

Plantingian Religious Epistemology and World Religions

Prospects and
Problems

Erik Baldwin and
Tyler Dalton McNabb



Plantingian Religious Epistemology and World Religions

Studies in Comparative Philosophy and Religion

Series Editor: Douglas Allen, University of Maine

This series explores important intersections within and between the disciplines of religious studies and philosophy. These original studies will emphasize, in particular, aspects of contemporary and classical Asian philosophy and its relationship to Western thought. We welcome a wide variety of manuscript submissions, especially works exhibiting highly focused research and theoretical innovation.

Recent Titles in This Series

Plantingan Religious Epistemology and World Religions: Prospects and Problems, by Erik Baldwin and Tyler Dalton McNabb

Three Pillars of Skepticism in Classical India: Nāgārjuna, Jayarāṣi, and Śrī Harṣa, by Ethan Mills

Hindu and Jewish Philosophy and Religion: Comparative Perspectives, edited by Ithamar Theodor and Yudit Kornberg Greenberg

Philosophy of the Ancient Maya: Lords of Time, by Alexis McLeod

Making Space for Knowing: A Capacious Approach to Comparative Epistemology, by Aaron B. Creller

Postmodern Ethics, Emptiness, Literature: Encounter between East and West, by Jae-seong Lee

Metaphor and Metaphilosophy: Philosophy as Combat, Play, and Aesthetic Experience, by Sarah A. Mattice

Brahman and Dao: Comparative Studies of Indian and Chinese Philosophy and Religion, edited by Ithamar Theodor and Zihua Yao

Plantingian Religious Epistemology and World Religions

Prospects and Problems

Erik Baldwin and Tyler Dalton McNabb

LEXINGTON BOOKS

Lanham • Boulder • New York • London

Published by Lexington Books
An imprint of The Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group, Inc.
4501 Forbes Boulevard, Suite 200, Lanham, Maryland 20706
www.rowman.com

6 Tinworth Street, London SE11 5AL, United Kingdom

Copyright © 2019 by The Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group, Inc.


All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced in any form or by any electronic or mechanical means, including information storage and retrieval systems, without written permission from the publisher, except by a reviewer who may quote passages in a review.

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Information Available

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

ISBN 978-1-4985-5293-6 (cloth : alk. paper)

ISBN 978-1-4985-5294-3 (electronic)

™ The paper used in this publication meets the minimum requirements of American National Standard for Information Sciences—Permanence of Paper for Printed Library Materials, ANSI/NISO Z39.48-1992.

Printed in the United States of America

Erik

*I dedicate this book to my wife, Melanie, and our daughter,
Naomi. Mamahalin ko tayo magpakailanman.*

Tyler

*I dedicate this book to my wife, Priscilla, and my
children, Eden, Elijah, Ezra, and Eva Maria.*

Erik and Tyler

We both would like to also dedicate this book to Alvin Plantinga.

Contents

Acknowledgments	ix
Preface	xi
PART I: PLANTINGIAN RELIGIOUS EPISTEMOLOGY AND THE WORLD RELIGIONS	1
1 Plantingian Religious Epistemology and the World Religions	3
2 Naturalism, Proper Functionalism, and the Evolutionary Argument against Naturalism	29
3 Plantingian Religious Epistemology and World Religions	59
PART II: THE PROSPECTS OF PLANTINGIAN RELIGIOUS EPISTEMOLOGY IN NON-CHRISTIAN RELIGIONS I: INDIA AND CHINA	65
4 Plantingian Religious Epistemology and <i>Advaita Vedānta</i> and <i>Sāṃkhya</i>	67
5 Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta	97
6 A Mādhva Vedānta Extension of the Standard Aquinas/Calvin Model	113
7 Buddhism	137
8 Neo-Confucianism and Daoism	155

PART III: THE PROSPECTS FOR PLANTINGIAN RELIGIOUS EPISTEMOLOGY IN NON-CHRISTIAN RELIGIONS II: THE ABRAHAMIC RELIGIONS	193
9 Judaism	195
10 An Islamic Extension of the Standard Aquinas/Calvin Model	217
PART IV: OBJECTIONS TO PLANTINGIAN RELIGIOUS EPISTEMOLOGY	255
11 Objections to Plantingian Religious Epistemology	257
Bibliography	285
Index	303
About the Authors	317

Acknowledgments

This book wouldn't be possible without our families sacrificing time with us. Nor would the success of the book be meaningful without them. We also want to acknowledge Billy Abraham. Billy was instrumental to this project, as he was responsible for bringing both of us together to write the book. We thank the graduate students at Houston Baptist University for going through a rough version of this book. We especially thank Matthew Damore and Zack Akin for their helpful feedback in the Fall 2017 Religious Epistemology course. We also thank Michael Thune for helpful discussions on the material in chapter 11. Finally, we acknowledge the following sources for allowing us to use some of the material found in this book:

Baldwin, Erik, and Tyler McNabb. "An Epistemic Defeater for Islamic Belief?" *International Journal of Philosophy and Theology* 76, no. 4 (2015): 352–67.

McNabb, Tyler Dalton. "Warranted Religion: Answering Objections to Alvin Plantinga's Epistemology." *Religious Studies* 52, no. 4 (2014): 477–95.

McNabb, Tyler Dalton. "Defeating Naturalism: Defending and Reformulating Plantinga's EAAN." *Eleutheria: A Graduate Student Journal* 4, no. 1 (2015): 35–51.

McNabb, Tyler Dalton and Erik Baldwin. "Divine Methodology: A Lawful Deflection of Kantian and Kantian-Esque Defeaters." *Open Theology* 3, no. 1 (2017): 293–304.

Preface

This book is long, the fruit of many years of study. It is concerned with a special problem of religious diversity, specifically, with whether the claims of Plantingian religious epistemology are in some way weakened or undermined given that at least some of the world's great religious traditions can utilize Plantinga's religious epistemology. Another theme is what to make of disagreements between Plantingians belonging to different world religions about which creedal-specific religious beliefs are properly basic and warranted and how such disagreements could be reasonable. In order to properly address these issues, we need to cover a lot of ground.

Part I sets the stage for the rest of the book. Because some readers interested in comparative religious epistemology may lack sufficient background in Plantinga's thought, we deemed it necessary to include a primer on the subject so that all of our readers would be sufficiently able to assess our arguments in the second and third parts of the book. Chapter 1 serves this purpose. Here we introduce Plantingian religious epistemology, including a brief history of the development of Plantingian reformed epistemology. We also consider and respond to various "standard" objections to Plantingian epistemology, including the Great Pumpkin and the Son of Great Pumpkin objections. We also explicate Plantinga's proper-function account of warrant and the standard and extended Aquinas/Calvin models which show how it could be that theistic belief and Christian belief could be both properly basic and warranted.

Chapter 2 covers another thread of Plantinga's philosophy, focusing on naturalism and Plantinga's evolutionary argument against naturalism. Briefly, we argue against the viability of naturalism as a worldview and argue that because there is no satisfactory naturalist account of proper function, naturalists can't rationally or consistently accept proper functionalism. We also

consider a few new arguments against naturalism that follow the general pattern set in place by Plantinga's evolutionary argument against naturalism and consider the ramifications of this for our project. Much of this material is fairly technical. Those who are sufficiently familiar with Plantinga's epistemology, find the standard responses to common objections to Plantingian religious epistemology convincing, or are either convinced of the truth of proper functionalism and the epistemological poverty of naturalism or are willing to grant these claims for the sake of the main argument of this book may safely skim or skip chapters 1 or 2.

Chapter 3, while brief, is of central importance, for it sets up the main tasks of the rest of the book. It provides the argument schema that we use to determine whether major world religions can make the same claims the Christian Plantingian does about their religious beliefs.

We cover several major world religions in Parts II and III. Without discussing the central beliefs of each religious tradition, we could hardly show how the metaphysical views and epistemological commitments of these religions are sufficiently similar in relevant ways to the metaphysical views and epistemological commitments presupposed by Plantingian religious epistemology. While the chapters are relatively self-contained, and it is likely that different readers will find some of these chapters more interesting than the others, we encourage readers to give each chapter equal consideration. Part II focuses on major world philosophical and religious traditions of India, including *Sāṃkhya*, *Advaita Vedānta*, *Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta*, *Dvaita Vedānta*, and *Buddhism*, focusing on the *Mādhyamaka* "Middle Way" tradition of Nāgārjuna. It also covers the major Chinese philosophical and religious traditions of Confucianism, Neo-Confucianism, and Daoism. Part III considers the major Abrahamic religions that are closely related to Christianity, namely, Judaism and Islam. Again, our main concern is to consider to what extent there is conceptual overlap between Plantinga's religious epistemology and the religious epistemologies of these other great world religions. As such, our book is essentially an exercise in comparative/cross-cultural philosophy of religion and comparative religious epistemology. As we shall see, in our view, most of these world religions are such that their religious epistemologies bear significant similarities to Plantingian religious epistemology, some more than others. Ultimately, we argue that some of them, including *Advaita Vedānta*, *Sāṃkhya*, *Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta*, and *Mādhyamaka Buddhism*, are such that their members are ultimately unable to affirm one or more of the core elements of Plantingian epistemology. Others, including Judaism, Islam, and *Dvaita Vedānta*, are such that there are ample intellectual and conceptual resources internal to them for members of those religious and philosophical traditions to lay claim to all of the core elements of Plantingian religious epistemology. Regarding Neo-Confucianism and Daoism, while it may seem

at first glance that their members are unable to affirm one or more of the core elements of Plantingian epistemology, there may be resources for at least some people in or of those traditions to affirm all of the core elements of Plantingian religious epistemology after all.

Part IV is comparatively shorter than the others. It considers and evaluates an objection to Plantingian religious epistemology that is, in our view, much more serious and significant than those we covered in chapter 1. We call this objection the multiple viable extensions objection. After elucidating and motivating this objection, we briefly survey the peer-disagreement literature. We spend the final part of the book discussing different responses to the multiple viable extensions objection that are compatible with contemporary positions in the peer-disagreement literature. While we don't make a final judgment as to whether there are successful responses to it, the various responses that we provide will equip readers to decide matters for themselves.

Part I

**PLANTINGIAN RELIGIOUS
EPISTEMOLOGY AND THE
WORLD RELIGIONS**

Chapter 1

Plantingian Religious Epistemology and the World Religions

Plantingian religious epistemology has three main components: reformed epistemology, a proper-function theory of warrant, and the standard and extended Aquinas/Calvin models. Each component was developed during a particular stage of Alvin Plantinga's thought. Having first articulated reformed epistemology, Plantinga developed his proper-function theory of warrant, and then the standard and extended Aquinas/Calvin models. Each stage both complements and expands upon the previous one. We go over each of these stages in turn, introducing and explaining their features. We don't provide an exhaustive explication or defense of Plantingian religious epistemology. Our primary tasks are to explain why several common objections to Plantinga's epistemological project fail and to motivate the claim that his epistemological positions are plausible. Along the way, we consider in some depth the Great Pumpkin and the Son of Great Pumpkin objections, review Michael Bergmann's replies to several common objections to reformed epistemology, and consider a variety of "Swampman" objections that illustrate why Plantinga thinks that proper function is necessary for warrant.

REFORMED EPISTEMOLOGY

Essentially, the core thesis of reformed epistemology is that religious belief can be rational without being based on propositional evidence or argument. Plantinga's first major work to articulate and defend this position is *God and Other Minds* (1967, 1990), the main topic of which is "the question of the rationality, or reasonability, or intellectual propriety of belief in God."¹ Its main goal is to undermine the Evidentialist objection to theistic belief, according to which belief in God is irrational, unreasonable, or intellectually

inappropriate because there isn't sufficient evidence in favor of God's existence. Historically, Evidentialists have maintained that belief in God is rational only if it is based on argument and propositional evidence. Plantinga agrees with Evidentialists that the traditional arguments for the existence of God (viz., the cosmological, ontological, and teleological arguments) would be fully successful only if they were to start from propositions that all intelligent, intellectually honest people find compelling and lead to conclusions that would be irrational to reject. Plantinga thinks that the traditional theistic arguments fail because none of them have premises of that sort. Against Evidentialists, however, Plantinga maintains that the belief that God exists can be perfectly rational, reasonable, and intellectually appropriate even if there aren't any good theistic arguments. In Part Three of *God and Other Minds*, Plantinga argues that the standard arguments for thinking that there are minds other than one's own fail to establish their conclusion. But no one really accepts solipsism; no one seriously thinks that it is foolish or irrational to believe in the existence of minds other than one's own. Surely, if anything is rational to believe, it is rational to believe that there are other minds. Plantinga maintains that belief in God and belief in other minds are on par in the sense that if one of them is rational then so is the other. He concludes, "if my belief in other minds is rational, so is my belief in God. But obviously the former is rational; so, therefore, is the latter."²

In a series of articles in the 1970s and early 1980s, Plantinga develops and defends the view that rational belief in God doesn't require propositional evidence.³ We don't attempt to cover this period chronologically or exhaustively, but rather state in some detail the main themes of Plantingian epistemology as they were developed during this period.⁴

In "The Reformed Objection to Natural Theology," Plantinga argues that Christians don't need arguments or propositional evidence for their belief in God to have rational justification and that such arguments are not typically the source of a believer's confidence.⁵ He maintains that because scripture "proceeds from God as the starting point," believers are within their epistemic rights to take belief in God as a starting point.⁶ Following John Calvin, he writes:

Calvin's claim, then, is that God has created us in such a way that we have a strong propensity or inclination towards belief in him. This tendency has been in part overlaid or suppressed by sin. Were it not for the existence of sin in the world, human beings would believe in God to the same degree and with the same natural spontaneity that we believe in the existence of other persons, an external world, or the past.⁷

Plantinga argues that belief in God resembles belief in the existence of the self, the external world, other minds, and the past. Such things are rational

to believe in even if there aren't good arguments in favor of their existence. By parity of reasoning, it is rational to believe in God without good arguments, too. Plantinga thinks that what Calvin and the other reformers were getting at is the view that belief in God can be properly epistemically basic. Elsewhere, he writes, "From Calvin's point of view believing in the existence of God on the basis of rational argument is like believing in the existence of your spouse on the basis of the analogical argument for the existence of other minds—whimsical at best and unlikely to delight the person concerned."⁸

In "Reason and Belief in God," Plantinga rejects classical foundationalism.⁹ Characterizing the view, Plantinga writes:

Aquinas and Descartes, we might say, are *strong* foundationalists; they accept weak foundationalism [the view that "(1) every rational noetic structure has a foundation, and (2) in a rational noetic structure, a non-basic belief is proportional in strength to the foundations"¹⁰] and add some conditions for proper basicity. Ancient and medieval foundationalists tended to hold that a proposition is properly basic for a person only if it is either self-evident or evident to the senses; modern foundationalists—Descartes, Locke, Leibniz and the like—tended to hold that a proposition is properly basic for *S* only if either self-evident or incorrigible for *S*. Of course this is a historical generalization and is thus subject to contradiction by scholars, such being the penalty for historical generalization; but perhaps it is worth the risk. And now suppose we say that *classical foundationalism* is the disjunction of ancient and medieval with modern foundationalism.¹¹

Plantinga writes that a proposition is *self-evident* if a subject "sees it to be true upon grasping or understanding it."¹² Going into more detail, Aquinas maintains that a proposition is self-evident when "the predicate is included in the essence of the subject, as 'Man is an animal,' for animal is contained in the essence of man."¹³ Self-evident truths are "self-evident to all; as is clear with regard to the first principles of demonstration, the terms of which are common things that no one is ignorant of."¹⁴ First principles of demonstration, such as the principle that a whole is greater than its parts, are grasped immediately by the intellect.¹⁵ A belief is *evident to the senses* if it directly involves one or more of the five senses. Aquinas's examples of beliefs that are evident to the senses include the beliefs that some things in the world are in motion, that some things are caused to exist, and that some things come to be and go out of existence.¹⁶ According to Descartes, a belief is *incorrigible* if it is immune from error, for example, one can't be mistaken about being in pain or one's seeming to see a bird outside one's window. For Descartes, the paradigmatic example of an incorrigible belief is the proposition "*I am, I exist*" which is "necessarily true whenever it is put forward by me or conceived in my mind."¹⁷

Plantinga doesn't take issue with foundationalism simpliciter, nor does he take issue with the examples of properly basic beliefs provided by Aquinas and Descartes. Rather, he thinks that some beliefs that aren't self-evident, evident to the senses, or incorrigible are properly basic. In sum, he rejects classical foundationalism and broadens the foundational support structure of weak foundationalism (defined by Plantinga as "the view that (1) every rational noetic structure has a foundation, and (2) in a rational noetic structure, non-basic belief is proportional in strength to support from the foundations"¹⁸) to include belief in God. Plantinga's argument against classical foundationalism may be put thus:

- (1) According to classical foundationalism, only absolutely certain beliefs (which are self-evident, evident to the senses, or incorrigible) are properly basic.
- (2) If classical foundationalism is true, then, since very many of our beliefs aren't absolutely certain, very many of our beliefs aren't properly basic, including the beliefs that there are enduring physical objects in an external-to-mind world, that the future will resemble the past, that sense perception and memory are generally reliable, that there are conscious minds other than one's own, that the Earth has existed for more than five minutes, and so on.
- (3) Contrary to classical foundationalism, it is reasonable to think that the beliefs listed in (2) are properly basic.
- (4) Moreover, classical foundationalism is self-referentially incoherent; it isn't absolutely certain, it isn't self-evident, evident to the senses, or incorrigible, and it can't be derived from statements that are self-evident, evident to the senses, or incorrigible.

