS, fols. 19–20 (p. 390) and PSP, 36: anyat pratitya * yadi nama* para 'bhavisyat* yaje[ ]* tarhi bahuluh* sikhino* 'ndhakaruh* / sarvasya janma ca bhavet khalu sarvatas* ca tulyam paratvam akhile janake (janake) 'pi yasmat * //

22. MAB, 89: "That is, because of [its] quality of being other."

23. MAB, 90: "Just as the grain of rice, because it is the producer, is different from the rice sprout, its result, so fire, coal, a barley seed, and so forth—which are not producers [of a rice sprout]—are also [different from the rice sprout]. And just as the rice sprout is produced from the grain of rice which is different [from it], so it would be produced from fire, coal, a barley seed, and so forth. And just as the rice sprout which is different [from it] arises from the grain of rice, so a jag and cloth will also [arise from the rice grain]. This is, however, not perceived, and therefore there is no [production from another]." According to this second alternative, a cause and its effect are absolutely separate or self-sufficient. If this were true, the Prasangika argues, the gap between the two could never be bridged, there could be no possible context for a relationship, and the
distinction between a cause and a non-cause of any given effect would be altogether negated. The flame, for example, is different from darkness: By what criteria are the two not related as cause and effect?

24. Cf. SBS, fol. 20 (p. 390): sakyam * prakartum iti karyam* ato niruktam* sahtam* yad asya janane sa paro 'pi heteh* / janmaikasamtatigataj* janakac* ca yasma[c]* chalyamkurasya* ca tatha* [pi na kodravadeh*] // La Vallée Poussin has janakac ca tasmāc ca chālyamkurasya na tatha* // and the following note. "Le manuscrit porte . . . yasma[ ] chalyamkurasya ca.—On peut lire: na tatha jananam yavadeh* ."

25. MAB, 91: "The nature [of the relationship between] cause and effect rests upon a particular mode of 'otherness,' and not on otherness in general." The opponent here is attempting, through the use of his notion of a continuum, to reestablish the normal context of relationship that must exist between two things he has previously defined as completely separate. The continuum would seem to make it possible for cause and effect to be simultaneously different and yet not different.

26. The flower seeds are by definition different from the rice sprout simply because they do not possess its characteristic qualities; and if the grain of rice is designated as 'other' than the rice sprout, then it must be so designated for the same reason.

27. Cf. ibid.: asty amkuras* ca na hi bijasamanakalo* (na samanakalo*) bijam* kutah* paratayastu* vina* paratvam / jannamkurasya* na hi sidhyati tena bijat samtyajyatham* parata udhhavatit* pakshah* //

28. MAB, 92–93: "One can see that [two individuals named] Maitreya and Upagupta (cf. n. 89, below) are interdependent and different [from each other] only because they exist simultaneously, but the seed and its sprout are not such that they can be imagined as simultaneously [existent], since until the seed has been altered the sprout does not exist. When, in this way, the seed and the sprout do not exist simultaneously, then the seed can possess no [quality of] 'otherness' with respect to the sprout. And if this [quality of] otherness is not present, then it is false to say that the sprout is produced from another."

29. MAB, 94: "The above claim that the seed and the sprout do not exist simultaneously may be challenged as unreasonable, as follows: Just as the ascent and descent of [the two ends of] a scale's balance occur simultaneously, so it is at the moment when a seed is being destroyed and the sprout being produced. This comes about in such a way that at exactly the moment when the seed is destroyed at precisely that moment—simultaneously—the sprout is produced."

30. Cf. PSP, 545: jannomukham* na sad idam* yadi jayamanam* nasonmukham* sad api nama* niruddhyanamam* / istam* tada* katham idam tulaya samanam* kartra* vina* janir iyam* na ca yuktarupa* //

31. Candrakirti* provides the following explanation (MAB, 95): "In this case, 'what is being produced' inclines in the direction of production [and is not yet actually produced], therefore it belongs to the future; while 'what is being destroyed' inclines in the direction of destruction [and is not yet actually destroyed], and so it belongs to the present. In this way, that which does not exist because it is not yet produced is produced; and that which does exist because it is already present is destroyed. Given this state of affairs, what possible reason-
balance is there to the circumstances surrounding the operation of the scale? The two ends of the scale's balance are actually present, and therefore the ascending and descending movements can [logically be said to] occur simultaneously; however, the seed belongs to the present and the sprout to the future, and on this account [one cannot logically assert that] they exist simultaneously. The [problem with the seed and the sprout] is therefore not in any way analogous to the example of the scale. And if our opponent should happen to believe that even though two things do not in fact exist simultaneously, still their actions can take place simultaneously—then [we must object]: This also is untenable, for it cannot be admitted that the actions of things are independent of the things themselves."

32. MAB, 96: "The agent (kartr *) of the impending action of being produced, that is to say, the sprout, belongs to the future, and so does not [yet] exist. Granted that [the sprout] does not exist, there is then no basis (asraya*) for its action, and that [action], does not exist [either]. And since no [action] exists, how can it be simultaneous with the destruction [of the seed]? On this account it is illogical [to assume] that the two actions [of production and destruction] are simultaneous. As [Nagarjuna*] has written (MS 7.17): 'If any unproduced entity whatsoever existed anywhere, then it would be produced, [but] why would an entity be produced when it is nonexistent?' The meaning of this [verse] is as follows: If any entity, as, for example, a sprout, were to exist unproduced prior to production, then it would [eventually] be produced. However, prior to production nothing whatsoever or wheresoever can be established as existent, because it is unproduced. Therefore, prior to being produced, the entity that furnishes the basis for the action of production does not exist, and without this [basis], what will be produced?" The argument is summarized (CS 1.18): "Because the sprout arises neither from a destroyed seed nor from an undestroyed seed, you declare that all production is like the manifestation of a magical illusion."

33. MAB, 97: "[An opponent might propose the following:] The seed and the sprout do not exist simultaneously. Consequently there is no 'otherness' (paratva), and production is illogical [under such circumstances] (according to the terms of the second alternative). However, when there is simultaneity, then in that event, because 'otherness' would be present, production also would be feasible. As for example the eye and form, and so on, along with feeling (vedana*) and the other coappearing [factors, are causes which] act to produce the simultaneous [and related effect of] visual cognition." (Visual perception is produced from a simultaneously existing array of causal factors.) The response to this claim is (MAB, 98): "If you assert that the eye and so on and perception (samjna*), etc., exist simultaneously [along with visual cognition] and serve as the conditions for that visual cognition, then they most certainly are 'other' with respect to the [existing visual cognition]. However, because there is absolutely no need for the arising of that which [already] exists, so there would be no production; and if you want to avoid the negation of production by asserting that [visual cognition] does not exist, then in that case the eye and so forth would not be different from a nonexistent visual cognition. The fallacy entailed in this [thesis] has already been explained. Therefore, if you insist on production from another, then even when 'otherness' is possible, production is impossible, and
when production is impossible, duality [between cause and effect] is impossible. And if production is possible, then there is no 'otherness,' and here again duality is impossible. Consequently, [one must admit that] appearances in no way represent the existence of external objects and are empty of any external object: [And where appearances] have disappeared, only words remain."

34. Cf. MS 20.21–22: "What cause produces an effect that is intrinsically existent? And what cause produces an effect that is intrinsically nonexistent? The quality of being a cause is not present in that which is not producing, and when the quality of being a cause is not present, what is the effect attributed to?" These two alternatives have already been dealt with in the preceding verses.

35. MAB, 100: "The simultaneous possession of [two] essences, one entailing existence and one nonexistence, is simply not possible in a single [entity]; said therefore an entity in possession of this intrinsic nature does not exist. And because it does not exist, what [influence] can producing causes exert over it?" The argument against simultaneous possession of neither existence nor nonexistence is analogous to the one just presented. A single entity that is neither existent nor nonexistent at one and the same moment is not only never perceived, but would by nature be self-contradictory. All four alternatives in the tetralamna have now been presented and discussed in some detail with regard to causation, and Candrakirti * takes up the system of the two truths.