Thus,

- (5) Classical foundationalism is false.

In "Is Belief in God Properly Basic?" Plantinga maintains that belief in God doesn't necessarily violate one's intellectual obligations, whether they are to be understood teleologically (in terms of consequences), aretetically (in terms of virtue), or deontologically (in terms of either *prima facie* or ultimate duties).¹⁹ He argues that belief in God is reasonable and appropriate without evidence in the same way that perceptual beliefs, memory beliefs, and beliefs which ascribe mental states to other persons are properly basic. These beliefs aren't arbitrary or groundless but are grounded in one's having certain characteristic experiences. Likewise, Plantinga maintains that belief in God is properly basic because it is grounded in characteristic experiences, such as experiencing God's presence while listening to a sermon at church or when gazing into the sky on a clear night.²⁰

While the view that belief in God can be properly basic is a common thread throughout his religious epistemology, Plantinga's negative assessment of the merits of theistic arguments seems to have softened somewhat over the span of his career. He developed a version of the ontological argument in *The Nature of Necessity* and presents a more streamlined and accessible version of it in *God, Freedom, and Evil*, both published in 1974. He maintains that while the argument isn't good according to the Evidentialist's standard (because it doesn't start from propositions that all intelligent, intellectually honest people will find compelling and lead to a conclusion that would be irrational to reject), it is good in the sense that it shows that theism is rationally acceptable. Nevertheless, the argument will have considerable force for those who accept its main premise, namely, that "maximal greatness *is* possibly instantiated."²¹ In his 2006 paper "Two Dozen (or so) Theistic Arguments," Plantinga considers what conditions and criteria an argument must satisfy in order to count as good. After evaluating and rejecting several candidate analyses, he appears to endorse (at least tentatively) a proposal suggested by Peter van Inwagen, namely, that "an argument is a good one if it meets the following condition: It would convince an audience of ideal agnostics when the argument is presented in an ideal fashion, and when there is an ideal critic who is permitted to criticize the argument."²² He goes on to say that good arguments are person relative in the sense that "whether [an] argument will convince someone depends in part on what else that person believes."²³ He expresses doubt about the possibility of specifying fully satisfactory criteria for determining the goodness of arguments but is more optimistic about how theistic arguments might be good for accomplishing particular purposes. Along these lines, a theistic argument is good, he maintains, insofar as it can (i) "move someone closer to theism—by showing, for example, that theism is a legitimate intellectual option," (ii) "reveal interesting and important connections between various elements of a theist's set of beliefs," (iii) "strengthen and confirm theistic belief," and (iv) "increase the warrant of theistic belief."²⁴ (As one would expect, he goes on to discuss two dozen or so theistic arguments that he deems to be more or less good for doing these purposes.) Recently, in *Knowledge and Christian Belief* (2015), Plantinga writes, "In my opinion no argument with premises accepted by everyone or nearly everyone is strong enough to support full-blown Christian belief, even if such belief is, as I think it is, more probable than not with respect to premises of that kind."²⁵ This way of putting things suggests that Plantinga now leaves room for their being at least some theistic arguments that are sufficiently strong so as to make Christian belief more probable than it would be otherwise. Perhaps, Plantinga would grant that some theistic arguments are, in Richard Swinburne's terminology, correct C-inductive arguments, arguments such that their "premises add to the probability of the conclusion (i.e. make the conclusion more likely or more probable than it would otherwise

be).”²⁶ Notably, Plantinga has described Swinburne’s version of the design argument as “powerfully impressive, and highly developed”²⁷ and has spoken very highly of Swinburne’s natural theology, calling it “the most sophisticated and highly developed natural theology the world has so far seen.”²⁸ Taken all together, what Plantinga has to say on the matter seems indicative of a significant shift in his assessment of the merits of theistic arguments.

OBJECTIONS TO REFORMED EPISTEMOLOGY AND REPLIES

The most famous objection to Plantinga’s religious epistemology is probably the Great Pumpkin objection, which states that if belief that God exists could be warranted in a properly basic way, then all sorts of bizarre and apparently irrational beliefs could be warranted in a properly basic way, too.²⁹ For instance, if belief in God is properly basic, so the objection goes, then why couldn’t belief in the Great Pumpkin,³⁰ belief in voodoo,³¹ Supermanism (briefly, the view that Jor-el, aka Clark Kent, “came from the planet Krypton about 530 million years ago and ignited the Cambrian explosion”³²), or some other type of obviously false belief be properly basic as well?³³ Keith DeRose, sharpening the original Great Pumpkin objection (and the subsequent Son of Great Pumpkin objection), renders the argument thus:

- (1) There are some possible wildly bizarre/weird aberrations of irrationalism that are Plantinga-defensible (i.e., such that Plantinga’s defensive strategy against the charge of irrationality would be as successful in defense of them as it is in Plantinga’s hands in defense of Christian belief).
- (2) Plantinga’s strategy can’t be used to successfully defend the wildly bizarre/weird aberrations against the charge of irrationality. Thus,
- (3) Plantinga’s defensive strategy does not provide a successful defense of Christian belief against the charge of irrationality.³⁴

Plantinga argues that this objection is mistaken. Plantinga’s initial response is to deny (1). Just because Christianity can be properly basic, it doesn’t follow that belief in anything and everything can be properly basic.³⁵ Here’s one way to construe the argument. According to classical foundationalism, what privileges a properly basic belief is the fact (though there is reason to doubt this) that properly basic beliefs are such that it is impossible to be wrong about them (or, minimally, such that one couldn’t rationally deny their truth). The classical foundationalist thinks that because relatively few of our beliefs are infallible, that a belief is a good indication that the belief in question is properly basic. However, just because incorrigible beliefs and self-evident

beliefs are properly basic, it doesn't follow that any old belief is properly basic. Similarly, according to Plantinga's epistemology, not every belief is or could be properly basic either. Both generalizations are logically fallacious and entirely gratuitous.

Plantinga provides further reason to reject (1) in his "The Reformed Objection to Natural Theology." Here Plantinga argues that reformed epistemologists aren't committed to approving when others use their strategy to defend silly views. Appropriate criteria for proper basicity must be reached "from below" rather than "from above"; that is, they must be argued to and tested by a relevant set of examples. According to Plantinga,

the proper way to arrive at [a criterion of basic belief] is, broadly speaking, *inductive*. We must assemble examples of beliefs and conditions such that the former are obviously properly basic in the latter, and examples of beliefs and conditions such that the former are obviously not properly basic in the latter. We must then frame hypotheses as to the necessary and sufficient conditions of proper basicity and test these hypotheses by reference to those examples.³⁶

While different groups may disagree about which beliefs should count as properly basic, mere disagreement about this shouldn't lead us to change our minds about which beliefs are properly basic.³⁷

More recently, in *Warranted Christian Belief* (2000), Plantinga is willing to grant that wildly bizarre/weird beliefs may be internally rational but contends that such beliefs lack external rationality and warrant. For instance, given that it seems obviously true to a madman that his head is made of glass, it would be internally rational for him to believe that to be true. However, if one is convinced that one's head is made of glass, perhaps one's subsequently coming to hold the belief "I ought to take care of my head" could be properly basic.³⁸ Alternatively, the terms "The Great Pumpkin" or "Superman" might just be idiosyncratic ways of referring to God, in which case there is no substantive objection here.³⁹ (We will discuss this response in more detail when we discuss Son of Great Pumpkin objection.)

Ultimately, Plantinga maintains that what determines which beliefs are appropriate to hold in a properly basic way is dependent on facts about our design plan. A design plan is the way that something is supposed to work when it is functioning as it ought to and nothing is going wrong with it, broken, or dysfunctional.⁴⁰ Consequently, if the design plan of our cognitive faculties is such that we naturally come to form belief in the existence of God in response to appropriate experiences, then belief in God needn't be based on argument or evidence in order to be internally rational or warranted. Moreover, it might not be a feature of our design plan to come to believe in the Great Pumpkin or in the mystical workings of voodoo in such a manner.

If this were the case, in order for the belief in the Great Pumpkin (or what have you) to be considered rational, it would need to be based on argument or evidence. On the other hand, forming beliefs in such things could be an appropriate epistemic response to an experience of a certain kind or be internally rational given other beliefs that one holds or be. However, if the human design plan does not designate these beliefs to be properly basic, then, so long as our faculties are functioning properly and are successfully aimed at truth, they could not be *properly* basic. In sum, Plantingians maintain that there are inherent limits on what kinds of beliefs are properly basic and that our design plan doesn't allow for just any belief to be properly basic or warranted.

Now, perhaps the gist of the complaint against Plantinga's epistemology isn't the notion that there aren't any limits on what could be properly basic but rather that, for all we know, given Plantinga's epistemology, it is epistemically possible for crazy and irrational beliefs (like belief in the Great Pumpkin or voodoo) to be legitimately held by members of particular epistemic communities. Along these lines, Michael Martin writes:

Although reformed epistemologists would not have to accept voodoo beliefs as rational, voodoo followers would be able to claim that insofar as they are basic in the voodoo community they are rational and, moreover, that reformed thought was irrational in this community. Indeed, Plantinga's proposal would generate many different communities that could *legitimately* claim that their basic beliefs are rational and that these beliefs conflict with basic beliefs of other communities. Among the communities generated might be devil worshipers, flat earthers, and believers in fairies, just so long as belief in the devil, the flatness of the earth, and fairies was basic in the respective communities.⁴¹

Plantinga calls this objection the Son of Great Pumpkin objection. Summing up his response, Plantinga concedes that Voodooists and Great Pumpkinites could be within their intellectual rights to believe what they do. Plantinga even goes so far as to suppose that their beliefs could be epistemically justified. In that sense, Voodooists and Great Pumpkinites may legitimately claim that their beliefs are rational. However, again, if our cognitive design plan is not set up to form belief in the deities of voodoo or the Great Pumpkin, then belief in such things would be mistaken, and the claim that such beliefs are warranted in a properly basic way would be false and illegitimate. In this situation, Voodooists and Great Pumpkinites who maintain otherwise would be in error and their beliefs would lack warrant.⁴²

According to proponents of the Son of Great Pumpkin objection, however, that the proper function of our design plan could in principle be to produce belief in crazy things is taken to be troubling in and of itself. Suppose that, for all we know, there could be something like a *sensus cucurbitatis* the proper

function of which is to produce properly basic and warranted belief in the Great Pumpkinite. For to admit that to be possible, so the objection goes, is exceedingly odd, tantamount to acknowledging that, for all we know, if Great Pumpkinism is true, then it would likely be warranted. To concede that it is epistemically possible for someone's belief in the Great Pumpkin to be warranted is extremely troubling and absurd. And since Plantinga's epistemology allows for such absurdities, so the objection goes, it can't be correct.

There are at least two responses to this version of the Son of Great Pumpkin objection. First, as alluded to earlier, one could argue that in order for this conditional to express a genuine epistemic possibility, Great Pumpkinism would need to be a slightly more elaborate version of theism. Plantinga makes this point when he states:

But why think it likely that if Great Pumpkinism is true, there will be a *sensus cucurbitatis*? Why think the Great Pumpkin has created us? Why think this pumpkin would care about whether human beings know anything about it? Why think it is conscious, capable of knowledge, and the like? All the story says is that there is this very large and scary-looking pumpkin that returns to Linus' pumpkin patch every Halloween. The argument for there being a *sensus cucurbitatis* if Great Pumpkinism is true, has very little going for it.⁴³

In sum, Plantinga maintains that in order for belief in the Great Pumpkin to be properly basic and warranted, the Great Pumpkin must be a person who, like the God of Christian theism, desires to enter into loving relationship with humans and creates them with a special cognitive faculty or process, the *sensus cucurbitatis*, the proper function of which is to produce belief in the Great Pumpkin in certain appropriate situations. But if all that were true, then there wouldn't really be any problem, for belief in the Great Pumpkin would be indistinguishable from belief in the God of theism, perhaps with the exception of an additional tenet that God has an undetected interest in pumpkins.⁴⁴ Plantinga's response to Daniel Dennett's charge that belief in God isn't any more rational than belief in Supermanism proceeds along similar lines.⁴⁵ While there are *some* similarities between Supermanism and the belief that God causes beneficial mutations at crucial times in our evolutionary history (for instance, both show care and concern for humanity), all things considered, God is not very much like Superman. Superman has none of the properties of the God of traditional theism; God is a necessary, and essentially omniscient being. Superman, while very powerful, has none of the properties of the God of traditional theism. On the other hand, if we suitably modify the Superman hypothesis we'd end up positing the existence of a being just like the God of traditional theism, in which case "Superman" is just a silly name for "The God of Traditional Theism." But then we won't

have a good objection to belief in God, for the beliefs in question would no longer be silly.⁴⁶

A second approach to tackling the Son of Great Pumpkin objection is to argue that belief in the Great Pumpkin has an obvious empirical defeater that Christianity doesn't. One could strip away any potential warrant for believing that the Great Pumpkin exists merely by going to a pumpkin patch on Halloween and seeing that he doesn't show up.⁴⁷ There isn't an analogous sort of defeater for the world's great religious traditions. You can't just as easily find the body of Jesus or muster up evidence that Muhammad never existed. Thus, because Great Pumpkinism shouldn't be taken all that seriously, the Son of Great Pumpkin objection fails. So much for the Great Pumpkin and the Son of Great Pumpkin objections.

In "Rational Religious Belief without Arguments," Michael Bergmann considers and responds to several other objections to reformed epistemology. One objection is that the religious interpretation of experiential evidence needs defense.⁴⁸ According to this objection, religious experiences must be interpreted within a particular theological framework in order to be meaningful. And since there are various theological frameworks for interpreting the meaning of religious experiences, one must have reasons to favor one interpretation over rival ones. On this line of thinking, one's religious beliefs can be rational only if one has a reason for preferring one theoretical framework to another. This gives rise to a dilemma: unless one has reasons of this sort, then belief in God won't be reasonable or warranted, but if one does have such reasons, then belief in God can't be both properly basic and warranted.⁴⁹ Bergmann notes that there is a similar argument against rational perceptual beliefs. This objection assumes that perceptual beliefs are rational only if one has a reason to prefer "the Standard Interpretation" of perception to some other framework. Briefly, the Standard Interpretation of sense perception is that when we have visual experiences of things like chairs and desks, the objects of those experiences are chairs and desks in an external-to-mind world. Bergmann responds that perceptual beliefs are rational even though most people don't have any good, non-circular reasons for thinking that the Standard Interpretation is correct. Moreover, the world presents itself as if the Standard Interpretation is correct. We form the vast majority of our experiential beliefs spontaneously and without interpretation. Likewise, having an experience of God, say that you are forgiven or that God loves you, isn't necessarily interpretative either.⁵⁰

Another objection that Bergmann considers gets its start from the fact that while virtually everyone forms properly basic beliefs based on sense perception, rational insight, and introspection, very many people don't believe in God. If, as reformed epistemology proposes, we can just immediately tell that God exists, then why do so many people not believe in God? Unless this

lack of parity can be adequately explained, so the objection goes, it is unreasonable to think that belief in God can be properly basic.⁵¹ Bergmann's reply is to explain this lack of parity. In short, the sense of divinity isn't working properly for unbelievers; something must be preventing it from performing its proper function. To motivate this move, Bergmann offers the following analogy. Suppose that after some considerable passage of time, an entire population ends up with distorted or unclear vision. In a similar way, it could be that many people are now unable to properly experience God. And if the sense of divinity is more damaged in some people than others, that would explain why some people believe in God and others don't.⁵²

Bergmann's explanation of why so many people don't believe in God leads naturally to another objection, namely, that sinfulness doesn't adequately explain the prevalence of atheism. Granting that the sense of divinity is more damaged in some people than in others, what causes the damage? The common answer, that sinfulness causes the damage, doesn't explain all cases of reasonable unbelief and seems insulting and/or implausible. Moreover, there are many sinful people who claim to perceive God and many atheists who don't who nevertheless lead better, more morally praiseworthy lives than these theists. Lacking a good explanation for this lack of parity, so the objection goes, belief in God isn't reasonable.⁵³ Bergmann replies that this explanation for the lack of parity is more plausible if we distinguish between damage caused by inherited sinfulness and damage caused by willful sinfulness. The former sort of damage isn't blameworthy. Note that while one's upbringing can further hinder or damage one's sense of divinity, only damage caused by one's own willful sinfulness is blameworthy. And, for some reason or other that we don't or can't know, God may choose to make himself known experientially to some but not others. Bergmann concludes that because there needn't be a tight correlation between being moral and having or lacking belief in God, the force of objections due to lack of parity are sufficiently undermined.⁵⁴

The last objection Bergmann considers and replies to is that religious disagreement provides a reason to be skeptical about which religious beliefs are true, if any. Some people who believe in God disagree about God's nature and purposes. Others don't believe in God at all. At least some of these disagreements are (or seem to be) between people who are apparently equally intelligent, thoughtful, and sincere and who have fully shared the relevant evidence with one another. Persistent disagreement of this sort gives us good reason to mistrust the deliverances of the sense of divinity.⁵⁵ The problem with this objection is that it assumes *The Withholding Principle*.

The Withholding Principle: If an intellectually virtuous person (whom you realize is about as intellectually virtuous as you are) disagrees with you on a controversial topic even after each of you has tried your best to disclose all your

relevant evidence to the other (where this evidence falls short of being a knock-down proof that every intelligent thoughtful truth-seeker would accept), then to be rational each of you should give up your contentious belief on this topic and, instead, withhold judgment on the matter.⁵⁶

But because equally intelligent, thoughtful, and sincere people disagree about whether *The Withholding Principle* is true, it is self-defeating and irrational to accept. Moreover, apparently, if there are cases of disagreement such that your belief is both internally rational (i.e., the belief is appropriate to hold “downstream from experience”) and externally rational (i.e., the belief arises in the right way “upstream from experience”) then while another person’s beliefs could be internally rational, they won’t be externally irrational and hence will lack warrant. Religious disagreements could be like this.⁵⁷

Having considered various objections responses to them, we think that the first stage of Plantingian religious epistemology is sufficiently plausible, at least at this point in our enquiry. It is far from clear, however, whether these responses will be equally successful if Plantingian religious epistemology is internal to or may be appropriated by various non-Christian world religions. We discuss this problem in Part IV. In Parts II and III we consider to what extent Plantingian religious epistemology is consistent with various non-Christian world religions. In the rest of this chapter, we discuss the second component of Plantingian religious epistemology, Plantinga’s proper-function theory of warrant.

PROPER FUNCTIONALISM

As mentioned in the previous section, Plantinga’s epistemology is grounded in the concepts of function, design, normality, malfunction, purpose, and damage. Plantinga writes that “the idea of proper function is one we all have; we all grasp it in at least a preliminary rough-and-ready way; we all constantly employ it.”⁵⁸ Plantinga’s theory of warrant doesn’t involve the application of methods or criteria of general rules for belief-formation, epistemic principles, and maxims to belief formation, as he thinks that while these procedures may work well in logic, math, and metaphysics, they aren’t very well suited to epistemology. Plantinga is a particularist; he maintains that we ought not to begin our inquiries having first assumed some methodology for getting at true belief (as Descartes and Locke do), but rather that we should start from particular instances of knowledge and then give an account of how it is that we have that knowledge (as Aristotle and Thomas Reid do).⁵⁹ Paradigmatic instances of warranted belief are “central, clear, and unequivocal cases of knowledge and warrant.”⁶⁰ As we move further away from these

paradigmatic instances of warranted belief, the degree of warrant that our beliefs have decreases. At their upper limits, we have less obvious or unclear cases of warrant. Beliefs on the periphery have little, if any, warrant at all. Perhaps it'd be best to hold such beliefs loosely or to suspend judgment about them altogether.

Plantinga thinks that a belief is warranted if and only if it is internally and externally rational. Plantinga characterizes internal rationality as “forming or holding the appropriate beliefs in response to experience, including both phenomenal imagery and doxastic experience.”⁶¹ It involves drawing inferences, making deductions, and realizing connections between various beliefs, looking for evidence when appropriate, being responsive to criticism, and being willing to be corrected when wrong. Internal rationality also pertains to dealing appropriately with epistemic defeaters for one's beliefs. Roughly, a belief D is a defeater for another belief B if upon acquiring D proper function requires giving up B where the cognitive process (or processes) that produce and sustains B are aimed at truth.⁶² Dealing appropriately with an epistemic defeater for B may involve one's engaging in further reflection on whether D in fact rebuts or undermines B. Briefly, D rebuts B if D provides justification for thinking that B is false and D undermines B if D provides justification for doubting or losing confidence in the truth of B.⁶³ Dealing appropriately with an epistemic defeater may but won't necessarily involve providing propositional arguments that rebut or undermine D.

External rationality involves forming or holding those beliefs that one ought to form in virtue of their cognitive faculties functioning properly and in an epistemic environment that sufficiently similar to the for which they were designed, by evolution and/or God. Plantinga writes that it requires “proper function with respect to the formation of the sensuous experience on which perceptual belief is based” and that it consists in “the formation of the right kind of doxastic experience—that is, the sort of doxastic experience required by proper function.”⁶⁴ According to Plantinga, both internal and external rationality are to be understood in terms of proper function. In sum, internal rationality may be characterized as “a matter of proper function all belief-producing processes ‘downstream from experience’” and external rationality as proper function “upstream” from experience.⁶⁵

To summarize, Plantinga maintains that a belief B is warranted for some epistemic agent S if and only if:

- (1) the cognitive faculties involved in the production of S's belief B are functioning properly,
- (2) S's cognitive environment is sufficiently similar to the one for which S's cognitive faculties were designed,

- (3) the purpose of S's design plan governing the production of B is the production of true beliefs,⁶⁶
- (4) S's design plan is a good one in that there is a high statistical or objective probability that a belief produced in accordance with the relevant segment of the design plan in that sort of environment is true.⁶⁷

We refer to (1)–(4) as proper functionalism.⁶⁸

WHY WE NEED PROPER FUNCTION: SWAMPMAN

Proper functionalism is central to Plantinga's epistemology. Plantinga has argued at great length in favor of his view. We do not cover his arguments at length, nor do we provide an exhaustive and thorough defense of proper functionalism. For that, we kindly refer the reader to Plantinga's own works.⁶⁹ But because some may be inclined to dispel the need for proper functionalism on account of various incompatible antecedent epistemological or metaphysical commitments, we recognize the need to provide some motivation for the claim that proper function is necessary for warrant. Those who are sufficiently convinced of the truth or the plausibility of proper functionalism may safely skip this material.

We take it that careful reflection on Swampman scenarios is sufficient to show that the proper-function condition is necessary for warrant. Before we make use of the Swampman counterexample, we articulate the Swampman scenario in its original context and briefly discuss Ernest Sosa's argument that it gives us reason to doubt that proper function is necessary for warrant. We then lay out two different arguments for thinking that, *contra* Sosa, the Swampman scenario gives us good reason for thinking that Plantinga's proper-function condition is necessary for warrant. In the first argument, we conclude that the Swampman scenario provides us with the ultimate Gettier case and in the second we employ cognitive science to help undermine Sosa's take on the Swampman scenario.

The Origins of Swampman

Swampman owes its origins to Donald Davidson's paper "Knowing one's own mind." Here, Davidson gives an example of an identical replica of himself, emerging from random and chaotic conditions:

Suppose lightning strikes a dead tree in a swamp; I am standing nearby. My body is reduced to its elements, while entirely by coincidence (and out of different molecules) the tree is turned into my physical replica. My replica, The

Swampman, moves exactly as I did; according to its nature it departs the swamp, encounters and seems to recognize my friends, and appears to return their greetings in English. It moves into my houses and seems to write articles on radical interpretation. No one can tell the difference.

But there *is* a difference. My replica can't recognize my friends; it can't *recognize* anything, since it never cognized anything in the first place. It can't know my friend's names (though of course it seems to), it can't remember my house. It can't mean what I do by the word "house," for example, since the sound "house" it makes was not learned in a context that would give it the right meaning—or any meaning at all. Indeed, I don't see how my replica can be said to mean anything by the sounds it makes, nor to have any thoughts.⁷⁰

Contra Davidson, Sosa thinks that when Swampman comes into existence he has knowledge.⁷¹ For example, upon coming into existence, it seems that Swampman's belief that there are trees around him should be considered knowledge. When he reflects on $2 + 2$ equaling 4, it seems that he knows that $2 + 2$ equals 4. However, there is no proper-function condition that would be satisfied in this scenario; there is no way in which Swampman's faculties ought to operate, for a random lightning strike isn't the sort of thing that confer a design plan on Swampman. Sosa concludes that Swampman knows things even though he lacks proper function.

To make his case even stronger, Sosa proposes a case where instead of a Swampman emerging, a Swampbaby somehow comes about.⁷² In this scenario, Swampbaby is raised from infancy to adulthood by normal, properly functioning human parents. It would seem that Swampbaby would grow up knowing all sorts of things. For instance, he could go to school and learn that virtual particles pop in and out of a quantum vacuum, or that Columbus sailed the ocean blue in 1492. According to Sosa, if Swampbaby is metaphysically possible, then we have a clear counterexample to Plantinga's proper functionalism. We maintain that our critique of Sosa's Swampman scenario counts equally against his Swampbaby one as well.

Swampman Argument 1: The Gettier Argument

Boyce and Plantinga⁷³ as well as McNabb⁷⁴ have argued that Swampman isn't a defeater for proper functionalism but actually strengthens the case for proper functionalism. As McNabb emphasizes, what epistemologists are after is a tight connection to truth, that is, a tight connection between the belief produced by one's cognitive faculties and that belief being true. McNabb maintains that careful reflection on the Swampman case makes it clear that without proper function there won't be a tight connection to truth. Compare Davidson with Swampman. When Davidson forms a belief, say the belief that the original Star Wars trilogy is better than the Star Wars prequel trilogy, his

faculties are operating in the manner in which they ought. However, when Swampman forms that belief, his faculties are not functioning properly, as there isn't any way in which Swampman's faculties should or shouldn't function, given that they haven't been designed by God and/or evolution. Rather, his faculties lack a way in which they should operate altogether, and it just so happens that his faculties produce this true belief over any other belief. Given that Swampman's faculties lack a way in which they should operate, there is no tight connection between the belief produced by his faculties and the truth of that belief. Moreover, that his faculties supply him with any true beliefs at all is a paradigmatic instance of cognitive luck. As such, Swampman appears to be the subject of the ultimate Gettier case: though he consistently produces true beliefs, and he even can supply the right sort of reasons for holding to them, his beliefs lack the relevant tight connection to truth. On the other hand, one might object that it is hard to imagine how it could be that one could have mostly true beliefs, as well as access to the right sorts of reasons for holding them, and still somehow have beliefs that lack a tight connection to truth. In response to this ambiguity, we provide another scenario, the Gambling Demon scenario.

It is metaphysically possible that hell exists and in hell there is some sort of common room where demons can take a break from their daily duties of torture. In this common room, there are belief and reason forming slot machines where upon pulling the lever on each type of slot machine, random beliefs and random reasons for holding them come up. For fun, the demons insert whatever beliefs and reasons that come up on the slot machines into the cognitive faculties of an unfortunate soul. What usually follows is that the unfortunate soul comes to hold beliefs such as "the dog made a ruler" and would have a reason such as "because 1 plus 1 equals Nogot." When the demons are in the mood for even more fun, they'll pull the lever and some poor soul will have the rest of their future belief and reason pairs determined in sum and all at once. While generally this is cause for considerable demonic celebration, much to the surprise of an unexpectant demon, upon pulling the lever on both the belief and reason forming slot machines, it just so happened the beliefs and the reasons for holding them perfectly correlate with the actions that the unfortunate soul (now fortunate soul?) will take for the rest of her life. So, for example, when the unfortunate soul is walking to church she believes that she is walking to church and she has a corresponding appropriate reason for doing so. In this case, we have a subject whose faculties are producing true beliefs, who even has access to the right reasons for holding them, and yet few would dare say that she has knowledge. This scenario shows that just because one has mostly or even all true beliefs and has access to the reasons for holding them it doesn't automatically follow that one's beliefs have a tight connection to truth. Thus, just because

Swampman (or Swampbaby) has true beliefs and access to the right reasons for holding to such beliefs, it doesn't follow that his beliefs have a tight connection to truth.

Swampman Argument 2: Cognitive Science Meets Swampman

Kenneth Boyce and Andrew Moon have identified another argument that the proper functionalist could use to show the plausibility of the proper-function condition.⁷⁵ They argue that what underlies Swampman counterexamples is (C1), a principle that states, "If a belief B is warranted for a subject S and another subject S* comes to hold B in the same way that S came to hold B in a relevantly similar environment to the one in which S came to hold B, then B is warranted for S*."⁷⁶ The authors go on to report how cognitive science supports the claim that children as young as four months of age know that objects don't go out of existence when they are no longer looking at them. Given the empirical evidence for that factual claim, the authors go on to create a counterexample which they contend undercuts one's justification for (C1). Suppose a small child named Billy has a cognitive malfunction which leads him to believe that anything red that goes out of his sight ceases to exist. Billy is abducted by aliens who, due to their cognitive environment (one in which red things really do pop out of existence upon not being observed), normally come to hold true beliefs about red things going out of existence when they are not observed. Suppose that Billy and an alien child—Boyce and Moon call him Zork—are together on the alien planet and that their cognitive faculties are operating in the same sort of manner. When both of them form the belief that a red object goes out of existence (when one actually does), it would seem Zork's belief would have warrant but Billy's wouldn't. But, as this situation meets (C1), it would seem that (C1) couldn't rationally be held. This being the case, the authors think that only the proper functionalist can explain why one could be warranted and the other one wouldn't.

Recently, James Taylor has suggested that what is wrong with Boyce and Moon's case isn't that there is a lack of proper function but rather the presence of cognitive malfunction.⁷⁷ He contends that Billy's lack of knowledge doesn't give us positive reason for thinking that the proper-function condition is plausible but rather gives us good reason for thinking that beliefs produced by malfunctioning cognitive faculties are unwarranted. Because Swampman's faculties aren't designed, he has neither properly functioning faculties nor malfunctioning faculties. Taking things a step further, imagine a swamp version of Zork, SwampZork. At least initially, it seems intuitive that both Zork and SwampZork would possess knowledge when they form the aforementioned belief. Taylor concludes that Boyce and Moon's case falls short and doesn't provide a good argument for proper function.