36. MAB, 101: "Since it is grounded simply in individual perception of all [things], everyday experience is endowed with tremendous power. And it is evident [on this basis] that one entity is produced from another. Appeal to reason is appropriate only in the case of that which is not directly perceived, but it is inappropriate where direct perception is involved. Therefore, even in lieu of any adequate [inferential support], it must still be true that entities are produced from other [entities]." Also cf. TKP, 172–173: "There are those who have imperfectly understood the sense of scriptures [dealing with emptiness], who have planted and matured on the beginningless wheel of samsara* the potentialities for apprehension of entities as [intrinsically] existent. They have become strongly attached to the [supposed] existence of these entities, and for a long time have had no spiritual friend. As a result of this deprivation they have also been deprived of repeated teaching on the absence of intrinsic being, and have become entrapped in misguided opinions that are actually invalidated by everyday experience. Without explaining the various ways in which everyday experience comes to be, it is impossible to reverse these misguided opinions. Therefore it is necessary to isolate the specific *yud* (object' or 'meaning') that must be rejected, through stating that 'such and such *yud* is invalidated by everyday experience;' and the specific *yud* that is not to be rejected, through stating that 'such and such an *yud* is not invalidated by everyday experience.'"

37. Cf. BC4, 174: *samayagmsadarsanalahbhavam* *rapadvayam* *bibhrati sarvabhavah* / *samayagdsam* *yo visayah* *sa taivam* *mrsadrsam* *samarisayam* *uktam* ili

38. MAB, 102–103: "The blessed buddhas, who understand perfectly the intrinsic nature of the two truths, taught of the two categories of intrinsic nature possessed by all concepts and all material things . . . as follows: [the intrinsic nature of] the screened (*samvrita*), and [that of] the highest meaning (*paramartha*)."
The highest meaning is that nature [of all things] revealed through being the specific object of the wisdom that entails accurate perception. However, [this highest meaning] is in no way established through any intrinsic quality of self. This is one nature of all things. The other is the intrinsic nature obtained on the strength of false perceptions made by common people in whom the eye of intelligence has been completely covered by the cataract of spiritual ignorance. This intrinsic nature is as well not established in itself, but is simply the object [revealed] through the perception of naive people. In this way all things bear a dual intrinsic nature."

39. Both of these are, however, illusionary from the perspective of the truth of the highest meaning.

40. BCA, 171: vinopaghatena * yad indriyanam* sannam* api grahyam* avaiti lokah* / satyam* hi tal lokata evam* kṣamam* vikalpitam* lokata eva mithya* //

41. Defects of the five senses can be either internal or external. Internal defects are constituted by disease or by any malfunction of the sense organs. External defects are magical or optical illusions of any sort, reflections, echoes, and so forth. Defects of the sixth faculty (mind) come about not only by false cognition grounded in any of the above problems, but also by faulty reasoning or misconceptions that may or may not be bound up with particular philosophical views. Dreams fall into this category.

42. MAB, 105–106: "These non-Buddhist [philosophers] want to penetrate to Reality, they want to ascend ever upward toward perfection in determining accurately and without confusion matters concerning production and destruction—things taken for granted even by impure people like cowherds and women. Consequently, they are like someone climbing a tree, first letting go of one branch and then clinging to another, until they take a mighty fall into the abyss of erroneous philosophical views. Then, because they are deprived of perception of the two truths, they will not obtain the result [of liberation, for which they strive]. Those things conceptualized by them [as for instance] the three qualities (gunaś) [of the Saṁkhyā system], and so on, are nonexistent even within the context of the screened [truth] of everyday experience."

43. Cf. BCA, 178: na badhate* jnanam* atāimiranam* yathopalabdham* tīmirekananam* / tathāmala-jnanatārasktanam* dhiyasti* badha* na dhiyō 'malayāh //

44. MAB, 106: "Exposition of the refutation of production from another is not [accomplished] by confining oneself to the perspective of everyday experience. How is it [accomplished] then? By accepting the vision of the Buddhist saint." Cf. the discussion of incommensurability in part 1, §5.1. The perception of emptiness characteristic of stainless knowledge (anavajñāna) does not contradict everyday experience, but only the various forms of conscious (philosophically contrived) and unconscious (innately occurring) reified concepts imputed over and above the consensus of everyday practice. These ideas are referred to as "conceptual diffusion" (prapañca).

45. BCA, 171: mohah* svabhavavaranad* dhi samvritih* satyam* taya* khyati* yad eva kṛitrinam* / jagada* tat samvritiṣatyanam* ity asau maniḥ* padarthanam* kṛitakam* ca samvritim* //

46. Here svabhava* is used as a synonym for svayyata*.

47. MAB, 107–109: 'Here 'delusion' is that which causes sentient beings to become muddled in the view of entities as they are [in the full context of every-
day experience, and this] spiritual ignorance is [called] a 'screen' (*samvrti *) because, in imputing to entities the existence of an individual essence which does not exist, it is characterized by its being an obstruction to awareness of [their] intrinsic nature (i.e., emptiness). The [entity so perceived] appears to be real on account of this screen, and where there is no intrinsic being, the appearance of intrinsic being is manifest to common people. [This entity] is real [only] within the context of the screen, which is worldly error; it is the fabrication which constitutes dependent origination. Some [of the things] which have originated dependently, like reflections, echoes, and so on, appear unreal even to spiritually ignorant people. However, there are others—for example, [the colors] blue and so forth, form, mind, feeling, etc.—that appear to be real. Their intrinsic nature (emptiness) does not appear in any manner to the spiritually ignorant. Therefore, this [emptiness], along with whatever appears as unreal even within the context of the screen, is not [called] the truth of the screen. The [balance of] what is perceived to exist under the influence of the spiritual ignorance of afflicted beings is designated the truth of the screen. For the sravakas*, the pratyekabuddhas, and the bodhisattvas who are free from the spiritual ignorance of afflicted beings, [conventionally real] composite things are seen to have the same quality of existence as reflections and the like. These things have the intrinsic nature of a fabrication; they are perceived as unreal because [the sravakas, pratyekabuddhas, and bodhisattvas] are without any inflated concepts of 'truth' (*satyabhimanam*). That which is deceptive for naive people (reified concepts of 'self,' 'intrinsic being,' etc.), as well as other things like magical illusions and so forth, are mere screen [still included in the "screen" of everyday life] because they [too] are dependently originated. Accordingly, the blessed one has spoken about the truth of the screen, and the mere screen. That which is of the highest meaning for common people is a mere screen for the Buddhist saints dwelling in the realm of appearances. Emptiness, the intrinsic nature of that screen, is of the highest meaning for them. The highest meaning for buddhas is just that intrinsic nature [of entities] (emptiness). And although it is the truth of the highest meaning, because it is not deceptive they must each come to know it through personal experience (de yang bsla ba med pa nyid kyis don dam pa’i bden pa yin la / de ni de rams kyi so sor rang gis rig par bya ba yin no /). Because the truth of the screen is deceptive, it is not [called] the truth of the highest meaning. Having taught about the truth of the screen, the author (Candrakirti*) desires to teach the truth of the highest meaning. However, because it is inexpressible and not within the realm governed by [dualistic] knowledge, so it is impossible to teach of it as though it were an [objectively present] fact (dogos su bstan par mi nas pa). Therefore he will provide an example for those who want to learn, so that [they may] clarify its intrinsic nature through their own experience* (rang gis myong ba nyid du’i rang bzhin gsal bar bya ba’i phyir dpe bshad pa /).

48. Cf. BCA, 176: vikalpitam* yat timiraprabhavat* kesadirupam* vitatham* tad eva / yenatmana* pasyati* suddhadrstis* tat tatvam* ity evam ibhag* avehi (avaithi) //

49. MAB, 111 (cited from the Satyadvayavatara[* ?]): “How is it that [this truth] cannot be verbalized as ‘the truth of the highest meaning?’ All things are screened and deceptive… Thus the truth of the highest meaning cannot be taught. Why is this? Because teacher, teaching, and listener are unborn in the
truth of the highest meaning, and unborn things cannot be described by unborn things." Under the influence of spiritual ignorance and clinging even the questions one asks turn back on themselves in a spiral of reified thought and confusion. The movement to a radically different form of life must be made by gradually learning to abandon the old questions and the entire way of thinking that endowed them with significance.

50. Candrakīrti* is concerned here with what Tsong kha pa has called "the most profound and subtle matter within the Madhyamika* system" (TKP, 139)—the concept of causal efficacy as the sole criterion for conventional validity. Essentially, the point here is that soteriological and conventional truths do not interfere with each other because they are set in a hierarchical structure (as opposed to a mutually exclusive relationship). They are incommensurable, not contradictory, because they deal with different realms of experience and entirely different needs. Causal efficacy is sufficient evidence of conventional reality despite the circumstance that, from a "higher" perspective, both cause and effect are interrelated in such a way that neither exists in and of itself. According to the Madhyamika, any attempt to justify everyday experience through something other than consensus leads to spiritual and intellectual problems.