Boyce responds to Taylor by inviting him to imagine a swamp version of Billy, SwampBilly.⁷⁸ SwampBilly wouldn't have cognitive malfunction (since he isn't designed) and yet it seems intuitive to think that on the alien planet (the one Zork and SwampZork are on), SwampBilly would still lack knowledge about object permanence. By way of support for this intuition, suppose that all of the subjects we've discussed are intrinsic duplicates. Subjects A and B are *intrinsic duplicates* if and only if they have exactly the same intrinsic properties.⁷⁹ As David Lewis writes, intrinsic properties are properties things have "in virtue of the way they themselves are," whereas extrinsic properties are properties things have "in virtue of their relations or lack of relations to other things."⁸⁰ A *perfectly natural property* is a fundamental, or primitive, natural property that can be discovered only by physics.⁸¹ According to Lewis,

it can plausibly be said that all perfectly natural properties are intrinsic. Then we can say that two things are *duplicates* if (1) they have exactly the same perfectly natural properties, and (2) their parts can be put into correspondence in such a way that corresponding parts have exactly the same perfectly natural properties, and stand in the same perfectly natural relations . . . Then we can go on to say that an *intrinsic* property is one that can never differ between duplicates.⁸²

If SwampBilly and SwampZork are intrinsic duplicates, then one couldn't say that SwampZork has knowledge that the red object goes out of existence without also saying that SwampBilly also knows that. If, as we've argued, SwampBilly lacks knowledge, then it follows that SwampZork lacks knowledge, too. This argument undercuts Taylor's response and leaves Boyce and Moon's original argument undefeated. Having motivated the view that the central tenet of Plantinga's epistemology is plausible, we move on to discuss Plantinga's religious application of it.

WARRANTED CHRISTIAN BELIEF: THE STANDARD AND EXTENDED AQUINAS/CALVIN MODELS

In *Warranted Christian Belief*, Plantinga introduces the standard and extended Aquinas/Calvin models.⁸³ Briefly, a model M is a possibly true proposition that shows how it could be that another proposition or state of affairs, the target proposition(s) of M, could be true or actual. If a model is true, then its target propositions are true, too.⁸⁴ The standard Aquinas/Calvin model shows how theistic belief could be warranted in an epistemically basic way for theists. The propositional content of theistic belief is that God is an intellectual, affective, and an intentional agent who is all-loving, perfectly

good, all-knowing, and all-powerful.⁸⁵ The extended Aquinas/Calvin model shows how it could be that Christian belief is warranted for Christians in an epistemically basic way. Christian belief includes the core teachings of Christianity as they are expressed by the intersection of the Christian creeds: that humans are sinners and God graciously provides forgiveness of sins through the sacrificial atonement of Jesus's death on the cross.⁸⁶

According to the standard Aquinas/Calvin model, humans are able to have knowledge of God by means of a special cognitive belief-forming faculty or process. The proper function of this faculty or process is to take perceptions or experiences of a certain kind as cognitive inputs and to produce appropriate belief outputs in response to those perceptions or experiences. Belief in God is thereby produced immediately and non-inferentially, in a manner analogous to how visual perception furnishes us with properly basic beliefs. On these points, Plantinga follows John Calvin, who writes, "There is within the human mind, and indeed by natural instinct, an awareness of deity" and "Men of sound judgment will always be sure that a sense of divinity [Latin, *sensus divinitatis*] which can never be effaced is engraved upon men's minds."⁸⁷ The *sensus divinitatis* is "a disposition or set of dispositions to form theistic beliefs in various circumstances, in response to the sorts of conditions or stimuli that trigger the working of this sense of divinity."⁸⁸

According to the extended Aquinas/Calvin model, there is a three-tiered cognitive process that produces properly basic and warranted Christian belief: the internal instigation of the Holy Spirit, scripture, and faith. The internal instigation of the Holy Spirit (IHS) is a belief-forming process that produces specifically Christian belief, including belief in "trinity, incarnation, Christ's resurrection, atonement, forgiveness of sins, regeneration, and eternal life."⁸⁹ The proper function of the *sensus divinitatis* is to get someone to accept the content of theistic belief immediately and in a properly basic way. The IHS, in conjunction with the proper functionalist constraints, produces specifically Christian beliefs about God. The Holy Spirit testifies to a person about the truths of the Gospel and prompts him or her to believe it. Scripture is divine testimony from the Spirit and is identified with the Old Testament and the New Testament, which together form the Christian Bible.⁹⁰ Lastly, there is faith, defined as "a firm and certain knowledge of God's benevolence toward us . . . revealed to our minds and sealed upon our hearts."⁹¹ Believers come to have faith in a wide variety of situations, including going to church, listening to sermons and religious teachings, reading scripture, praying, and considering God's handiwork as it is displayed in the created order nature. Plantinga argues that if both the standard and extended Aquinas/Calvin models (or models rather like them) are true, then, so long as Christians adequately deal with whatever objections to the truth, rationality, and coherence of Christian belief that may arise and are generally epistemically responsible with respect

to the formation and maintenance of their beliefs about God, both Christian belief and theistic belief are warranted for Christians in a properly basic way.

It is important to emphasize that Plantinga doesn't argue that either the standard or extended Aquinas/Calvin model is true. That would be contrary to the spirit of his religious epistemology. Rather, he maintains that *if* the models are true, then, very probably, theistic belief and Christian belief, respectively, are properly basic and warranted for those who hold them.

Three theses capture the core features of Plantinga's religious epistemology at work in the standard model:

- (I) The Dependency Thesis: Humans are ontologically and epistemologically dependent on and created by God.
- (II) The Design Thesis: Humans are created in accord with a design plan one aim of which is the production of true belief.
- (III) The Immediacy Thesis: God endows humans with special cognitive faculties or belief-forming processes through which theistic belief can be known in an epistemically immediate and basic manner.⁹²

Two additional theses capture the core elements of the extended model, (IV) the Internal Inspiration of the Holy Spirit Thesis, or the Internal Inspiration Thesis for short, and (V) the Scriptural Revelation Thesis. Each thesis proposes a special means by which God causes Christians to have, immediately and in a properly basic way, faith that certain components of Christian belief are true.

- (IV) The Internal Inspiration of the Holy Spirit Thesis: There is a special belief-forming process the purpose of which is to produce specifically Christian beliefs about the nature of God, salvation, forgiveness of sins, eternal life, and the like.
- (V) The Scriptural Revelation Thesis: By means of scripture, which is identified with the Christian Bible, God propositionally reveals to humans important divine teachings and doctrines.⁹³

CONCLUSION

In this chapter, we explained and motivated the main components of Plantinga's religious epistemology and responded to common objections. In the next, we consider the viability of naturalism as a worldview. First, we consider whether there are viable naturalistic accounts of proper function, focusing on the views of Karen Neander, Ruth Millikan, Peter Graham, Ernest Sosa, Michael Levin, and Philippa Foot. Second, we discuss Plantinga's

evolutionary argument against naturalism (EAA) and the ramifications it has for our project. We also consider a couple of new arguments against naturalism, one formulated by Tom Crisp, the central claim of which is that if naturalism is true then we have a defeater for the reliability of our abductive reasoning faculties, and another argument of our own making, the central claim of which is that if naturalism is true then we don't have a good reason to think that any of our metaphysical beliefs are true.

NOTES

1. Alvin Plantinga, *God and Other Minds: A Study of the Rational Justification of Belief in God* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990), xi.

2. Plantinga, *God and Other Minds*, 271.

3. See, for instance, the following papers: "God and Rationality," *Reformed Journal* 24, no. 1 (1974): 28–29; "Is Belief in God Rational?" in *Rationality and Religious Belief*, ed. C. Delaney, 7–27 (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1979); "The Reformed Objection to Natural Theology," *Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association* 15 (1980): 49–62; "Is Belief in God Properly Basic?" *Nous* 15, no. 1 (1981): 41–52; "On Reformed Epistemology," *The Reformed Journal* 32, no. 1 (1982): 13–17; and "Reason and Belief in God," in *Faith and Rationality*, eds. Alvin Plantinga and Nicholas Wolterstorff, 16–93 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983).

4. For more exhaustive overviews and analyses of this period of Plantinga's thought, see James F. Sennett, *Modality, Probability, and Rationality: A Critical Examination of Alvin Plantinga's Epistemology* (New York: Peter Lang, 1991) and James K. Beilby, *Epistemology as Theology: An Evaluation of Alvin Plantinga's Religious Epistemology* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2006).

5. Alvin Plantinga, "The Reformed Objection to Natural Theology," *Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association* 54 (1980): 49–62.

6. *Ibid.*, 50.

7. *Ibid.*, 51.

8. Plantinga, "Reason and Belief in God," 143.

9. The view has more recent defenders, too, including Timothy McGrew and John DePoe. See Timothy McGrew, *The Foundations of Knowledge* (Lanham: Littlefield Adams Books, 1995) and John M. DePoe, "In Defense of Classical Foundationalism: A Critical Evaluation of Plantinga's Argument that Classical Foundationalism is Self-Refuting," *South African Journal of Philosophy* 26, no. 3 (2007): 245–251.

10. Plantinga, "The Reformed Objection to Natural Theology," 56.

11. *Ibid.*, 57.

12. *Ibid.*, 56.

13. See Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, 1, Q. ii, a. 1. The translation we use is Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica: Complete English Edition in Five Volumes* (Westminster: Christian Classics, 1981). Note that Aquinas maintained that the

specific essence of a thing is that which is expressed by its definition. See *ibid.*, 1, Q. iii, a. 3.

14. *Ibid.*, 1, Q. ii, a. 1.

15. *Ibid.*, 1, Q. i, a. 1.

16. *Ibid.*, 1, Q. ii, a. 3.

17. René Descartes, “Meditations on First Philosophy,” in *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes, Volume II*, trans. John Cottingham, Robert Stoothoff, and Dugal Murdoch (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 17.

18. Plantinga, “The Reformed Objection to Natural Theology,” 56.

19. Plantinga, “Is Belief in God Properly Basic?” 43.

20. *Ibid.*, 44–47.

21. Alvin Plantinga, *God, Freedom, and Evil* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1974), 112.

22. Alvin Plantinga, “Appendix: Two Dozen (or So) Theistic Arguments,” in *Alvin Plantinga*, ed. Deane-Peter Baker, *Contemporary Philosophers in Focus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 207.

23. *Ibid.*, 208.

24. *Ibid.*, 209.

25. Alvin Plantinga, *Knowledge and Christian Belief* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015), 126.

26. Richard Swinburne, *The Existence of God*, second edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 7.

27. Alvin Plantinga, *Where the Conflict Really Lies: Science, Religion, and Naturalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 42.

28. Alvin Plantinga, “Designed Intelligence,” *Times Literary Supplement* [London, England] July 21, 2006: 28.

29. See Plantinga, “Reason and Belief in God,” 73–78. Also see Plantinga, *Warranted Christian Belief* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 344.

30. The Great Pumpkin is a fictional character from the cartoon *Peanuts*, who is rumored to go to pumpkin patches every Halloween. Even within the show, the belief that the Great Pumpkin exists is largely seen as an irrational belief to have.

31. Keith DeRose, *Voodoo Epistemology*, 1999.

32. Daniel Dennett and Alvin Plantinga, *Science and Religion: Are They Compatible?* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 28.

33. See Plantinga “The Reformed Objection to Natural Theology,” 57–58.

34. DeRose, “Voodoo Epistemology,” 7. Society of Christian Philosophers, Eastern Division Meeting of the American Philosophical Association, December 29, 1999.

35. Plantinga, *Warranted Christian Belief*, 345.

36. Plantinga, “The Reformed Objection to Natural Theology,” 60.

37. *Ibid.*, 60–61.

38. Plantinga, *Warranted Christian Belief*, 111–112.

39. See Dennett and Plantinga, *Science and Religion: Are They Compatible?* 39–43, 57–60.

40. Plantinga, *Warrant and Proper Function*, 21.

41. Michael Martin, *Atheism: A Philosophical Justification* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1992), 272.

42. See Plantinga, *Warranted Christian Belief*, 345–351 for the full argument.
43. Alvin Plantinga, “Replies to My Commenters,” in *Plantinga’s Warranted Christian Belief: Critical Essays with a Reply by Alvin Plantinga*, ed. Dieter Schönecker (Boston: De Gruyter, 2015), 248.
44. *Ibid.*, 248.
45. See Dennett and Plantinga, *Science and Religion: Are They Compatible?* 39–43, 57–60.
46. *Ibid.*, 57–60.
47. Joseph Kim, *Reformed Epistemology and the Problem of Religious Diversity: Proper Function, Epistemic Disagreement, and Christian Exclusivism* (Eugene: Pickwick Publications, 2011), 77.
48. Michael Bergmann, “Rational Religious Belief Without Arguments,” in *Philosophy of Religion: An Anthology*, seventh edition. eds. Louis Pojman and Michael Rea (Boston: Wadsworth, 2015), 615–617. Note that one of the objections Bergmann considers is the Great Pumpkin objection. But since we’ve covered that objection in detail, we omit his response to it.
49. This objection has roots in the thinking of John Hick. See his *An Interpretation of Religion: Human Responses to the Transcendent*, second edition (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2004), 233–251.
50. Bergmann, “Rational Religious Belief without Arguments,” 617.
51. *Ibid.*, 617–618.
52. *Ibid.*, 618. Note that Bergmann follows Plantinga’s own explanation of the lack of belief in God. Plantinga writes: “Due to sin, the knowledge of God provided by the *sensus divinitatis*, prior to faith and regeneration, is both narrowed in scope and partially suppressed. The faculty itself may be *diseased* and thus partly or wholly disabled. There is such a thing as cognitive disease; there is blindness, deafness, inability to tell right from wrong, insanity; and there are analogues of these conditions with respect to the operation of the *sensus divinitatis*.” (Plantinga, *Knowledge and Christian Belief*, 37.)
53. *Ibid.*, 618–620.
54. *Ibid.*, 618.
55. *Ibid.*, 620.
56. *Ibid.*, 620.
57. *Ibid.*, 622.
58. Alvin Plantinga, *Warrant and Proper Function*, 5.
59. For more on the particularist approach to epistemology, see Roderick Chisholm, *The Aquinas Lecture: The Problem of the Criterion* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1973).
60. Alvin Plantinga, *Warrant: The Current Debate* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 213.
61. Plantinga, *Warranted Christian Belief*, 111.
62. Plantinga, *Warranted Christian Belief*, 363.
63. For more on this distinction, see Bergmann, *Justification Without Awareness* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006): 158–159.
64. Plantinga, *Warranted Christian Belief*, 112.