51. This intuition of a direct relationship between cause and effect is the basis of reified concepts of "necessary connection" and the like.

52. *MAB, 116: "The actual meaning here is this: If both the seed and the sprout did possess some intrinsic being, then they would have to be either identical or different. But when neither one of them has any intrinsic being, then as with the seed and the sprout apprehended in a dream—how can there be [any question of] identity or otherwise?" Cf. MS 18.10: "That which exists in dependence on [something else] is to that extent not identical with that thing nor different from it; on this account there is no annihilation and no permanence."

53. *MAB, 117: "If an intrinsic distinguishing characteristic of things [like] form, feeling, and so forth—an individual essence or intrinsic being—was produced by causes and conditions, then when the yogi perceived things as empty of any intrinsic being and [so] understood that all things are without intrinsic being, emptiness would certainly be understood through negation of this intrinsic being which had been produced. Emptiness would then be the cause of negation of this intrinsic being just as surely as a hammer is the cause of the destruction of a jug." In this context, an "intrinsic distinguishing characteristic" (svalaksana*) is a logical mark posited in order to define the single quality that endows an entity with intrinsically valid existence: this would be the individual essence of intrinsic being of the entity as defined by the Madhyamika's* opponent. The Madhyamika responds that things are without any intrinsic being whatsoever, and consequently there is for him no question of the production or destruction of such a being, or of any logical mark indicating its presence. The concept of existence through an intrinsically distinguishing characteristic (svalaksanasiddha*) is grounded in the writings of Vasubandhu as interpreted by the two famous Yogacara* epistemologists Dinnaga* and Dharmakīrti*. It is a concept that had far-reaching and subtle implications for later Madhyamika developments in India and Tibet. See Kochumuttom 1982, 25–26, for a brief discussion of the concept with reference to the relevant classical sources.
54. Candrakīrti's commentary provides the following illustration: Suppose that through the proper combination of wood, strings, and workmanship a lute is built. When a wise man listens to the sound of this lute and examines what he hears he will discover that it actually comes from nowhere and goes nowhere—the tone is simply the end result of a skillful assemblage of wood and strings. In the same way, when a yogi examines any composite thing produced from causes and conditions, he finds there only emptiness. "The distinguishing characteristic of things is of the essence of space" (MAB, 122). When an entity accepted as existent on the basis of conventional truth is closely examined, one discovers that the only actual "mark" or characteristic feature of this entity is its emptiness. There is no "real, discrete object" to be found, despite the fact that in everyday experience the entity is produced and destroyed. Nevertheless, the truth of the screen which governs the world is not to be absolutely discredited: "Just as a foreigner cannot be made to understand through any language other [than his own], so the world cannot be made to understand without the use of a conventional language" (CS 8.19). The Tibetan here is very idiomatic, and our English rendering strays far from any so-called literal translation. One could say, "Because when entities are examined no abode is found other than the entity characterized by the reality [expressed in the truth of the highest meaning], therefore the conventional truth of the world is not to be critically examined." The point is that rational analysis of conventional truths will yield no absolute, objective truth. Cf. MA 6.158–159 and notes 104, 123, 124 and 191, below.

55. MAB, 123–124: "No entity whatsoever remains exempt from [the relations of] cause and effect. Once he understands how even reflections without any intrinsic being (svabhava*) also adhere to causal relations, then what intelligent person would determine that form, feeling, and so on are endowed with intrinsic being? One need only understand them as they exist in the context of their causal relationships, and it follows that no [entity] is produced through its intrinsic nature, despite its being apprehended as existent."

56. Cf. MS 21.14: "When one accepts the [intrinsic] existence of the entity, then he must consequently [accept] either the philosophical view of absolutism or of nihilism, because an [intradically existent] entity must be either permanent or impermanent." Also ibid., 17.31–33: "Just as the magician creates through his magical power a magical creature, and that magical creature; itself created, goes on to create another magical creature; so the agent of any action (karma*) is like the [first] magical creature, and the action (karma) taken [by that agent] is like the second magical creature created by the [first]. The various mental afflictions, action, the body, the agent of action, and the results of that action are like visions of an imaginary fairyland, like mirages or dreams."

57. A given action exists only as an effect dependent on a particular collocation of causes and conditions, and as a contributing factor toward the production of its own related effect(s). The efficacy of this action is so determined only within the context of everyday experience, where it can be construed as taking its proper place in the network of cause and effect that makes up the relations governed by conventional truth. The component parts of the network, which are necessarily perceived in the form of causes and effects, are devoid of intrin-
It may be taken for granted that the modern world, in the great and dominating forms it has assumed since the eighteenth century, represents a unique type of culture… One of the most important characteristics of this new world is the development of an unreservedly historical view of human affairs.

The modern idea of history is a dynamic principle for attaining a comprehensive view of everything human. It grew originally out of the Enlightenment and its criticism of political and social institutions, out of the Reformation and its battle against Catholic tradition, and out of the renewal of Christian and classical philology. It was given added depth by the great world views of the period of German idealism, especially those views relating to the history of evolution. Eventually it grew from isolated monographs into an independent discipline which, in connection with the object of its study, has developed into a unique mode of thought and research that has authenticated itself with most brilliant results. The more this idea of history has been emancipated from extraneous metaphysical prejudices and gained recognition as a way of thinking independent of the formulation of concepts that takes place in the natural sciences, the more it has demonstrated that it is the matrix out of which all world views take shape.

This does not mean that the modern idea of history merely puts greater emphasis on ways of looking at things that were also employed earlier. It is something new in principle, a consequence of an expanding of men’s horizons both backward into the past and laterally across the entire breadth of the present. As a result, the original naïve certainty held by every existing type of culture and value system regarding the obviousness of its own validity has been shaken. Each culture, each value system, is treated as one object of historical investigation among others, and through comparison between such objects it has now become possible, for the first time, to arrive at criteria of value. Thus the modern idea of history marks the end of dogmatic conceptualization which hypostatizes naïve claims to validity with a few comparatively simple notions as revelations or truths of natural reason. The modern idea of history, that is to say, is in principle a new mode of thought that gains its orientation from history itself.

The understanding of history that prevailed in antiquity was the history of single states. It operated with the rudiments of historical criticism, with excellent but fragmentary results in terms of analogical and psychological comprehension, and with political and patriotic criteria. The idea of history in Catholic culture was the history of mankind. It proceeded, however, not only with purely dogmatic criteria used to absolutize the classical culture of Catholicism but also with a commitment to subordinate all important matters to purely dogmatic postulates. Thus it drew everything together under one all-embracing critique that involved an almost total absence of skill in, or inclination toward, sympathetic understanding. In both cases the idea of history was an appendix or adjunct to the dominant thought of the culture. It conformed to the national, rational, or theological norms of thought.

In contrast to these two ways of thinking, the modern idea of history, which depends on critical source-analysis and on conclusions derived from psychological analogy, is the history of the development of peoples, spheres of culture, and cultural components. It dissolves all dogmas in the flow of events and tries sympathetically to do justice to all phenomena, first measuring them by their own criteria and then combining them into an overall picture of the continuous and mutually conditioning factors in all individual phenomena that shape the unfolding development of mankind. This overall picture, steadily pursued despite the incompleteness and uncertainty of
our knowledge, is today, with all its different stages of development, the presupposition of every judgment concerning the norms and ideals of mankind. This overall picture, steadily pursued despite the incompleteness and uncertainty of our knowledge, is today, with all its different stages of development, the presupposition of every judgment concerning the norms and ideals of mankind. For this reason the modern idea of history is no longer merely one aspect of a way of looking at things or a partial satisfaction of the impetus to knowledge. It is, rather, the foundation of all thinking concerning values and norms. It is the medium for the self-reflection of the species about its nature, origins, and hopes.

It is easy to see how Christianity is affected by this mode of thought which is entirely free as regards the outcome of specific investigations and yet bound to definite methodological presuppositions. Christianity, like all great religious movements, has from the outset possessed a naïve certainty as to its normative truth. Apologetic reflections have fortified this confidence since the earliest times by contrasting Christianity with everything non-Christian as a whole. In this way the latter became more and more a homogeneous mass of human error while the former became more and more a divinely ordained institution, recognizable as such on the basis of external and internal miracle. Ecclesiastical philosophy and theology then perfected the concept of the church. Founded as an absolute miracle and authenticating itself in the miracles of conversion and the sacraments, the church was conceived as a supernatural institution that stands within history but does not derive from history. Ordinary history with its merely human and humanly conditioned truths is, according to this view, the sphere of sin and error. Only history as written by the church gives truth that is absolutely certain, though not absolutely exhaustive, because it works with powers that derive not from history but directly from God.

The modern idea of history, however, has had a radically dissolving effect on this apologetic structure of thought. Opposition to the rationalistic watering-down of Christianity, often thought of as a kind of restoration of church-oriented theology, led to a revival of the notion of the historical uniqueness of Christianity. But this in turn simply led to the incorporation of Christianity as one individual phenomenon into the current of the other great individual phenomena that history has brought forth, even though the Christian phenomenon was not to be declared false on the basis of extraneous normative concepts. In particular, it led to the incorporating of Christianity into the context of the history of religions. The apologetic wall of division, the wall of external and internal miracle, has slowly been broken down by this idea of history, for no matter what one may otherwise think about miracles, it is impossible for historical thought to believe the Christian miracles but deny the non-Christian. Again, however frequently one may discern something supernatural in the ethical power of the inner life, no means exist by which to construe the Christian’s elevation above sensuality as supernatural while interpreting that of Plato or Epictetus as natural. With this, however, there no longer exists any means by which one may isolate Christianity from the rest of history and then, on the basis of this isolation and its formal signs, define it as an absolute norm. This impossibility is made even more acute by the fact that Christianity, as far as its content is concerned, presents itself as a mere fragment of divine truth and thus knows that it can bring forth only humanly incomplete results.

Viewed positively, however, every step that establishes connections between early Christian history and pre- or extra-Christian phenomena, every discovery of similarity between Christianity and other objects of investigation as a result of critical research into sources and traditions, every application of contemporary psychological methods of observation to religion and to the development of religious concepts, signifies a victory in the illumination of this magnificent historical phenomenon. That is what justifies a skeptical outlook that opposes the
various means by which Christianity has been isolated from other human history—means that
have been used, and are used even today in apologetic theology, to demonstrate the normative
truth of Christianity solely out of its own resources without a single glance at other history.

Once the modern idea of history made it impossible to prove the normative value of
Christian thought by means the church had traditionally used, attempts were made to reach the
goal by yet another path. Its starting point was the concept of a total history of mankind, with
history taken as a dynamic principle in its own right. The history of mankind was viewed
causally and teleologically as a single whole. Within this whole the ideal of religious truth was
thought of as moving forward in gradual stages, and at once definite point, namely in the
historical phenomenon of Christianity, it was deemed to have reached absolute form, i.e., the
complete and exhaustive realization of its principle.

This approach remained true to the Enlightenment and its incorporating of Christianity
into the religions of the world. It also remained true to the historicocritical way of viewing
Christianity. Because the totality of history in general and the history of religion in particular
were comprehended by an all-embracing intuition and were brilliantly interpreted, it was
expected that this approach would overcome the tension between the multiplicity of history and
is relative, individual forms. It was to do so by means of the concept of a universal principle that
bore within itself the law of its movement from lower, obscure, and embryonic beginnings to
complete, clear, and conscious maturity—a universal principle represented as a normative power
actualizing itself by degrees in the course of history. In this way Christianity was held up as the
actualization of the principle of religion, the absolute religion in antithesis to mediated and veiled
expressions of this principle. There exists, in reality, only one religion, namely, the principle or
essence of religion, and this principle of religion, this essence of religion, is latent in all historical
religions as their ground and goal. In Christianity this universally latent essence, everywhere
else limited by its media, has appeared in untrammelled and exhaustive perfection. If Christianity
is thus identical with this principle of religion that is elsewhere implicit and that comes to
complete explication only in Christianity, then the Christian religion is of course normative
religious truth. Thus the older apologetic speculation, which opposed history, has been replaced
by a new one that is on the side of history. Thus too, in fact, the concept of a principle of
Christianity that is at the same time the realization of the principle of religion as such has
become the foundation of the modern apologetic.

After Lessing’s, Kant’s, and Herder’s philosophies of history had paved the way for this
view, two leaders of German idealism who are at the same time the fathers of the new historicocritical and yet religion-affirming theology (Schleiermacher and Hegel) took this conceptual
framework and in different but largely similar ways made it in to the very foundation of
theology. Schleiermacher put more emphasis on the historically existent, the concrete particular
within this perspective; Hegel had a clearer and firmer grasp of the overall structure of history
because of his sure foundation in the concept of evolution, and he has therefore exercised the
greater influence in the shaping of theology. The correlated ideas of the essence of religion, the
development of this essence in the history of religion, and Christianity as the absolute religion,
have arisen out of this background to become the apologetic foundation of the so-called modern
or liberal theology. This theology, despite the different nuances it has added, presupposes this
foundation at every point, and even the more supernaturally tinged systems have borrowed
heavily from it. It is also the source of attempts to comprehend the history of Christianity in
such a way as to show that critical historical research proves the person of Jesus to be the bearer
of, and point of breakthrough for, the absolute religion. The absolute principle realized in and
through him then serves as the idea or dynamic principle of Christianity, the further historical development of which is construed and evaluated on the basis of this one integral concept.

It is against this background that the meaning of the problem posed in the present inquiry is to be understood.

The term “absoluteness” derives from the modern evolutionary apologetic, and has a precise meaning only under its presuppositions. It has this precise meaning to the extent that it includes the horizons of the history of religion generally, the acknowledgment of all non-Christian religions as relative truths, and the interpretation of Christianity in relation to these relative truths as the absolute and completed form of religion. The term, its presuppositions, and its content are thus modern academic concepts through and through, conditioned by a leveling process in which all human events are drawn into the modern understanding of history.

Nevertheless, the evolutionary apologetic is closely related, in its motive and goal, to the apologetic of supernatural, orthodox theology. This point is to be stressed emphatically, and in this connection the following critical reflections, based on a non-speculative understanding of history, should be mentioned. In its contemporary form the orthodox, supernatural apologetic does take the modern idea of history into account in that it subordinates the external miracle to inner and in that the only essential function it attributes to inner miracle is that of assuring absolute certainty of salvation. Those features of external miracle that are not absolutely necessary to the assertion and confirmation of the inner are sacrificed to the modern understanding of history. Both schools strive to establish the normative value of Christian thought. Indeed, endeavors of this kind are a matter of course for theology inasmuch as this discipline is in any reckoning the pursuit of normative religious knowledge and not merely an interest in the history of religion in general. Yet both the evolutionary and the orthodox schools of thought desire to attain this normative value by placing Christianity, as a matter of principle, in a unique position. They are not content with a de facto supremacy and ultimacy but want to make it into the sole truth to which everything else stands opposed in accordance with the requirements of theory. This attribution of a unique position to Christianity on the basis of a theoretical demand with a universal orientation is characteristic of both. What must emerge by necessity from universal, cosmic relationships as the content of divine truth is by nature, for both schools, not merely the highest and ultimate truth for man as he observes life around him, but the one and therefore the only truth about God and the world, about time and eternity. The two conceptions differ only in the means by which the implications of this idea are worked out.

The orthodox, supernatural apologetic secures a unique position for Christianity by reflections relating to the form in which religious truths arise. According to this way of thinking, man is made for full knowledge of God as shown by the very structures of creation which flows forth from the love of God and culminates in man. Cut off from the light of knowledge by the darkness of sin, man nevertheless retains a basic and intrinsic impulse toward God and the hope that someday there will be a manifestation of the fullness of divine truth. Since, however, everything human remains subjective, fallible, sinful, and powerless, what is required is a manifestation that will proceed from superhuman divine powers, a manifestation that will be recognized as divine precisely because it transcends and nullifies all likeness to human events. A manifestation is needed that will prove itself divine in its substantive effects by openly cleaving through the ordinary laws of the inner life of man. Miracle in the realm of nature, as attested in the accounts of the origin of Christianity, and the psychological miracle of conversion, which continues to the present day, guarantee this unique Christian causality. They confirm the reality
of what all religious thought demands, namely, the manifestation of religious truth and of a
power for life that in principle lies beyond all human fallibility and impotence.