65. *Ibid.*, 110.
66. Plantinga, *Warrant and Proper Function*, 21–22.
67. For a more complete statement of these conditions, *ibid.*, 194.
68. For a volume of several challenging and critical evaluations of Proper Functionalism, see Jonathon L. Kvanvig, ed. *Warrant in Contemporary Epistemology: Essays in Honor of Plantinga's Epistemology* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 1996). Also see Deane-Peter Baker, ed. *Alvin Plantinga* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).
69. The seminal defense of proper functionalism is Alvin Plantinga, *Warrant and Proper Function*, 1993. Also see Kvanvig, ed. *Warrant in Contemporary Epistemology*.
70. Donald Davidson, "Knowing One's Own Mind," *Proceedings and Addresses of the American Philosophical Association* 60, no. 3 (1987), 443–444.
71. Ernest Sosa, "Knowledge: Instrumental and Testimonial," in *The Epistemology of Testimony*, eds. Jennifer Lackey and Ernest Sosa (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2006), 120.
72. Ernest Sosa, "Proper Functionalism and Virtue Epistemology," in *Warrant in Contemporary Epistemology, Warrant in Contemporary Epistemology: Essays in Honor of Plantinga's Theory of Knowledge*, ed. Jonathon L. Kvanvig (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 1996), 256.
73. See Kenneth Boyce and Alvin Plantinga, "Proper Functionalism," in *The Continuum Companion to Epistemology*, ed. Andrew Cullison (London: Continuum, 2012), 130–131 and Kenneth Boyce, "Proper Functionalism," *The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, accessed July 25, 2018, <http://www.iep.utm.edu/prop-fun>.
74. Tyler Dalton McNabb, "Warranted Religion: Answering Objections to Alvin Plantinga's Epistemology," *Religious Studies* 52, no. 4 (2014): 477–495.
75. See Kenny Boyce and Andrew Moon, "In Defense of Proper Functionalism: Cognitive Science Takes on Swampman," *Synthese* 193, no. 9 (2016), 2987–3001.
76. *Ibid.*, 2990.
77. James Taylor, "Colloquium on Justification," Meeting of the American Philosophical Association Pacific Division, March 31st, 2016.
78. Kenneth Boyce and Andrew Moon, "In Defense of Proper Functionalism: Cognitive Science Takes on the Swampman" (with Andrew Moon), 2016 Pacific Division of the American Philosophical Association, March 30–April 2, 2016.
79. We take it that the design plan of a subject is something that is extrinsic to the subject. We can therefore imagine subjects all being intrinsic duplicates, even though the subjects differ with respect to their cognitive design plans (if the subjects have one).
80. David Lewis, *On the Plurality of Worlds* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 1986), 61.
81. *Ibid.*, 60–61.
82. *Ibid.*, 61–62.
83. This section is a reworking of material originally published in, Erik Baldwin, *Fully Informed Reasonable Disagreement and Tradition Based Perspectivalism, Studies in Philosophical Theology, Vol. 56* (Leuven: Peeters Publishing, 2016), 26–27.

84. Plantinga, *Warranted Christian Belief*, 168.
85. *Ibid.*, vii.
86. *Ibid.*, 248.
87. John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, trans. Henry Beveridge (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), I, iii, 1, quoted in Plantinga, *Warranted Christian Belief*, 171–172. Also see *Romans*, 1:18–20.
88. Plantinga, *Warranted Christian Belief*, 173.
89. *Ibid.*, 241.
90. *Ibid.*, 251.
91. *Ibid.*, 244.
92. See Baldwin, *Fully Informed Reasonable Disagreement and Tradition Based Perspectivalism*, 27.
93. *Ibid.*, 28.

Chapter 2

Naturalism, Proper Functionalism, and the Evolutionary Argument against Naturalism

In this chapter, we provide two arguments for the view that naturalism fails to provide the resources that are necessary for making Plantinga's proper functionalism intelligible. Our aim is to show that naturalists cannot rationally accept or otherwise make use of Plantinga's proper-function account of warranted belief.¹ We consider naturalistic accounts of proper function developed by Karen Neander, Ruth Millikan, Ernest Sosa, Michael Levin, as well as a Neo-Aristotelian account inspired by Philippa Foot, and argue that none of them can account for proper function. After introducing Plantinga's evolutionary argument against naturalism, we show that even if naturalism could somehow account for proper function, it still couldn't account for the remaining conditions of Plantinga's theory of warrant. This is because, given naturalism and Darwinian evolution, our cognitive faculties evolved such that they produce beliefs that are conducive to survival and reproduction, but the truth-value of such beliefs is irrelevant to satisfying this Darwinian requirement. Consequently, lacking a reason to privilege a belief that leads to the Darwinian requirement being satisfied over another leading to the same result, naturalists would have a defeater for both beliefs. Thus, even if naturalism were true it could not be warranted. Along the way, we introduce some of the tools that we will use in subsequent chapters to engage various world religions in order to determine whether and if so to what extent they can make use of Plantingian religious epistemology.

WHAT IS NATURALISM?

There are various meanings associated with the term "naturalism."² There is epistemological naturalism, characterized by W. V. O. Quine as "the

recognition that it is within science itself, and not in some prior philosophy, that reality is to be identified and described.”³ Along similar lines, Michael Devitt notes, “there is only one way of knowing, the empirical way that is the basis of science (whatever that may be).”⁴ G. E. Moore’s construal of ethical naturalism is closely related to epistemological naturalism so understood. Moore writes, “Ethics is an empirical or positive science: its conclusions could all be established by means of empirical observation and induction.”⁵ Another version of naturalism, methodological naturalism, maintains that the methodological assumptions that should guide or constrain the process of inquiry ought to be naturalistic.⁶ Brian Leiter, for example, maintains that “Naturalism in philosophy is always first a methodological view to the effect that philosophical theorizing should be continuous with empirical inquiry in the sciences.”⁷ Epistemological and methodological understandings of naturalism are distinct from metaphysical naturalism, which is, according to David Armstrong, the view that “reality consists of nothing but a single all-embracing spatio-temporal system.”⁸ W. T. Stace defines naturalism “as the belief that the world is a single system of things or events every one of which is bound to every other in a network of relations and laws, and that outside this ‘natural order’ there is nothing.”⁹ Similar to Armstrong and Stace, Plantinga characterizes naturalism as “the idea that there is no such person as God or anything like God; we might think of it as high-octane atheism or perhaps atheism-plus.”¹⁰ On Plantinga’s characterization of naturalism, Michael Bergmann writes, “Metaphysical naturalism is, roughly speaking, the view that there are no supernatural beings—no such beings as, for example, God or angels or ghosts.”¹¹ While we take Plantinga’s and Bergmann’s characterizations of metaphysical naturalism to be roughly the same, for our purposes in this chapter, we work with Bergmann’s.

NATURALISTIC ATTEMPTS AT PROPER FUNCTION

In chapter 1, we argued that careful reflection on various Swampman scenarios supports the view that proper function is necessary for warranted belief. Granting that claim, can naturalism supply the preconditions that are required to make proper function intelligible? According to Plantinga, naturalistic accounts of proper function put forward by various philosophers aren’t really accounts of proper function at all, but rather accounts of similar or nearby notions of it that invoke evolution and natural selection.¹² We consider and evaluate two such naturalistic accounts, each of which either depends on or is complimented by contemporary evolutionary theory. We then outline three further attempts to provide naturalistic accounts of proper function that do not depend on evolutionary theory in any significant way.

Non-Theistic Evolutionary Accounts of Proper Function

Take, for example, Karen Neander's account of proper function: "It is the/a proper function of an item (X) of an organism (O) to do that which items of X 's type did to contribute to the inclusive fitness of O 's ancestors, and which caused the genotype, of which X is the phenotypic expression, to be selected by natural selection."¹³ Essentially, on this view, an organ is properly functioning if it contributes to one's survival in the way that it did in the case of one's ancestors. Another popular account of proper function related to Neander's account is advanced by Ruth Millikan:

Putting things very roughly, for an item A to have function F as a "proper function," it is necessary (and close to sufficient) that one of these two conditions should hold. (1) A originated as a "reproduction" (to give one example, as a copy, or a copy of a copy) of some prior item or items that, *due* in part to possession of the properties reproduced, have actually performed F in the past, and A exists because (causally historically because) of this or these performances. (2) A originated as the product of some prior device that, given its circumstances, had performance of F as a proper function and that, under those circumstances, normally causes F to be performed by *means* of producing an item like A . Items that fall under condition (2) have "derived proper functions," functions derived from the devices that produce them.¹⁴

These naturalistic accounts of proper function share a common feature, namely, that there is no first member of a species. However, this feature is problematic. As Plantinga writes, "Whether or not God directly and immediately created Adam and Eve, clearly he *could* have—and if he had, they would have had no ancestors. Still, their hearts would have had proper functions: the very functions performed by yours and mine."¹⁵ As the story goes, God, in a quick fashion, directly creates Adam and Eve, two fully developed humans without any prior history, with hearts that function properly despite the fact that they lacked ancestors or prior copies. If this sort of story is logically possible, then it isn't necessary for individuals of a species to have immediate ancestors in order them to have properly functioning faculties.¹⁶ It follows that the accounts of proper function offered by Neander and Millikan fail. To further support this point, consider the development of the modern computer. Arguably, the first electronic computer was the Atanasoff-Berry Computer of 1939.¹⁷ It is indisputable that ENIAC (Electronic Numerical Integrator and Computer) is the world's first turing-complete large-scale electronic digital computer.¹⁸ Whichever of these inventions should receive the honor of being the first modern computer depends on just how we define the term, but isn't it obvious that these devices were properly functioning computers despite lacking immediate predecessors? Similarly, isn't it just as

obvious that Adam and Eve would have properly functioning faculties even if they lacked immediate ancestors? On the basis of these considerations we conclude that naturalists should abandon the sort of account of proper function offered by Neander and Millikan.¹⁹

Furthermore, in regard to these evolutionary accounts, not only are the conditions they propose unnecessary (given the logical possibility of Adam and Eve and the actual history of the modern electronic computer), but, as Plantinga has pointed out, they aren't sufficient either. Plantinga gives the example of a Hitler-like madman, who orders his minions to cause a genetic mutation in select non-Aryan victims that greatly hinders their visual system and add a certain amount of pain when they open their eyes.²⁰ The regime then starts killing off non-Aryan non-mutants. In this situation, the genetic mutation that hinders the visual system of and causes discomfort to the non-Aryan mutants actually saves them from perishing. Several generations later, we see the criteria of these evolutionary accounts being met. Later generations of non-Aryans mutants have visual systems that were conducive to the previous generation's survival and those systems enable the current population to survive and reproduce. But should one really think that the non-Aryan mutants have a visual system that is properly functioning? Plantinga thinks that the obvious answer to this question is no, taking that answer to provide a good reason to reject accounts such as Neander's and Millikan's all together.²¹

Contrary to Plantinga's view, Peter Graham has argued that the non-Aryan mutants actually have two design plans.²² They have their original design plan and they have a newly acquired design plan that came about under the scenario Plantinga has described. Thus, for Graham, there is one sense in which the non-Aryan mutants' faculties aren't functioning properly (in accordance with their original design plan) and another sense in which their faculties are functioning properly (in accordance with their newly acquired design plan). But is this plausible? It doesn't seem at all clear to us that a way in which some people's faculties ought to operate can come about merely from the refraining actions of a twisted regime who decide not to kill them, in virtue of their being victims of a genetic harm originally brought about the regime's founders. We think the Plantingian will rightly assert that making the concession that the non-Aryan mutants have a design plan doesn't provide evidence that evolutionary accounts can work but rather supports the view that they can't.

Non-Evolutionary and Non-Theistic Accounts of Proper Function

It is important to note that non-theistic accounts of proper function needn't hinge on particular claims about how our cognitive faculties evolved to have

their functions. To illustrate how these sorts of accounts fail, we evaluate two representative non-theistic and non-evolutionary accounts of proper function, one offered by Ernest Sosa and another offered by Michael Levin.

As articulated by Plantinga, Sosa's account is roughly that "S's cognitive faculty, *F*, tracks the truth (and functions properly) if and only if, (1) if *P* were true *F* would produce (in *S*) her belief *P*, and (2) if *F* were to produce (in *S*) the belief that *P*, *P* would be true."²³ While Sosa doesn't offer an account of proper function per se, but rather one of cognitive proper function, his account includes or presupposes a more general account of proper function. According to Sosa, a person could have a faculty that is truth tracking but only in virtue of some cognitive malfunction. For example, suppose that God exists but our belief in his existence is an unintended malfunction of our cognitive faculties and nothing else. Given that if God exists, God exists necessarily, belief in God would meet Sosa's truth-tracking criteria. (Sosa, effectively conceding this point, writes, "any belief in a necessary truth will be automatically as safe as could be. Not easily will one hold such a belief while it is false, since not *possibly* could one hold it while it was false."²⁴) But that a necessarily true proposition could be as safe as could be even when produced by malfunctioning cognitive faculties seems obviously problematic. Elsewhere, Sosa proposes a more complete account that includes the requirement that *S* comes to believe that *P* in a reflective and intellectually virtuous way.²⁵ With the addition of this requirement, Sosa might argue that one's cognitive faculties wouldn't be functioning properly if one merely believed a necessary truth by way of a safe but unintended cognitive process.

We don't think adding the virtue condition will save Sosa's account of proper function, however. Sosa defines an intellectual virtue or faculty as "a competence in virtue of which one would mostly attain the truth and avoid error in a certain field of propositions *F*, when in certain conditions *C*."²⁶ But in order to determine the function of an intellectual virtue or faculty, Sosa can't just reiterate his truth-tracking account. At best, making that move would just push the original question back a step. More importantly, Sosa's account is merely a description of conditions that need to be in place in order for one to obtain knowledge. But to provide such a description isn't to give an account of how a subject's faculties ought to operate. Thus, Sosa's account lacks the resources necessary account for the normativity that is related to proper function.

Like Sosa, Michael Levin has developed an account of proper function that doesn't depend on evolutionary claims. Developing Larry Wright's account of proper function, which focuses on the explanation of things or relationships rather than the advantageous effects of faculties, Levin's account goes as follows: *F* is a function of *S* if and only if "*S* is explained by its leading to

F and is the efficient cause *S* of *S* is explained by its leading to *S*.”²⁷ In regard to this account, Plantinga points out:

God could have created Adam (or Eve) directly; if he had, the function of Adam’s heart would have been just what the function of our hearts is, namely to circulate the blood in a certain way. But (the second clause of) Levin’s conditions isn’t met in this case: it is not the case that, under these conditions, the efficient cause of Adam (namely God) is explained by his “leading to” Adam’s heart.²⁸

Since one could think of a counterexample where the efficient cause isn’t explained by its “leading to” such and such, Levin’s account doesn’t work. Similar to the evolutionary accounts reviewed above, his account faces the trouble of the dreaded Hitler scenario. Plantinga writes:

Take a given mutant *m* and his visual system *S*, which works in that unfortunate way. The existence of *S* is explained by its working in that way: working in that miserable way kept *m* (or *m*’s ancestors) from being killed by the Nazis. The efficient cause of *S*—whatever system it is, in human beings, that causes the existence of visual systems—furthermore, is explained by its leading to *S*. In this case, then, the proposed necessary and sufficient condition is met; but it is not the function of *m*’s visual system to cause pain and display only a uniform green visual field with a few shadowy figures projected on it.²⁹

To conclude this section, we think Plantinga has established two successful counterexamples (one involving Adam and Eve and another involving Hitler) that show what goes wrong with most naturalistic attempts to account for proper function. Recall, as our discussion of Swampman scenarios in chapter 1 showed, that proper functions, as opposed to natural functions, aren’t intrinsic to an organism or organs but are rather extrinsic, conferred on them in accord with a design plan that an intentional conscious designer has for them. If biological organisms and their cognitive processes arise naturalistically, they, too, like Swampman’s faculties, have no way that they ought to function. The failure of naturalistic accounts of proper function further vindicates the claim that proper function needs a “proper functioner,” as it were. We concede that the failure of these accounts fails to demonstrate that no successful naturalistic account of proper function is forthcoming. But that so many that have been proposed have failed provides compelling support for thinking that no good naturalistic accounts of proper function are forthcoming.

There is one last naturalistic account to consider, a Neo-Aristotelian Naturalist account. This account is unique because it doesn’t explicitly require or presuppose the truth of either metaphysical or epistemological naturalism. As such, our prior critiques of naturalism aren’t applicable to it.

Neo-Aristotelian Ethical Naturalism

By way of initial approximation, Neo-Aristotelian Ethical Naturalists typically defend the following theses: (i) rule-based or deontological ethical theories are sufficiently flawed so as to warrant a return to Aristotle and virtue ethics, (ii) objective features of organisms (and organisms themselves) have nature functions that fix evaluative criteria for performing these functions well, or excellently, and (iii) the natural functions of organism and the criteria and their normative evaluation can be known in a broadly empirical manner. For our purposes, we set to one side (i) and focus our attention on (ii) and (iii). From now on, we often refer to those who hold these views simply as Neo-Aristotelian Naturalists, or simply Neo-Aristotelians.