With this, the orthodox, supernatural apologetic is content. Its demand for
“absoluteness” is satisfied when Christianity has been traced to an immediate divine causality,
necessarily postulated by the religious man and present in his experience of this reality. It is
satisfied when Christianity has been defined in principle as something that stands in opposition
to everything human and historical, in opposition to all merely relative truths and powers.
Absoluteness here consists of miracle. It is the absoluteness of a Christian Sunday causality in
antithesis to the relativity and mediacy of a non-Christian weekday causality. The principle of
supernaturalism is decisive. In relation to the religious content of the manifestation itself, on the
other hand, this theology is deeply permeated by two ideas: first, that up to now we have
received only a down payment and pledge of the truth; second, that anxiety, guilt, and sin have
been overcome but that the divine light with its perfect clarity has sent only one of its rays into
the midst of a vast, profound darkness. There is no mention of a religious knowledge that
exhausts its underlying principle but only of a kind of religious knowledge that is set apart from
everything else that poses as religion by features externally similar to those of the other religions.
The decisive factor is a power attested in direct divine communication and therefore secure
against admixture with all merely human wisdom. What matters is the power that draws the soul
up into an otherwise inaccessible higher realm, even though this realm remains largely hidden
from our eyes. For this reason the expression “absoluteness of Christianity” was not coined by
holders of this view. They fashioned only the theory of exclusively supernatural revelation, in
contrast to which everything outside Christianity stands as the work not of God but of man.
What this apologetic understands by the term “absoluteness” is actually exclusive
supernaturalism.

The contrast with the evolutionary apologetic, however, lies precisely at this point. This
apologetic has learned to abstain from impracticable attempts to secure for Christianity a favored
position based on form. It seeks, therefore, by reference to content and essence to demonstrate
that the idea of Christianity is to be recognized, in accordance with the requirements of theory, as
the realization of the idea of religion itself. Here “human” and “divine” are not antithetical
terms. Instead, everything is human and divine at the same time. Modern thought, it is held, has
proved irrefutably the thoroughgoing continuity of the causal process and has made the dogmatic
supernaturalism of the church impossible. It can, however, regard this causal context as a form
for the realization of the “idea,” here thought of as unfolding its inner life-content in gradual
movement through the structures of causality. The idea, therefore, is regarded as containing
within itself the movement of the divine life as a causal, teleological, and unitary life-process.
Accordingly, this idea is present at every point in the universe, and it can be reconstructed from
any given point. For finite consciousness, however, it becomes the consciously held idea of God
or the idea of religion. This idea must first, therefore, gradually reveal its content and essence
within the total meaning and context of human reality and in conjunction with man’s unfolding
of the depths of his own consciousness. But the idea must also attain the perfect goal, the
absolute principle, in which all that was previously revealed as circumscribed, in process, and
preliminary finds its ultimate conclusion.

All religion is, therefore, truth from God, each religion corresponding to some stage in a
universal process of spiritual development. But there must also be a highest, ultimate stage that
demonstrates itself to be so through its fulfillment of the evolutionary law intrinsic to the
universal principle that is the basis of all things. What discloses the holy and abiding round of
all inner life to the faithful is not an apologetic of miracle and conversion but reflective meditation on the eternal content of Christian thought. The man of faith sees this inner principle evolving everywhere according to strict laws that follow from the nature of divine activity. On the basis of these laws of evolutionary development, he recognizes in devout admiration the inevitable preeminence of the summit on which he stands. From this summit he commands a view over all the divine powers of earthly history and reverently foresees the ultimate completion of all the purposes and powers at work in this history. From this perspective, tangled reality becomes crystal clear and what seemed to be chaos is transformed into a wondrous realm of transparently obvious consequences. A kind of religious geology teaches such a man to understand all lands and provinces in this realm as preliminary stages to the summit they all help to form, the summit that exists not in isolation from all else but simply as the crown of the whole. Of course this is not absolute knowledge of God—only God himself possesses that—but it is the absolute realization of all human knowledge of God, a realization that exhausts its principle and its substantive goal. This means it is the knowledge of God that man, as he proceeds from and returns to God, can understand as the finite spirit which, though rooted in infinity, consumes and purifies its finitude in devotion.

Only in this context does the expression ‘absoluteness’ possess its full meaning. It signifies the perfect self-comprehension of the idea that strives for complete clarity, the self-realization of God in the human consciousness. It is the philosophical substitute for the dogmatic supernaturalism of the church.

Both the orthodox and the evolutionary theories thus take it for granted that the proof of normative religious truth can be provided only by the doctrine of a theoretically necessary and uniquely confirmed development of the religious powers of mankind. This is why these theories are so powerful and appealing. The problem of the normative, seen in relation to the multiplicity of history, appears most certainly resolved if the normative is something more than what we are able to recognize as normative by ourselves, if it is the sole and eternal truth, recognizable as such on the basis of a systematically worked-out concept. However embarrassed we feel in face of the centuries-old but increasingly inadequate, improbable, and confused artifices of the supernatural apologetic in areas of research relating to the Bible and church history, we nevertheless find ourselves strongly attracted time and again by its religious thought. Yet most people are only alienated by a path to knowledge that, when concretely applied, cannot avoid defects of this kind.

Where alienation from this path occurs, however, the only alternative that appears to remain is that of the evolutionary apologetic. It too continually attracts religious persons by the depth and breadth of its perspective, by the mighty power of its all-embracing vision, by the pure energy that consumes all husks and forms in the flame of thought. It too allures religious people by its staunch faith in the meaning and coherence of the divine activity in the world, its faith which, cutting through all distractions and confusions, unerringly points like a compass to the one, eternal, divine idea. However difficult it may be for this apologetic to transform the totality of earthly affairs into a translucent crystal through which the powers of the idea may radiate with formative effect, nevertheless, if the other approach has been closed, and if a way is expected to exist, then this appears to be the only way. If the isolation of Christianity from other historical phenomena as an absolute, uniquely grounded truth and the tracing of this uniqueness to a special Christian causality is no longer a live alternative, then it is all the more certain that the
goal must be reached by means of the concept of that which is common to all religions and by the
realization of this exclusively true and universal principle in Christianity.

These two theories, therefore, are the only ones that require serious consideration in an
inquiry concerning the “absoluteness” of Christianity. They alone have a clear-cut and worthy
concept behind them and have seriously undertaken to support and explicate this concept. The
popular disdain in which many theologians today hold these theories is superficial and
thoughtless. These theories take their revenge, though, in that they continually lend themselves
to these theologians in piecemeal and inconsistent forms. Orthodox and Hegelian speculation
have often been pronounced dead with profound feelings of superiority, but just as often their
funeral orators have themselves made use of the forms that had been declared defunct, though in
their use the foundation and inner spirit are lost.

Thus for many people today the expression “absoluteness of Christianity” has become a
colorless concept that is treated with great passion indeed but with little concrete meaning. For
many it is merely a modern, neutral-sounding, scholarly expression by which they really mean
supernatural revelation, but they have no clear conceptual basis for this revelation; it is merely
one of the many ill-fitting academic masks that are worn to the feast of theology. To others it
signifies Christianity’s character as the final and perfect religion. However, they are not even
mildly disquieted by this perfection, even though the concepts that support it, including the
concept of faith in an “idea” as a faith that consumes all empirical phenomena, continually call
for further elucidation. To still others the term “absoluteness of Christianity” simply represents
the claim Christianity makes to exclusive truth, a claim which, though it conflicts sharply with
all similar claims, nevertheless belongs to the very nature of Christianity and therefore must
simply be accepted. They do not take this to mean that the interpretation of Christian thought
should exclude a flexible consideration of other kinds of truths and other ways of understanding,
such as those of the natural sciences. Unfortunately, however, this theology that makes so much
of the Christian claim takes no account of the corresponding claims of other religions.

Over against such facile, pallid ways of treating these extremely difficult and weighty
concepts, which are particularly likely to baffle the beginning student of contemporary theology,
what is really important is to grasp the problem in its own clear and definite meaning. Simple
normative value is something distinct from exclusively supernatural revelation and likewise
from absolute fulfillment of the principle of religion. The latter two, again, are essentially
different from one another and cannot be united. […]

This problem [of the “absoluteness” of Christianity vis-à-vis other religions] remains
focused exclusively on the two great theories, one relying on the absolute miracle of an inner
renewal that transcends all natural powers, and the other finding its support in the realization of
the essence of religion in Christianity, defending this concept by reference to the history of
evolution.

The first of these theories, however, can never prove its validity merely by appealing to
purely internal experience or its content. On this basis it can arrive only at the recognition that
over and above that dimension of human life which is bound by natural conditions there is also
a higher life of the human spirit. As for the different forms of this higher life that emerge in the
various religions and in other creations of the human spirit, this theory can distinguish between
them only as to their depth and power. But when it tries to prove on this basis that Christianity
occupies a unique position, it constantly finds itself obliged to argue for a specifically Christian
miraculous causality that breaks through natural causality in this inner experience. This line of
thought requires it to find external substantiation for its purely internal miraculous causality, and
it does so by reference to the archetypal miracles of the incarnation and of the time of the founding of Christianity. Inner miracles that defy the homogeneity of history are not as such incapable of demonstration. Their uniquely miraculous character demands support from the great, external, archetypal miracles. But with this, the theory as a whole is forced into that well-known apologetic which must differentiate sacred from profane events and which, along with its arguments for this dichotomy, gasps for breath the more it breathes the air of the modern understanding of history.

We are left, therefore, with the idealistic-evolutionary theory as the only one that calls for serious critical consideration. In itself this theory is an attempt to rule out every means of isolating Christianity from the rest of history on the basis of miracle, and it is an attempt to present in a purely historical way the validity and significance of the Christian religion in statements as unequivocal as the doctrinal formulations of the early church. The entire flowering of theology during the first part of the nineteenth century was due to this theory. It stimulated research in the areas of Bible, church history, and history of Christian doctrine, and provided a basis for overcoming the tension between faith and history. To this day it offers itself wherever men find the church’s idea of history untenable, and for many who are not in contact with the more exact development of doctrine, its propositions constitute a message of liberation even today.

The problem is, therefore, whether this theory of the absoluteness of Christianity as the realization of the idea of religion is a tenable alternative to the doctrine of exclusive supernatural revelation. This includes the problem of whether the idealistic and evolutionary theory of absoluteness can, for its part, answer the momentous and radical question of our intellectual, or at least of our religious, situation. This question is: How can we pass beyond the diversity with which history presents us to norms for our faith and for our judgments about life?
VOR DEM GESETZ

"Vor dem Gesetz steht ein Türküter. Zu diesem Türküter kommt ein Mann vom Lande und bittet um Eintritt in das Gesetz. Aber der Türküter sagt, dass er ihm jetzt den Eintritt nicht gewähren könne. Der Mann überlegt und fragt dann, ob er also später werde eintreten dürfen. 'Es ist möglich,' sagt der Türküter, 'jetzt aber nicht.' Da das Tor zum Gesetz offensteht wie immer und der Türküter beiseite tritt, bückt sich der Mann, um durch das Tor in das Innere zu sehen. Als der Türküter das merkt, lacht er und sagt: 'Wenn es dich so lockt, versuche es doch, trotz meines Verbotes hineinzugehen. Merke aber: Ich bin mächtig. Und ich bin nur der unterste Türküter. Von Saal zu Saal stehen aber Türküter, einer mächtiger als der andere. Schon den Anblick des dritten kann nicht einmal ich mehr ertragen.' Solche Schwierigkeiten hat der Mann vom Lande nicht erwartet; das Gesetz soll doch jedem und immer zugänglich sein, denkt er, aber als er jetzt den Türküter in seinem Pelzmantel genauer ansieht, seine grosse Spitznase, den langen, dünnen, schwarzen tatarischen Bart, entschliesst er sich, doch lieber zu warten, bis er die Erlaubnis zum Eintritt bekommt. Der Türküter gibt ihm einen Schemel und lässt ihn seitwärts von der Tür sich niedersezen. Dort sitzt er Tage und Jahre. Er macht viele Versuche, eingelassen zu werden, und ermißt den Türküter durch seine Bitten. Der Türküter stellt öfters kleine Verhöre mit ihm an, fragt ihn über seine Heimat aus.

BEFORE THE LAW

"Before the Law stands a doorkeeper on guard. To this doorkeeper there comes a man from the country who begs for admittance to the Law. But the doorkeeper says that he cannot admit the man at the moment. The man, on reflection, asks if he will be allowed, then, to enter later. 'It is possible,' answers the doorkeeper, 'but not at this moment.' Since the door leading into the Law stands open as usual and the doorkeeper steps to one side, the man bends down to peer through the entrance. When the doorkeeper sees that, he laughs and says: 'If you are so strongly tempted, try to get in without my permission. But note that I am powerful. And I am only the lowest doorkeeper. From hall to hall keepers stand at every door, one more powerful than the other. Even the third of these has an aspect that even I cannot bear to look at.' These are difficulties which the man from the country has not expected to meet, the Law, he thinks, should be accessible to every man and at all times, but when he looks more closely at the doorkeeper in his furred robe, with his huge pointed nose and long, thin, Tartar beard, he decides that he had better wait until he gets permission to enter. The doorkeeper gives him a stool and lets him sit down at the side of the door. There he sits waiting for days and years. He makes many attempts to be allowed in and wearies the doorkeeper with his importunity. The doorkeeper often engages him in brief conversation, asking him about his home and about other matters, but the
und nach vielem anderen, es sind aber teilnahmslose Fragen, wie sie große Herren stellen, und zum Schlusse sagt er ihm immer wieder, dass er ihn noch nicht einlassen könne. Der Mann, der sich für seine Reise mit vielem ausgerüstet hat, verwendet alles, und sei es noch so wertvoll, um den Türkheuer zu bestechen. Dieser nimmt zwar alles an, aber sagt dabei: 'Ich nehme es nur an, damit du nicht glaubst, etwas versäumt zu haben.' Während der vielen Jahre beobachtet der Mann den Türkheuer fast ununterbrochen. Er vergisst die anderen Türkheuer, und dieser erste scheint ihm das einzige Hindernis für den Eintritt in das Gesetz. Er verflucht den ungünstigen Zufall, in den ersten Jahren rücksichtslos und laut, später, als er alt wird, brummt er nur noch vor sich hin. Er wird kindisch, und da er in dem jährlangen Studium des Türkheuers auch die Flöhe in seinem Pelzkragen erkannt hat, bittet er auch die Flöhe, ihm zu helfen und den Türkheuer umzustimmen. Schliesslich wird sein Augenlicht schwach, und er weiss nicht, ob es um ihn wirklich dunkler wird, oder ob ihn nur seine Augen täuschen. Wohl aber erkennt er jetzt im Dunkel einen Glanz, der unverlässig aus der Tür des Gesetzes bricht. Nun lebt er nicht mehr lange. Vor seinem Tode sammeln sich in seinem Kopfe alle Erfahrungen der ganzen Zeit zu einer Frage, die er bisher an den Türkheuer noch nicht gestellt hat. Er winkt ihm zu, da er seinen erstarrenden Körper nicht mehr aufrichten kann. Der Türkheuer muss sich tief zu ihm hinunterneigen, denn der Grösseunterschied hat sich sehr zuungunsten des Mannes verändert. 'Was questions are put quite impersonally, as great men put questions, and always conclude with the statement that the man cannot be allowed to enter yet. The man, who has equipped himself with many things for his journey, parts with all he has, however valuable, in the hope of bribing the doorkeeper. The doorkeeper accepts it all, saying, however, as he takes each gift: 'I take this only to keep you from feeling that you have left something undone.' During all these long years the man watches the doorkeeper almost incessantly. He forgets about the other doorkeepers, and this one seems to him the only barrier between himself and the Law. In the first years he curses his evil fate aloud; later, as he grows old, he only mutters to himself. He grows childish, and since in his prolonged watch he has learned to know even the fleas in the doorkeeper's fur collar, he begs the very fleas to help him and to persuade the doorkeeper to change his mind. Finally his eyes grow dim and he does not know whether the world is really darkening around him or whether his eyes are only deceiving him. But in the darkness he can now perceive a radiance that streams immortally from the door of the Law. Now his life is drawing to a close. Before he dies, all that he has experienced during the whole time of his sojourn condenses in his mind into one question, which he has never yet put to the doorkeeper. He beckons the doorkeeper, since he can no longer raise his stiffening body. The doorkeeper has to bend far down to hear him, for the difference in size between them has increased very much to the man's disadvantage. 'What do you want to know now?' asks the doorkeeper, 'you are insatiable.'

‘Der Türhüter hat also den Mann getäuscht,’ sagte K. sofort, von der Geschichte sehr stark angezogen.

‘Sei nicht überreizt,’ sagte der Geistliche, ‘übernimm nicht die fremde Meinung ungeprüft. Ich habe dir die Geschichte im Wortlaut der Schrift erzählt. Von Täuschung steht darin nichts.’

‘Es ist aber klar,’ sagte K., ‘und deine erste Deutung war ganz richtig. Der Türhüter hat die erlösende Mitteilung erst dann gemacht, als sie dem Manne nicht mehr helfen konnte.’

‘Er wurde nicht früher gefragt,’ sagte der Geistliche, ‘bedenke auch, dass er nur Türhüter war, und als solcher hat er seine Pflicht erfüllt.’