Note that Neo-Aristotelians need not affirm either metaphysical or epistemological naturalism. That is, they need not affirm that only natural objects exist or maintain that the only source of basic justification for our moral beliefs is what is sanctioned by empirical science. Although some philosophers in the Neo-Aristotelian camp are theists (such as Alasdair MacIntyre) and others are not (such as Philippa Foot), the view is logically consistent with both theism and atheism. We consider here whether Neo-Aristotelians who go on to affirm metaphysical naturalism can make full use of proper functionalism. Such Neo-Aristotelians may look to the writings of Philippa Foot to make a case that they can.

According to Foot, in many cases, sentences that make use of the expression “is a good A” presuppose objective criteria of the goodness of A’s. For instance, the sentence “This is a good knife” can’t be truly said of a knife the blade of which is unable to cut bread or rusts quickly.³⁰ Foot maintains that words such as “knife” have functional meaning, in that such words name objects in respect of their functions. She writes, “Where a thing has a function the primary (but by no means necessarily the only) criterion for the goodness of that thing will be that it fulfils its function well. Thus the primary criterion of goodness in a knife is its ability to cut well.”³¹ Similarly, “The word ‘pen’ means something used in writing, and writing is making a set of marks designed to be read; so the minimum condition for a good pen is that it writes legibly.”³² She continues:

Knives and pens have functions not only because we use them for a central purpose but also because they are manufactured for a specific use. But it is obvious that there are examples of words which, without naming manufactured things, are functional in the strong sense: ‘eye,’ for instance, and ‘lung’ are words like this. Moreover words can be functional in the ‘strong’ sense without naming anything that we ourselves use or need. Any part of any plant or animal may have a function, and often we would refuse to call by the same name something that played no part, or a quite different part, in the life of the living thing. Such things as roots and claws are named in this way.³³

For these reasons, Foot maintains that there are objective conditions on the flourishing of living organisms and that these standards allow us to know marks of goodness of organisms that are appropriate to them as members of their kind. For example, a good spaniel must have long ears and a good cactus must have leaves or stems that store enough water and nutrients to enable them to withstand harsh environments.³⁴ We know these things because we have knowledge of the sorts of things that spaniels and cacti are. For instance, we know that a cactus with blighted or damaged stems isn't healthy or flourishing, and as such won't count as good, or more completely, won't count as a good specimen of its kind.

Various other terms without functional meaning when conjoined with "good" take on criteria of goodness rather like functional words do. For instance, a person is a good farmer only if he or she maintains crops and herds in a healthy condition. Regarding words such as "father" and "friend," she writes,

A man can only be said to be a good father if he looks after his children as best he can. Being a good *father* must have something to do with bringing up children, and more specifically caring for them. While opinions may differ as to what is best for children, and while more or less of the children's care may be assigned to parents in different communities, it is only within such limits that the criteria of a good father will differ from place to place.³⁵

And,

A good *friend* must be one who is well disposed towards the man whose friend he is; it makes no sense to say that he would be a good friend in so far as he cheated the other, or left him in a lurch.³⁶

John Hacker-Wright, elaborating on Foot's account of natural goodness, writes that moral goodness is an aspect of what makes us good as human beings. Rather like being blight-free and having lush green flesh in a certain shape makes a cactus good, there are objective constraints, which Foot calls "natural norms," that must be satisfied if we humans are to flourish as members of our kind, among them is the requirement that we must have certain moral and intellectual virtues.³⁷ According to Foot, objective standards that determine whether an organism is a good or bad specimen of their respective natural kind also have normative force. That is, Foot maintains that objective standards of natural goodness of an organism set in place objective natural norms that specify the criteria of appropriate or proper function for that organism. For example, that which makes it true that "food is good for humans," and hence that which makes it a moral fact that "humans are such that eating food is to their good," are natural facts about food and humans

that have normative import. The fact that human nature is *this* way rather than *that* way is what makes eating oatmeal good for them and ingesting arsenic bad for them, and that in turn is what grounds the objective moral judgment that putting arsenic in a child's oatmeal would be morally wrong and thus ought not to be done.³⁸ For these reasons, Neo-Aristotelians may conclude that knowledge of what is conducive to excellent human functioning is no different, in principle, than knowledge of what is conducive to the excellent functioning of other organisms, such as spaniels and cacti.

Commenting on Foot's views on natural norms and proper function, Hacker-Wright writes, "Foot makes the claim that natural norms are essential to the identification of anything as an organism—to identify something as an organism is ipso facto to view it from a normative standpoint . . . grasping something as an organism requires us to situate the organism against the background of its species . . . [which] requires us to consider it from a normative perspective."³⁹ For instance, the growth of a fern is essentially different than the growth of nonliving things, such as trash heaps. For one thing, ferns grow organically in accord with the natural process of cell-division; we can talk about how the growth of a fern should naturally grow. In contrast, there are no objective or natural conditions that specify when the growth of a trash heap goes either rightly or wrongly. Moreover, talk of the growth of a trash heap is at best metaphorical. There are no biological mechanisms internal to a trash heap, such as digestion and cellular reproduction that cause it to grow in size.

Given their views about natural goodness, natural normativity, and proper function, Footian Neo-Aristotelians are in a much better position to account for the necessary conditions of Plantinga's proper-function account of warrant than the other views we've looked at in this chapter. By way of summary, consider the following argument, call it Foot's Argument, for thinking that Neo-Aristotelians can make full use of Plantinga's proper functionalism:

- (1) Organisms (and their organs), including humans, have natural functions, and facts about the natural functions of organisms, together with facts about the natural environments in which they arise and thrive, determine the objective standards of natural goodness of humans (and their organs).
- (2) If there are objective standards of natural goodness for humans, then there are objective natural norms that specify the criteria of appropriate or proper function for humans.
- (3) There are objective standards of natural goodness for humans (and their organs).

Thus,

- (4) There are objective natural norms that specify the criteria of appropriate or proper function for human organisms (and their organs). [From (1) to (3)]

(5) If there are objective natural norms that specify the criteria of appropriate or proper function for human organisms (and their organs), then Neo-Aristotelians (and like-minded others who recognize these facts, too) can make full use of Plantinga's proper-functionalist account of warranted belief.

Thus,

(6) Neo-Aristotelians (and like-minded others who recognize these facts, too) can make full use of Plantinga's proper-functionalist account of warranted belief. [From (4) to (5)]

Objections and Replies

There are serious problems for metaphysical naturalists who accept Foot's Argument. Neo-Aristotelians who affirm metaphysical naturalism deny that God designed human beings and deny that God assigns them ultimate purposes, final ends, and goals; they affirm that whatever purposes and goals we or our organs have must arise naturalistically. In *Warrant and Proper Function*, Plantinga argues that naturalistic accounts of proper function fail, but grants that it is possible that naturalistic evolution might somehow furnish us with cognitive faculties that function properly in accord with a design plan.⁴⁰ In *Knowledge of God*, he is much less sanguine. He writes:

As far as I know, no one has been able to come up with a naturalistic analysis of proper function that is anywhere nearly adequate or accurate, and by now the project is beginning to look unhelpful. The fundamental reason, I suggest, is that this notion, the notion of function or proper function, essentially involves the aims and intentions of one or more conscious and intelligent designers. The notion of proper function really implies the idea of design by conscious, intentional, and intelligent designers. But that means that the organs and parts of plants, animals, and human beings can function properly (or improperly) only if they are designed and caused to be by one or more conscious, intelligent agents.⁴¹

If Plantinga is right about this, then, if metaphysical naturalism is true, metaphysical naturalists won't be able to rely on Foot's Argument for an adequate account of proper function. Here's why. Suppose that both premises (1) and (3) of Foot's Argument and metaphysical naturalism are true. Problems arise for metaphysical naturalists who would also affirm (2). If Plantinga is correct, there are objective natural norms that specify the criteria of appropriate or proper function for humans *only if* humans have design plans and proper functions. And, as we have argued above, humans have design plans and proper functions only if they are conferred on them by one or more conscious, intelligent agents, which can't be the case if metaphysical naturalism is true.⁴²

Thus, Neo-Aristotelians who affirm metaphysical naturalism can't coherently claim that (2) is true. This blocks them from drawing the inference to (4), which in turn prevents them from reaching the conclusion of the argument. Moreover, it won't be coherent for metaphysical naturalists to affirm (1), for what we've said against the truth of (2) also counts against the truth of (1). If organisms and their organs have proper functions and design plans only if they are conferred on them by a conscious, intelligent agent (or agents), then it's just not true that the natural functions of organisms and their organs, together with facts about the natural environments in which they arise and thrive, are enough to determine the objective standards of natural goodness of humans (and their organs). Again, it's also necessary for a conscious, intelligent agent (or agents) to confer on or build into those organisms their proper functions and design plans.

To be clear, we recognize that there are objective standards, or natural norms, according to which individual members of a species flourish in ways that are appropriate or natural to them given the kind of things they are. We grant that living organisms are natural kinds (or have natures or essences, if you prefer) and as such that there are natural objective standards according to which we may determine whether those organisms flourish and achieve the good that is natural to them. And, insofar as there are beings that can't realize their natural good without having and exercising their cognitive faculties in ways that are appropriate to their kind, we grant that some organisms have cognitive faculties with natural functions that may lead them to have various kinds of cognitive successes, including the acquisition of true belief. But from all this it doesn't follow there is a complete naturalistic account of how these organisms or their cognitive faculties should or ought to function, for there are objective natural norms that specify the criteria of appropriate or proper function of human organisms as a whole and their cognitive faculties in particular only if those norms are both fully descriptive and fully prescriptive. So, while the descriptive standards which specify the objective standards of natural goodness for humans in accord with the kinds of things they are can be accounted for or explained given metaphysical naturalism, because Footian descriptive accounts set forth in terms of natural norms of goodness lack the relevant prescriptive or normative force, they can't explain or account for the proper or improper functions of human organisms and their cognitive faculties. It follows that the relevant prescriptive standards can't be discovered by fully specifying the naturalistic, descriptive facts about humans or their cognitive faculties. In short, with respect to the proper or improper functions of human organisms and their cognitive faculties, we may say that Foot's Argument falls prey to Hume's law, according to which it is not possible to derive normative "ought" statements from purely descriptive "is" statements.⁴³ It would seem, then, that Jean-Paul Sartre was on to something

when he affirmed that if there is no creator God, then there are no ultimate purposes or ends to human existence, and the only meaning or significance is that which we give to ourselves as individuals.⁴⁴

We leave open the possibility that a forthcoming argument may plausibly bridge the gap between Footian descriptive norms of natural goodness and the requisite prescriptive standards. For instance, perhaps it is part of our cognitive design plan that the relevant prescriptive standards can be known immediately and directly in a manner analogous to how we can come to believe in a basic way that artifacts are the products of intelligent design.⁴⁵ Alternatively, perhaps, by reflecting on ourselves and our characteristic way of being in the world, paying close attention to descriptive facts about human nature and aided by a faculty of moral insight or intuition, we may be able to perceive the relevant normative and/or prescriptive features of our design plan and come to know something about our ultimate purposes or final ends in that way. What we envision here is or is analogous to a kind of moral intuitionism or moral perception, but not one that pertains to knowledge of our basic moral obligations, but rather to knowledge of our final ends and ultimate purposes.⁴⁶

But none of this will be of use to Neo-Aristotelians who affirm metaphysical naturalism. For, on our view, the relevant prescriptive standards that govern what organisms and their organs should or ought to do are conferred by an actual conscious designer who gives organisms and their organs their ultimate purposes or final ends. Because they deny that there are final ends and ultimate purposes, Neo-Aristotelians who affirm metaphysical naturalism can't account for design plans and can't rely on arguments that presuppose that there are such things. In contrast, none of the problems we've discussed in this section arise for Neo-Aristotelians who affirm theism. Briefly, theistic Neo-Aristotelians maintain that humans have the natural functions that are due to God's creative activity. In sum, when God creates humans, among other things, he instantiates beings that have various essential and accidental properties, determines the relevant facts about their natural environment, establishes conditions under which they may flourish in accord with objective standards of natural goodness appropriate to their kind, and sets in place prescriptions regarding the ways in which they should or ought to flourish. We take the establishment of all this to be Aquinas's point as it pertains to the Fifth Way. Here Aquinas argues that non-conscious substances which have final causes or ends, or purposes, must have an intellect outside of those final causes or end. As Edward Feser puts it:

What then of the vast system of causes that constitutes the physical universe? Every one of them is directed towards a certain end or final cause. Yet almost none of them is associated with any thought, consciousness, or intellect at all; and even animals and human beings, which are conscious, are comprised in

whole or in part of unconscious and unintelligent material components which themselves manifest final causality. But given what was said above, it is impossible for anything to be directed towards an end unless that end exists in an intellect which directs the thing in question towards it. It follows that the system of ends or final causes that make up the physical universe can only exist at all if there is a Supreme Intelligence or intellect outside the universe which directs things towards their ends.⁴⁷

Thus, if our cognitive faculties have final causes or ends, we cannot account for what gives our cognitive faculties their purpose (or in Plantingian terms, their design plan), without ultimately appealing to God. Once more, Neo-Aristotelians who affirm metaphysical naturalism can't make sense of normative notions like proper function without eventually appealing to a conscious designer.⁴⁸

PLANTINGA'S EVOLUTIONARY ARGUMENT AGAINST NATURALISM (EAAN)

Using the work of Plantinga, we now defend an argument that will apply to a traditional naturalist, that is, to a naturalist who both denies the existence of God and the immaterial soul. Plantinga calls this argument the evolutionary argument against naturalism (or EAAN for short). Plantinga's latest version of the EAAN goes as follows. Let P stand for probability of, let R stand for the proposition that our cognitive faculties are reliable, and let N and E stand for naturalism and evolution.

- (1) $P(R/N \text{ and } E)$ is low.
- (2) Anyone who accepts N and E and sees that $P(R/N \text{ and } E)$ is low has a defeater for R.
- (3) By definition, anyone who has a defeater for R has a defeater for any other belief she has, including [belief in] N and E itself.
- (4) If one who accepts N and E thereby acquires a defeater for N and E, N and E is self-defeating and cannot rationally be accepted.⁴⁹

We first address the less controversial (2) before turning to the all-important (1).

Regarding (2), one might wonder why the belief that our cognitive faculties are reliable couldn't be properly basic. For instance, one might concede that given N and E the probability that our cognitive faculties produce mostly true beliefs is low but maintain that having the strong epistemic seeming that one's faculties are reliable is enough for one to be warranted in affirming R in

a basic way. Michael Bergmann, on behalf of the commonsense naturalist, argues as follows:

Even if a naturalist believed that $P(R/N \text{ and } E)$ is low or inscrutable, this needn't give her a defeater for R. For she could have *nonpropositional* evidence for R that is sufficiently strong to make belief in R rational, reasonable, and warranted—even for someone whose total relevant *propositional* evidence, k, was such that $P(R/k)$ is low or inscrutable.⁵⁰

How would a Plantingian respond? As we will see in chapter 11, appealing to nonpropositional evidence to deflect defeaters is a traditional move within the Plantingian framework. The idea, roughly, is that while one's overall propositional evidence might point to one's faculties being unreliable, nonpropositional evidence makes one's overall evidence such that the probability that one has reliable cognitive faculties is high. However, for many persons who reflect on the EAAN, the nonpropositional evidence that they have won't be sufficient to make their total evidence such that there is a high probability that their cognitive faculties are reliable. Some individuals might be affected by this argument in such a way that their warrant is significantly decreased, even given certain nonpropositional evidence. Others, however, given their conviction that they have nonpropositional evidence that outweighs the propositional evidence for R being low, might be sufficiently moved by this argument. What Bergmann has shown, then, is that the EAAN might be person-variable.