‘Warum glaubst du, dass er seine Pflicht erfüllt hat?’ fragte K., ‘er hat sie nicht erfüllt. Seine Pflicht war es vielleicht, alle Fremden abzuwehren, diesen Mann aber, für den der Eingang bestimmt war, hätte er einlassen müssen.’

‘Du hast nicht genug Achtung vor der Schrift und veränderst die Geschichte,’ sagte der Geistliche. ‘Die Geschichte enthält über den Einlass ins Gesetz zwei wichtige Erklärungen des Türhüters, eine am Anfang,'

other is: that this door was intended only for the man. But there is no contradiction. The first statement, on the contrary, even implies the second. One could almost say that in suggesting to the man the possibility of future admittance the doorkeeper is exceeding his duty. At that moment his apparent duty is only to refuse admittance, and indeed many commentators are surprised that the suggestion should be made at all, since the doorkeeper appears to be a precision with a stern regard for duty. He does not once leave his post during these many years, and he does not shut the door until the very last minute; he is conscious of the importance of his office, for he says: 'I am powerful'; he is respectful to his superiors, for he says: 'I am only the lowest doorkeeper'; he is not garrulous, for during all these years he puts only what are called 'impersonal questions'; he is not to be bribed, for he says in accepting a gift: 'I take this only to keep you from feeling that you have left something undone'; where his duty is concerned he is to be moved neither by pity nor rage, for we are told that the man 'were the doorkeeper with his importance'; and finally even his external appearance hints at a pedantic character, the large, pointed nose and the long, thin, black Tartar beard. Could one imagine a more faithful doorkeeper? Yet the doorkeeper has other elements in his character which are likely to advantage anyone seeking admittance and which make it comprehensible enough that he should somewhat exceed his duty in suggesting the possibility of future admittance. For it cannot be denied that he is a little simple-minded and consequently a little conceited. Take the statements
pflichttreuen Tü刘某 geben? Nun mischen sich aber in den Tü刘某 noch andere Wesenzüge ein, die für den, der Einlass verlangt, sehr günstig sind, und welche es immerhin begreiflich machen, dass er in jener Andeutung einer zukünftigen Möglichkeit über seine Pflicht etwas hinausgehen konnte. Es ist nämlich nicht zu leugnen, dass er ein wenig einfältig und im Zusammenhang damit ein wenig eingebildet ist. Wenn auch seine Aussagen über seine Macht und über die Macht der anderen Tü刘某 und über deren sogar für ihn unerträglichen Anblick — ich sage, wenn auch alle diese Aussagen an sich richtig sein mögen, so zeigt doch die Art, wie er diese Ausserungen vorbringt, dass seine Auffassung durch Einfalt und Überhebung getrübt ist. Die Erklärer sagen hierzu: 'Richtiges Auf-
fassen einer Sache und Missverständen der gleichen Sache schliessen einander nicht vollständig aus.' Jeden-
falls aber muss man annehmen, dass jene Einfalt und Überhebung, so geringfügig sie sich vielleicht auch äussern, doch die Bewachung des Eingangs schwächen, es sind Lücken im Charakter des Tü刘某ers. Hierzu kommt noch, dass der Tü刘某ter seiner Naturanlage nach freundlich zu sein scheint, er ist durchaus nicht immer Amtsperson. Gleich in den ersten Augenblicken macht er den Spass, dass er den Mann trotz dem aus-
drücklich aufrechterhaltenen Verbot zum Eintritt einlädt, dann schickt er ihn nicht etwa fort, sondern gibt ihm, wie es heisst, einen Schelm und lässt ihn seitwärts von der Tür sich niedersetzen. Die Geduld, mit der er durch alle die Jahre die Bitten des Mannes erträgt, die kleinen Verhöre, die Annahme der Ge-
he makes about his power and the power of the other doorkeepers and their dreadful aspect which even he cannot bear to see—I hold that these statements may be true enough, but that the way in which he brings them out shows that his perceptions are confused by simplicity of mind and conceit. The commentators note in this connection: 'The right perception of any matter and a misunderstanding of the same matter do not wholly exclude each other.' One must at any rate assume that such simplicity and conceit, however sparingly indicated, are likely to weaken his defense of the door; they are breaches in the character of the door-
keeper. To this must be added the fact that the doorkeeper seems to be a friendly creature by nature, he is by no means always on his official dignity. In the very first moments he allows himself the jest of inviting the man to enter in spite of the strictly maintained veto against entry; then he does not, for instance, send the man away, but gives him, as we are told, a stool and lets him sit down beside the door. The patience with which he endures the man’s appeals during so many years, the brief conversations, the acceptance of the gifts, the politeness with which he allows the man to curse loudly in his presence the fate for which he himself is responsible—all this lets us deduce certain motions of sympathy. Not every doorkeeper would have acted thus. And finally, in answer to a gesture of the man’s he stoops low down to give him the chance of putting a last question. Nothing but mild impatience—the doorkeeper knows that this is the end of it all—is discernible in the words: ‘You are insatiable.’ Some push this mode of interpreta-
schenke, die Vornehmheit, mit der er es zulässt, dass
der Mann neben ihm laut den unglücklichen Zufall
verlustricht, der den Türrhüter hier aufgestellt hat—alles
dieses lässt auf Regungen des Mitleids schliessen. Nicht
ejeder Türrhüter hätte so gehandelt. Und schliesslich
beugt er sich noch auf einen Wink hin tief zu dem
Mann hinab, um ihm Gelegenheit zur letzten Frage
gaben. Nur eine schwache Ungeduld—der Türrhüter
weiss ja, dass alles zu Ende ist—spricht sich in den
Worten aus: 'Du bist unersättlich.' Manche gehen
sogar in dieser Art der Erklärung noch weiter und
meinen, die Worte 'Du bist unersättlich,' drücken eine
Art freundlichen Bewunderung aus, die aller-
dings von Herablassung nicht frei ist. Jedenfalls
schliesst sich so die Gestalt des Türrhüters anders ab,
as du glaubst."

"Du kennst die Geschichte genauer als ich und
Dann sagte K.: "Du glaubst, also, der Mann wurde
nicht getäuscht?"

"Missverstehe mich nicht," sagte der Geistliche, "ich
zeige dir nur die Meinungen, die darüber bestehen. Du
musst nicht zuviel auf Meinungen achten. Die Schrift
ist unveränderlich, und die Meinungen sind oft nur ein
Ausdruck der Verzweiflung darüber. In diesem Falle
gibt es sogar eine Meinung, nach welcher gerade der
Türrhüter der Getäuschte ist."

"Das ist eine weitgehende Meinung," sagte K. "Wie
wird sie begründet?"

"Die Begründung," antwortete der Geistliche, "geht
von der Eintakt des Türrhüters aus. Man sagt, dass er

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das Innere des Gesetzes nicht kennt, sondern nur den Weg, den er vor dem Eingang immer wieder abgehen muss. Die Vorstellungen, die er von dem Innern hat, werden für kindlich gehalten, und man nimmt an, dass er das, wovor er den Manne Furcht machen will, selbst fürchtet. Ja, er fürchtet es mehr als der Mann, denn dieser will ja nichts anderes als eintreten, selbst als er von den schrecklichen Türhütern des Innern gehört hat, der Türhüter dagegen will nicht eintreten, wenigstens erfährt man nichts darüber. Andere sagen zwar, dass er bereits im Innern gewesen sein muss, denn er ist doch einmal in den Dienst des Gesetzes aufgenommen worden, und das könne nur im Innern geschehen sein. Darauf ist zu antworten, dass er wohl auch durch einen Ruf aus dem Innern zum Türhüter bestellt worden sein könne, und dass er zumindest tief im Innern nicht gewesen sein dürfte, da er doch schon den Anblick des dritten Türhüters nicht mehr ertragen kann. Ausserdem aber wird auch nicht berichtet, dass er während der vielen Jahre ausser der Bemerkung über die Türhüter irgend etwas von dem Innern erzählt hätte. Es könnte ihm verboten sein, aber auch vom Verbot hat er nichts erzählt. Aus alledem schliesst man, dass er über das Aussehen und die Bedeutung des Innern nichts weiss und sich darüber in Täuschung befindet. Aber auch über den Mann vom Lande soll er sich in Täuschung befinden, denn er ist diesem Mann untergeordnet und weiss es nicht. Dass er den Mann als einen Unterordneten behandelt, erkennt man aus vielem, das dir noch erinnerlich sein dürfte. Dass er ihm aber tatsächlich untergeordnet ist, soll nach

interior already, since he is after all engaged in the service of the Law and can only have been appointed from inside. This is countered by arguing that he may have been appointed by a voice calling from the interior, and that anyhow he cannot have been far inside, since the aspect of the third doorkeeper is more than he can endure. Moreover, no indication is given that all these years he ever made any remarks showing a knowledge of the interior except for the one remark about the doorkeepers. He may have been forbidden to do so, but there is no mention of that either. On these grounds the conclusion is reached that he knows nothing about the aspect and significance of the interior, so that he is in a state of delusion. But he is deceived also about his relation to the man from the country, for he is subject to the man and does not know it. He treats the man instead as his own subordinate, as can be recognized from many details that must still be fresh in your mind. But, according to this view of the story, it is just as clearly indicated that he is really subordinated to the man. In the first place, a bondman is always subject to a free man. Now the man from the country is really free, he can go where he likes, it is only the Law that is closed to him, and access to the Law is forbidden him only by one individual, the doorkeeper. When he sits down on the stool by the side of the door and stays there for the rest of his life, he does it of his own free will; in the story there is no mention of any compulsion. But the doorkeeper is bound to his post by his very office, he does not dare strike out into the country, nor apparently may he go into the interior of the Law,
dieser Meinung ebenso deutlich hervorgehen. Vor allem ist der Freie dem Gebundenen übergeordnet. Nun ist der Mann tatsächlich frei, er kann hingehen, wohin er will, nur der Eingang in das Gesetz ist ihm verboten, und überdies nur von einem einzelnen, vom Türahüter. Wenn er sich auf den Schemel seitwärts vom Tor niedersezt und dort sein Leben lang bleibt, so geschieht dies freiwillig, die Geschichte erzählt von keinem Zwang. Der Türahüter dagegen ist durch sein Amt an seinen Posten gebunden, er darf sich nicht auswärts entfernen, allem Anschein nach aber auch nicht in das Innere gehen, selbst wenn er es wollte. Ausserdem ist er zwar im Dienst des Gesetzes, dient aber nur für diesen Eingang, also auch nur für diesen Mann, für den dieser Eingang allein bestimmt ist. Auch aus diesem Grunde ist er ihm untergeordnet. Es ist anzunehmen, dass er durch viele Jahre, durch ein ganzes Mannesalter gewissermassen nur leeren Dienst geleistet hat, denn es wird gesagt, dass ein Mann kommt, also jemand im Mannesalter, dass also der Türahüter lange warten musste, ehe sich sein Zweck erfülle, und zwar so lange warten musste, als es dem Mann beliebte, der doch freiwillig kam. Aber auch das Ende des Dienstes wird durch das Lebensende des Mannes bestimmt, bis zum Ende also bleibt er ihm untergeordnet. Und immer wieder wird betont, dass von allem der Türahüter nichts zu wissen scheint. Daran wird aber nichts Auffälliges gesehen, denn nach dieser Meinung befindet sich der Türahüter noch in einer viel schwereren Täuschung, sie betrifft seinen Dienst. Zuletzt spricht er nämlich vom Eingang und

even should he wish to. Besides, although he is in the service of the Law, his service is confined to this one entrance; that is to say, he serves only this man for whom alone the entrance is intended. On that ground too he is subject to the man. One must assume that for many years, for as long as it takes a man to grow up to the prime of life, his service was in a sense empty formality, since he had to wait for a man to come, that is to say, someone in the prime of life, and so had to wait a long time before the purpose of his service could be fulfilled, and, moreover, had to wait on the man's pleasure, for the man came of his own free will. But the termination of his service also depends on the man's term of life, so that to the very end he is subject to the man. And it is emphasized throughout that the doorkeeper apparently realizes nothing of all this. That is not in itself remarkable, since according to this interpretation the doorkeeper is deceived in a much more important issue, affecting his very office. At the end, for example, he says regarding the entrance to the Law: 'I am now going to shut it,' but at the beginning of the story we are told that the door leading into the Law stands always open, and if it stands open always, that is to say, at all times, without reference to the life or death of the man, then the doorkeeper is incapable of closing it. There is some difference of opinions about the motive behind the doorkeeper's statement, whether he said he was going to close the door merely for the sake of giving an answer, or to emphasize his devotion to duty, or to bring the man into a state of grief and regret in his last moments. But there is no lack of agree-
sagt: 'Ich gehe jetzt und schliesse ihn,' aber am Anfang heisst es, dass das Tor zum Gesetz offensteht wie immer, steht es aber immer offen, immer, das heisst unabhängig von der Lebensdauer des Mannes, fur den es bestimmt ist, dann wird es auch der Tuerhuet nicht schliessen konnen. Daruber gehen die Meinungen auseinander, ob der Tuerhuet mit der Ankundigung, dass er das Tor schliessen wird, nur eine Antwort geben oder seine Dienstpflicht betonen oder den Mann noch im letzten Augenblick in Reue und Trauer setzen will. Darin aber sind viele einig, dass er das Tor nicht wird schliessen konnen. Sie glauben sogar, dass er, wenigstens am Ende, auch in seinem Wissen dem Manne untergeordnet ist, denn dieser sieht den Glanz, der aus dem Eingang des Gesetzes bricht, wahrend der Tuerhuet als solcher wohl mit dem Ruecken zum Eingang steht und auch durch keine Ausserung zeigt, dass er eine Veranderung bemerkte.

"Das ist gut begruedet," sagte K., der einzelne Stellen aus der Erklaerung des Geistlichen halblaut fur sich wiederholt hatte. "Es ist gut begruedet, und ich glaube nun auch, dass der Tuerhuet getauscht ist. Dadurch bin ich aber von meiner fruheren Meinung nicht abgekommen, denn beide decken sich teilweise. Es ist entscheidend, ob der Tuerhuet klar sieht oder getauscht wird. Ich sagte, der Mann wird getauscht. Wenn der Tuerhuet klar sieht, konne man daran zweifeln, wenn der Tuerhuet aber getauscht ist, dann muss sich seine Tauschung notwendig auf den Mann ubertragen. Der Tuerhuet ist dann zwar kein Betrueger, aber so einfaltig,

ment that the doorkeeper will not be able to shut the door. Many indeed profess to find that he is subordinate to the man even in wisdom, towards the end, at least, for the man sees the radiance that issues from the door of the Law while the doorkeeper in his official position must stand with his back to the door, nor does he say anything to show that he has perceived the change."

"That is well argued," said K., after repeating to himself in a low voice several passages from the priest's exposition. "It is well argued, and I am inclined to agree that the doorkeeper is deluded. But that has not made me abandon my former opinion, since both conclusions are to some extent compatible. Whether the doorkeeper is clear-sighted or deluded does not dispose of the matter. I said the man is deluded. If the doorkeeper is clear-sighted, one might have doubts about that, but if the doorkeeper himself is deluded, then his delusion must of necessity be communicated to the man. That makes the doorkeeper not, indeed, a swindler, but a creature so simple-minded that he ought to be dismissed at once from his office. You mustn't forget that the doorkeeper's delusions do himself no harm but do infinite harm to the man."

"There are objections to that," said the priest. "Many aver that the story confers no right on anyone to pass judgment on the doorkeeper. Whatever he may seem to us, he is yet a servant of the Law; that is, he belongs to the Law and as such is set beyond human judgment. In that case one dare not believe that the doorkeeper is subordinate to the man. Bound as he is by his service,
dass er sofort aus dem Dienst gejagt werden müsste. Du musst doch bedenken, dass die Täuschung, in der sich der Türhüter befindet, ihm nichts schadet, dem Mann aber tausendfach.


"Mit dieser Meinung stimme ich nicht überein," sagte K. kopfschüttelnd, "denn wenn man sich ihr anschliesst, muss man alles, was der Türhüter sagt, für wahr halten. Dass das aber nicht möglich ist, hast du ja selbst ausführlich begründet."

"Nein," sagte der Geistliche, "man muss nicht alles für wahr halten, man muss es nur für notwendig halten."

"Trübelige Meinung," sagte K. "Die Lüge wird zur Weltordnung gemacht."

even at the door of the Law, he is incomparably freer than anyone at large in the world. The man is only seeking the Law, the doorkeeper is already attached to it. It is the Law that has placed him at his post; to doubt his integrity is to doubt the Law itself."

"I don't agree with that point of view," said K. shaking his head, "for if one accepts it, one must accept as true everything the doorkeeper says. But you yourself have sufficiently proved how impossible it is to do that."

"No," said the priest, "it is not necessary to accept everything as true, one must only accept it as necessary."

"A melancholy conclusion," said K. "It turns lying into a universal principle."