On our view, as we will argue in chapter 11, we think that appealing to nonpropositional evidence to deflect undercutting defeaters is plausible but *only if* it is understood within a proper-functionalist framework. And if we are right that naturalism fails to supply the conditions that are necessary to make proper functionalism intelligible, then the naturalist ultimately won't be able to make use of this standard Plantingian response. Given that this is the case, the success of Plantinga's EAAN rests on (1) being plausible. If, indeed, (1) can be demonstrated (or as we will argue, if something very close to (1) can be demonstrated), then Plantinga's EAAN should be seen as a good argument against naturalism. With that in mind, in the next section we turn to Plantinga's presentation of the EAAN, focusing on how he goes about defending (1). We further his argument by applying it to strictly metaphysical beliefs. We don't defend the claim that given N and E the probability of R is low, but rather defend the claim that given N and E the probability of R is inscrutable.⁵¹ Defending the second claim rather than the first does not significantly weaken Plantinga's conclusion, for if one lacks a reason for trusting a faculty, then one wouldn't be warranted in accepting any belief produced from that faculty.

A Reformational View on Paul

In his earlier works, including *The Warrant Trilogy*, Plantinga argued that according to an orthodox Darwinian framework, human cognitive faculties are understood to produce beliefs that aren't aimed directly at truth, but rather at survival and reproductive behavior. Patricia Churchland puts it this way:

Boiled down to essentials, a nervous system enables the organism to succeed in the four F's: feeding, fleeing, fighting, and reproducing. The principal chore of nervous systems is to get the body parts where they should be in order that the organism may survive. Insofar as representations serve that function, representations are a good thing. Getting things right in space and time, therefore, is a crucially important factor for nervous systems, and there is often considerable evolutionary pressure deriving from considerations of speed. Improvements in sensorimotor control confer an evolutionary advantage: a fancier style of representing is advantageous *so long as it is geared to the organism's way of life and enhances the organism's chances of survival*. Truth, whatever that is, definitely takes the hindmost.⁵²

In *Warrant and Proper Function*, Plantinga outlines the following scenario to show how advantageous beliefs produced by natural selection could nonetheless be false:

Perhaps Paul very much *likes* the idea of being eaten, but whenever he sees a tiger, always runs off looking for a better prospect, because he thinks it unlikely that the tiger he sees will eat him. This will get his body parts in the right place so far as survival is concerned, without involving much by way of true belief. . . . Or perhaps he thinks the tiger is a large, friendly, cuddly pussycat and wants to pet it; but he also believes that the best way to pet it is to run away from it. . . . Clearly there are any number of belief-cum-desire systems that equally fit a given bit of behavior.⁵³

The sophomore biology major might object to this example on the grounds that in order for Paul to have a fighting chance at getting away from the tiger, he'd need adrenaline pumping through his body. Wanting to pet a nice ole pussycat, or perhaps being manically depressed and wanting to be eaten by a bigger one, simply won't do the trick.⁵⁴ Specifically, one might complain that Plantinga's example fails to show how Paul might have a belief that would aid him in surviving that fails to correspond with external reality. This line of reasoning is articulated by Jerry Fodor, Evan Fales, and Stephen Law.⁵⁵ These objections all center on the belief that natural selection would select mostly true beliefs, as true beliefs would provide an organism with the greatest chance of survival. Law's main point is somewhat different than Fodor's and Fales's, as Law has in mind the idea that certain neural structures just are certain

beliefs. Law holds that the neural structures that are selected are selected in virtue of the behavior they will likely produce. This leads him to argue that beliefs that enable survival and reproduction are likely to be true. Law insists that, ultimately, given certain neural structures combined with certain desires, a subject's faculties will likely produce true beliefs that are necessary for survival and reproduction. For the sake of argument, we assume that Law is correct about this. Law formulates his objection to Plantinga into a scenario—let's call it the wandering nomad objection.⁵⁶ Law asserts the following:

Consider a human residing in an arid environment. Suppose the only accessible water lies five miles to the south of him. Our human is desperately thirsty. My suggestion is that we can know a priori, just by reflecting on the matter, that if something is a belief that, solely in combination with a strong desire for water, typically results in such a human walking five miles to the south, then it is quite likely to be the belief that there's water five miles to the south (or the belief that there's reachable water thataway [pointing south] or whatever). It's highly unlikely to be the belief that there isn't any water five miles to the south (or isn't any reachable water thataway), or the belief that there's water five miles to the north (or thisaway [pointing north]), or the belief that there's a mountain of dung five miles to the south, or that inflation is high, or that Paris is the capital of Bolivia.⁵⁷

Is Plantinga's attempted defeater then deflected? In *Naturalism Defeated: Essays on Plantinga's Evolutionary Argument against Naturalism*, in his replies to his objectors, Plantinga takes aim at the objection that a belief that enables survival is likely to be true. Here he appears to raise a defeater-deflector of his own by asserting that the answer is in gerrymandering the right properties. To Fales, Plantinga writes:

Consider the cognitive agents who think everything is created by God and whose predicates express only properties entailing being created by God. Then, by the naturalist's lights, their beliefs will be mainly false. Still, their beliefs can obviously be adaptive, that is, lead to appropriate action; all that's required is that they ascribe the right properties to the right objects.⁵⁸

In a similar manner, Plantinga gives the example of a tribe who predicates the property of being a witch to everything. For instance, tribe members correctly predicate of a tiger that it is fierce and dangerous but incorrectly ascribe to it the property of being a witch.⁵⁹ Let F be the property of being fierce and let D be the property of being dangerous. Say Paul is now in a tribe that perceives and believes all sorts of things have the property of being a witch. Paul falsely sees a witch (we can say it is actually a tiger) that has the properties F and D. Paul now perceives imminent danger, which helps meet the conditions to get his adrenaline pumping so that he can flee. As long as the right properties are in place (F and D), there seems to be no reason why the remaining content has to be true.

Perhaps one might reject this clarification on the grounds that although Paul has one false belief, namely, that something is a witch, he still has several true beliefs, namely that something is F and something is D. In regard to predicating the property of witch to an *appletree* that is blooming, Jerry Fodor responds to Plantinga's approach:

Still, much of what a creature believes in virtue of which it believes that *that appletree witch is blooming* (and in virtue of which the thought that *that appletree witch is blooming* leads to behavioral success) are perfectly straightforwardly true. For example: *that's an appletree; that's blooming; that's there; something is blooming; something is blooming there*, and so on indefinitely. The point is trivial enough: If a creature believes *that appletree witch is blooming*, then it presumably believes that *that's an appletree* and that *that's a witch* and that *that's blooming*. And two of these are true beliefs that the creature shares with us and that enter into explanation of its behavioral successes vis-à-vis blooming appletrees in much of the same way that the corresponding beliefs of ours enter into the explanation of our behavior success vis-à-vis blooming appletrees.⁶⁰

Plantinga responds to Fodor as follows:

These creatures form beliefs only of the form 'that *P*-witch has *Q*' for properties *P* and *Q*. (We may add, if we like, that they form general beliefs of the form *all (some) P-witches are Q*, together with propositions appropriately constructible out of these general and singular beliefs.) So the creature in question doesn't believe *that's an appletree* (though he may believe *that witch is an appletree*) or *that's blooming* (though he may believe *that witch is blooming*). Why couldn't there be creatures like that? Not, surely (as Fodor himself notes), because any such creatures would have to believe all the logical consequences (or all the obvious logical consequences) of what he believes; we ourselves do not do that . . . An explanation of [a creature's] behavioral success doesn't require the attribution to it of the sorts of beliefs Fodor mentions.⁶¹

Plantinga's argument boils down to the possibility that humans could have been constituted in such a way that they form beliefs in a phenomenologically simple way. It seems biologically possible that we could have evolved such that we form beliefs without ever coming to believe in any of their logical consequences and entailments. This shows that having the belief *that witchtree is blooming* in no way requires one to believe that *that's a tree* or *that's blooming*. If this is possible, it seems that one could form all sorts of different false beliefs that are equally conducive to survival and reproduction all of which satisfy the Darwinian requirement equally well. But if that is the case, then one should remain agnostic about the probability of R because there would be completely in the dark about whether one's faculties produce beliefs that both true and meet the Darwinian requirement or whether they

merely satisfy the Darwinian requirement. We will address this further in our own version of the argument later on in this chapter. First, having explained how Plantinga has responded to Fales and Fodor, we apply that response to Law's scenario.

Instead of a man who needs to know the correct location of water, let us change the content of the scenario to a man who believes he needs to find a magical potion. Suppose that the nomad believes that a demi-god, being jealous of humankind, curses all living creatures. The curse causes men's mouths to shrivel up as the life is sucked slowly out of them. However, suppose that he also believes that a good demi-god countered this jealousy by providing a special potion that wards off the effects of curse. The location of this magical potion is under the earth (where the demi-gods live, of course) and can be seen in an abounding outflow from the earth. The nomad has several false beliefs in this revised scenario, but his holding and acting on them satisfies the Darwinian requirement.

Now, one may think that this story might explain how one could have lots of false beliefs about water and the like, but that it doesn't explain why the nomad forms the true beliefs that are necessary for him to both correctly identify the location of "the magical potion" and his need to consume it. Thus, like Fodor, Law could maintain that the nomad nevertheless has several true beliefs. The proponent of Plantinga's EAAN argument could give a two-pronged response. First, if all of the beliefs that the nomad formed are formed in such a way that they are affirmed without reflection on any entailment (see the above discussion of Fales's view), then the nomad would have all or mostly all false beliefs. The nomad would believe *that magical potion is over there*, or *I need that magical potion to survive* but it isn't necessary that he form any additional beliefs, such as *something is over there* or *I need something to survive*. Moreover, it isn't necessary that these additional beliefs be true. Alternatively, the proponent of the EAAN may concede that Law has demonstrated that some true propositions must be believed if organisms are to survive and reproduce and maintain that, besides those beliefs, organisms could hold all sorts of important beliefs that are false. For instance, focusing on the naturalist's problem with metaphysical beliefs, one might press that the point is that, given the truth of N and E, the naturalist is totally in the dark about whether their metaphysical beliefs have any bearing on how things really are or whether they have the tight connection to truth that is required for warranted belief.

It remains to be seen whether these Plantingian responses will ultimately be successful. We move the discussion forward by proposing a new way of looking at Paul. Before doing that, however, we provide a brief overview of some evolutionary explanations that naturalists have given for certain metaphysical beliefs. After surveying a few of these metaphysical views and their relation to neo-Darwinian evolution, we develop a second sort of response

that the proponent of the EAAAN could give in response to the objections raised by Law, Fodor, and Fales.

Naturalism and Its Current Endeavor in Metaphysics

Various metaphysical beliefs that humans hold could have resulted for merely adaptive reasons. By metaphysical beliefs, we mean propositions which have traditionally been understood to be outside the spectrum of the empirical sciences that pertain to that which is most fundamentally real. Paul Churchland considers such propositions when he raises the following questions: "Is our basic conception of human cognition and agency yet another myth, moderately useful in the past perhaps, yet false at its edge or core? Will a proper theory of brain function present a significantly different or incompatible portrait of human nature?"⁶² Churchland notes that he is "inclined toward positive answers to all these questions."⁶³ Similarly, Daniel Dennett states, "the human mind is something of a bag of tricks, cobbled together over the eons by the foresightless process of evolution by natural selection."⁶⁴

Attempts have been made to explain why the vast majority of the world's population possess religious belief. For instance, E. O. Wilson and Michael Ruse have argued that natural selection could have selected for belief in God because it has survival value.⁶⁵ Kai Nielsen extends this line of thinking by arguing that the notions that all human persons have dignity and are of equal moral worthy have their origins in the religious belief that morality is dependent on God, even though moral judgments of this sort may now be defended in a purely secular manner.⁶⁶ Presumably, Nielsen thinks that while it may have been excusable for our ancient ancestors, who weren't very good at secular ethics, to ground the true belief all human persons have dignity and are of equal moral worthy in their religious views, people doing ethics these days ought to know better. Daniel Dennett, agreeing with Jeremy Bentham that the notion of moral rights is "nonsense on stilts," nevertheless maintains that, perhaps, talk of moral rights is good nonsense, presumably because such talk can motivate people to act in ways that are conducive to our good.⁶⁷

Of course, if the notion of human dignity does have an evolutionary explanation, it would seem probable that ethics would as well. Mark Linville argues that if naturalistic Darwinian evolution were true, there would be Darwinian counterfactuals. That is, moral values and obligations could have been perceived differently had the circumstances of evolution been different.⁶⁸ Linville reflects on the world that Darwin had envisioned:

Had the circumstances of human evolution been more like those of hive bees or Galapagos boobies or wolves, then the directives of conscience may have led us to judge and behave in ways that are quite foreign to our actual moral sense. Our

wolfish philosophers defend justice as *inequality*, and their erudite reasonings take their cue from the fund of judgments bequeathed to them by their genes. Bees and boobies graced with intellect would judge that siblicide and infanticide are morally required under certain conditions.⁶⁹

In a similar vein, Michael Ruse observes,

Now you know that morality is an illusion put in place by your genes to make you a social cooperator, what's to stop you behaving like an ancient Roman? Well, nothing in an objective sense. But you are still a human with your gene-based psychology working flat out to make you think you should be moral . . . your psychology will make sure you go on living in a normal, happy manner.⁷⁰

Just as they seek to explain moral values and obligations, naturalists often attempt to explain belief in free will via natural selection. For instance, Patricia Churchland affirms that although the human brain and its activities are determined by the laws of physics but notes that it's useful to maintain the illusion of free will, comparing the illusion of free will to the illusion of morality. Regarding the illusion of morality, she writes, "We know that moral laws are not specified by the gods. We know that they are, first of all, neurobiologically based or evolutionarily based, and, secondly, culturally based, but it's very useful for people to have the illusion that these are really true."⁷¹ One of the leading philosophers of mind, John Searle, admits that "Our conception of physical reality simply does not allow for [libertarian] radical freedom."⁷² Searle isn't so certain about why evolution would have given us an illusion of alternative possibilities, nor why a sense of alternative possibilities has been built into the very structure of our consciousness. He is convinced, however, that neither his nor any other discussion about how to characterize the relationship between our notion of ourselves as rational, free, conscious, and intentional agents on the one hand and that of our notion of the world has between our notion the world "as consisting of mindless, meaningless, physical prosperities"⁷³ on the other "will ever convince us that our behavior is unfree."⁷⁴

Dennett suggests that the problem of how meaning could be determinate in a causally determined and Darwinian-fashioned universe could be solved by denying any determinate meaning altogether. He states:

Something has to give. Either you must abandon meaning rationalism—the idea that you are unlike the fledgling cuckoo not only having access, but also in having privileged access to your meanings—or you must abandon the naturalism that insists that you are, after all, just a product of natural selection, whose intentionality is thus derivative and hence potentially indeterminate.⁷⁵

Lastly, according to Plantinga, following Michael Rea, materialism implies there are no real objects but rather there is continuous atomless gunk that may be propertyed differently in different places.⁷⁶ As David Lewis characterizes it, gunk is a material stuff that has no mereological atoms as parts, is infinitely divisible, and is such that every proper part of it has proper parts.⁷⁷ Briefly, Rea argues that because metaphysical naturalism can't account for how material objects could have modal properties, it can't account for how material objects could enter into constitution or composition relations or otherwise come together to form mereological sums. Consequently, if metaphysical naturalism is true, there can be no discrete material objects that have identity and persistence conditions, and it follows that our material universe must be gunky.⁷⁸ If material objects are gunky, then our common sense understanding of matter and of everyday objects is horribly flawed. Nevertheless, even if our world is a gunky one, it could be that our cognitive systems developed so as to enable us to perceive things such that we can get on in life and better organize ourselves within our surroundings.

A New Perspective on Paul

On the basis of the examples considered above, we take a new look at Paul. This time, instead of focusing on his relationship with the tiger, we propose looking at Paul from his perspective. In this new scenario, Paul lives in a gunky world. In this gunky world, human minds evolved so as to perceive things in way that enhances their prospects for survival. Paul finds himself eye-to-eye with a tiger and is distressed about what he should do. He believes that his free choices have brought him here (even though determinism is true) and that notion comforts him as he confronts the tiger. After some quick thinking, Paul decides it would be best if he were to scream for help just in case any nearby hunters were listening. (Of course, his thoughts are indeterminate, just as a cuckoo bird's thoughts would be, but luckily for Paul he does not know that.) Paul then consciously reflects on his situation and his strong conviction that he is morally obligated (even though objective morality is an illusion) to run toward and attack the tiger so that his large family (which he has built up for religious reasons) may survive and reproduce. Paul's beliefs would successfully deliver the correct Darwinian output and yet all of them would be false. This shows how it could be that our cognitive faculties could produce false metaphysical beliefs that nevertheless are conducive to survival and reproduction. Notice, we have not argued that natural selection has actually led us to believe in things like free will and moral obligations for the evolutionary reasons that were given. Nor have we claimed that evolutionary explanations for metaphysical beliefs such as this are commonly held or acknowledged by naturalists. Rather, we maintain that, given N and E, it is

inscrutable whether these evolutionary explanations are just as likely as any other sort of explanation as to why people hold their beliefs. And if that is the case, the naturalist is in a very difficult spot epistemically speaking.

Natural Selection, Deism, and Naturalism

Having established how various false metaphysical beliefs could contribute to fulfilling the Darwinian requirement, we call attention to more specific metaphysical beliefs, namely, belief in deism and belief in naturalism. By “belief in deism” we mean the belief that God exists and is responsible in some sense for our creation but doesn’t intervene in and hasn’t guided our cognitive faculties through the process of evolution. As mentioned above, there are certain evolutionary psychologists who affirm that our cognitive faculties produce belief in God as a means to survival. Perhaps believing in God is comforting, or perhaps believing in a transcendent being helps to maintain a group’s unity and a sense of community. As such, belief in deism produced by natural selection could satisfy the Darwinian requirement. On the other hand, natural selection could give us a disposition to believe in naturalism. Suppose that humans are inclined to have religious beliefs and to invent religious rituals in accordance with them and are prone to fighting among themselves about these beliefs and rituals. This fighting is likely to have led to a continually decreasing population. Now, suppose that a mutation naturally occurred in some individuals leading them to believe in naturalism. This state of affairs would allow those predisposed to accept naturalism to have a better chance of meeting the Darwinian requirement. Natural selection, therefore, could have given people either the disposition to believe in deism or the disposition to believe in naturalism. Both of these accounts are such that people recognize certain factors as evidence in support of their views. For all that we know, both belief in deism and belief in naturalism could be equally well suited toward satisfying the Darwinian requirement. Given that the Darwinian requirement could be met by populations with very different and conflicting views, it’s hard to see how naturalists are in a position to determine whether cognitive faculties are aimed at producing true metaphysical beliefs or whether metaphysical beliefs have been produced and selected merely to enable one to meet the Darwinian requirement.

XX Pills and Undercutting Defeaters

At this stage, a naturalist might turn to science and reason (S and R) and argue that the empirical sciences can deal with these problems. Those making this move could grant that without S and R, we would have no recourse but to work with the unreliable intuitions that we have been hardwired to have.

But with S and R, so the suggestion goes, it's possible to verify in an objective way how the world really is and to have tangible reasons for believing metaphysical proposition, such as, for instance, that free will is an illusion or that there really are such things as material objects. But this line of thinking misses the point entirely. In order to make this move, probably, humans would need beliefs about how beliefs have epistemic justification, and the like. Such beliefs would stem from a particular framework that is the result of natural selection. This framework would be made up of impulses, intuitions, background beliefs, and moral values, all of which would be subjected to particular Darwinian factors that under different circumstances could easily not have been realized. But this framework could also be utilized to interpret and analyze evidence for God's existence. Making the turn to S and R, then, would seem to have indeterminate results. Moreover, a naturalist in this case would be relevantly similar to the case in which a man takes an XX pill. For the purposes of this argument, suppose that anyone who takes an XX pill has a 50/50 chance of suffering permanent cognitive malfunction. More troubling, those who suffer permanent cognitive malfunction from taking an XX pill have no idea that anything has changed. From their internal perspective, everything seems just fine. Someone suffering from the adverse effects of taking the XX pill would go on believing that their cognitive faculties are functioning properly but, clearly, that belief wouldn't be warranted. This would hold even if someone suffering from cognitive malfunction somehow manages to engage in empirical experiments or uses reason to try to prove that their cognitive faculties are reliable. Those who take an XX pill knowing the odds of suffering permanent cognitive malfunction and are fortunate enough to avoid suffering any adverse effects would have no way to tell whether their cognitive faculties functioning properly or whether they only seem to be. As such, they'd have an undefeated defeater for the belief that their cognitive faculties function properly. Effectively, they'd be in the same impoverished epistemic position as those who actually suffer from the adverse effects of taking an XX pill. Engaging in empirical experiments or using reason to try to prove that their cognitive faculties are reliable wouldn't be of any use to them either.

THE EVOLUTIONARY ARGUMENT AGAINST METAPHYSICAL BELIEFS

Having assessed a variety of interconnected objections and responses, we propose a new argument against naturalism that is within the family of Plantinga's EAAN. Again, let N and E stand for naturalism and evolution.

- (1) Given the truth of naturalism and evolutionary theory, then, under different circumstances, our evolutionary makeup could have been such that we'd hold different metaphysical beliefs that meet the Darwinian requirement equally well as those that we actually hold.
- (2) But if beliefs that people would hold in these possible circumstances and the beliefs that we hold in our actual circumstances both meet the Darwinian requirement equally well, then the truth-value of these metaphysical beliefs (including the belief in naturalism) seems to have nothing to do their meeting the Darwinian requirement.
- (3) Therefore, if one recognizes that the truth-value of these metaphysical beliefs seems to have nothing to do with their meeting the Darwinian requirement, then one has a defeater for the conjunction of naturalism and evolution.

As long as the examples in the previous sections are sufficiently convincing to render (1) and (2) more plausible than their negations, since (3) necessarily follows from (1) and (2), we think our argument is sufficiently plausible and as such contributes to the literature pertaining to the EAAN. The advantage of our argument is that it allows that certain beliefs must be held in order for a person to survive and reproduce. However, as long as there are conflicting metaphysical beliefs all of which could lead a subject to meet the Darwinian requirement, that is enough for our argument to get off the ground.

Crisp, Abduction, and Naturalistic Metaphysics

Thomas Crisp offers another argument that is within the family of Plantinga's EAAN. Crisp argues that those who affirm both naturalism and evolution have a defeater for the deliverances of their complex abductive reasoning. In order for one to be able to delineate between possible theories, one needs to possess a sufficiently strong imagination. One needs to come up with a wide variety of possible explanations in order to figure out which explanation is the best. But, on N and E, what makes us think that natural selection has equipped us with sufficiently robust imaginative capacities that would make our abductive faculties reliable?⁷⁹ Now, one might think that at a very local level, such as when hunter-gathers use their imagination to track down their food, our imaginative capacities might be sufficiently strong so as to render our abductive faculties reliable.⁸⁰ But why think our imaginative faculties are sufficiently robust? And why should we expect ourselves to have sophisticated abductive processes? For example, why think that our imaginative capacities and abductive processes are well suited for forming beliefs about string theory or quantum mechanics? Better yet, why think our cognitive faculties are reliable with respect to whether God exists or whether naturalism is

true? At best, the probability that we have reliable and sophisticated enough abductive processes seems at least inscrutable. At worst it seems low. And if this is the case then the naturalist who endorses neo-Darwinian evolution has a defeater for trusting her metaphysical beliefs.

The naturalist might reply that it would be miraculous if our metaphysical theories based on abduction all turned out to be true on the supposition that our cognitive faculties are unreliable. Hence, given the improbability of miracles, the best explanation of our faculties leading us to true metaphysical beliefs is that our faculties are probably reliable. However, as Crisp points out, making this move primarily utilizes abductive reasoning. In our context, to use and assume the reliability of our abductive faculties in order to argue that we have reliable abductive faculties would beg the question.⁸¹

Now, while Crisp doesn't formulate his argument against naturalistic metaphysics in such a way as to show that it is incoherent or self-defeating in nature, we believe that this isn't hard to do. Below, we formulate an argument which both captures Crisp's argument as it pertains to naturalistic metaphysics and demonstrates how some naturalists have a defeater for their belief in naturalism.

- (1) The objective probability of a subject having sufficiently reliable abductive faculties with respect to sophisticated metaphysical and scientific beliefs on N and E is low or inscrutable.
- (2) Anyone who sees that the objective probability of a subject having sufficiently reliable abductive faculties with respect to sophisticated metaphysical and scientific beliefs on N and E is low or inscrutable has a defeater for their sophisticated metaphysical and scientific beliefs, including naturalism, unless one has sufficient nonpropositional evidence such that the defeater can be deflected.
- (3) It's difficult to see how the naturalist could have sufficient nonpropositional evidence to defeat this defeater.
- (4) Therefore, probably, anyone who accepts (1) and comes to believe in naturalism by means of abduction has an undefeatable defeater for their belief that naturalism is true.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter we accomplished many things. We interacted with naturalistic accounts of proper function as well as Plantinga's critiques of them and argued that naturalism lacks the resources to account for proper function. We concluded that if proper function is necessary for warrant, then belief in naturalism could not be warranted even if it is true. We explained Plantinga's

evolutionary argument against naturalism, the core claim of which is that given Darwinian natural selection, one's cognitive faculties will be well suited for survival and reproduction but not necessarily aimed at the production of true belief. Because since all sorts of false propositions would be conducive to survival and reproduction, the naturalist has defeater for the belief that their cognitive faculties actually produce true beliefs. We developed our own version of the argument, one that focuses exclusively on metaphysical beliefs, especially on naturalism and deism. Finally, we summarized and reformulated Crisp's evolutionary argument metaphysical naturalistic metaphysics. Having explained the main components of Plantinga's religious epistemology and the implications it has for naturalism, we are now able to go on to survey various world religions and consider whether they affirm, either implicitly or explicitly, views that would make it possible for their members to affirm a Plantingian religious epistemology, or something rather like it.

NOTES

1. Some of what follows can be found in Tyler Dalton McNabb, "Defeating Naturalism: Defending and Reformulating Plantinga's EAAN," *Eleutheria: A Graduate Student Journal* 4, no. 1 (2015): 35–51.
2. Many of the following definitions are found in Michael Rea, *World without Design: The Ontological Consequences of Naturalism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002).
3. W. V. O. Quine, *Theories of Things* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981), 21.
4. Michael Devitt, "Naturalism and the A Priori," *Philosophical Studies* 92, no. 1/2 (1998): 45.
5. G. E. Moore, *Principia Ethica*, Revised edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 91.
6. Rea, *World Without Design*, 64.
7. Brian Leiter, "Naturalism and Naturalized Jurisprudence," in *Law: New Essays in Legal Theory*, ed. Brian Bix (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007), 81.
8. David Armstrong, "Postscript: 'Naturalism, Materialism, and First Philosophy Reconsidered,'" in *Contemporary Materialism: A Reader*, eds. Paul Moser and J. D. Trout (London: Routledge, 1995), 35, 47.
9. Walter T. Stace, "Naturalism and Religion," *Proceedings and Addresses of the American Philosophical Association* 23 (1949–1950), 22.
10. Alvin Plantinga, "Evolution vs. Naturalism: Why They are Like Oil and Water," *Books and Culture*, July/August 2008, accessed July 25, 2018, <http://www.booksandculture.com/articles/2008/julaug/11.37.html>.
11. Michael Bergmann, "Common Sense Naturalism," in *Naturalism Defeated? Essays on Plantinga's Evolutionary Argument Against Naturalism*, ed. James Beilby (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002), 61.

12. Alvin Plantinga and Michael Tooley, *Knowledge of God* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub, 2008), 22.

13. Karen Neander, "Functions as Selected Effects: The Conceptual Analyst's Defense," *Philosophy of Science* 58, no. 2 (1991): 174.

14. Ruth Millikan, "In Defense of Proper Functions," *Philosophy of Science* 56, no. 2 (1989): 288–289.

15. Plantinga and Tooley, *Knowledge of God*, 24.

16. On the coherence of the claim that God is creator, see, for instance, William Lane Craig, "Creation and Conservatism Once More," *Religious Studies* 34, no. 2 (1998): 177–188. For a brief and accessible Thomistic account of theistic evolution, see William E. Carroll, "Creation, Evolution, and Thomas Aquinas," *Revue des Questions Scientifiques* 171, no. 4 (2000): 319–347. Also see Richard Swinburne, *The Evolution of the Soul*, Revised edition (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1997).

17. See Alice R. Burks and Arthur W. Burks, *The First Electronic Computer: The Atanasoff Story* (Ann Arbor, The University of Michigan Press, 1989).

18. See Thomas Haigh, Mark Priestley, and Crispin Rope, *ENIAC in Action: Making and Remaking the Modern Computer* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2016).

19. Peter Graham has argued that S gets a function F from its history. He thinks natural selection, an organism's metabolism, and a trial-and-error process are all ways in which S's history gives S a function. Similar to Neander's and Millikan's accounts, Graham's account seems to fall prey to the Adam and Eve counterexample, as Adam's cognitive faculties and/or his heart lacks a relevant history, and yet each of these things possesses proper function. See Peter Graham, "Functions, Warrant, and History," in *Naturalizing Epistemic Virtue*, eds. A. Fairweather and O. Flanagan (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 15–35. Also, see Peter Graham, "Intelligent Design and Selective History: Two Source of Purpose and Plan," in *Oxford Studies in Philosophy of Religion Volume 3*, ed. Jonathan Kvanvig (Oxford: Oxford Press, 2011), 67–88.

20. Plantinga and Tooley, *Knowledge of God*, 26.

21. *Ibid.*, 27.

22. Graham, "Intelligent Design and Selective History," 67–88.

23. For where Ernest Sosa lays out this view, see Ernest Sosa, "Proper Functionalism and Virtue Epistemology," 276. For Plantinga's glossing of it, see Alvin Plantinga, "Respondeo," in *Warrant in Contemporary Epistemology: Essays in Honor of Plantinga's Theory of Knowledge*, ed. Jonathon L. Kvanvig (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 1996), 369.

24. Ernest Sosa, "Tracking, Competence, and Knowledge," in *The Oxford Handbook of Epistemology*, ed. Paul Moser (New York: Oxford Press), 275.

25. Sosa defends this view in various places. For instance, Sosa writes, "At a certain level of abstraction, we can distinguish two sorts of 'belief,' one implicit and merely functional, the other not merely functional but intentional, perhaps even consciously intentional. It is the latter that needs our attention in giving *responsibilism* its proper place in epistemology. This is because our rational nature is most fully manifest in such reasoned choice and judgment." Ernest Sosa, *Judgement and Agency* (New York: Oxford Press, 2015), 51.

26. Ernest Sosa, "Reliabilism and Intellectual Virtue," in *Knowledge in Perspective: Selected Essays in Epistemology*, Cambridge Studies in Philosophy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 138.

27. Michael Levin, "Plantinga on Functions and the Theory of Evolution," *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 75, no. 1 (1997): 89.

28. Plantinga and Tooley, *Knowledge of God*, 27–28.

29. *Ibid.*, 28.

30. Phillipa Foot (ed.), "Goodness and Choice," in *Virtues and Vices* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002), 133.

31. Foot, "Goodness and Choice," 135.

32. *Ibid.*, 135.

33. *Ibid.*, 135.

34. *Ibid.*, 140–142.

35. *Ibid.*, 137.

36. *Ibid.*, 138.

37. John Hacker-Wright, *Philippa Foot's Moral Thought* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), 118.

38. For a defense of these claims about natural goodness along these lines, see Erik Baldwin, "Why Islamic 'Traditionalists' and 'Rationalists' Both Ought to Accept Rational Objectivism," *Religious Studies* 53, no. 4 (2017): 467–477.

39. Hacker-Wright, *Philippa Foot's Moral Thought*, 119.

40. Alvin Plantinga, *Warrant and Proper Function* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 21, 199–210.

41. Plantinga and Tooley, *Knowledge of God*, 29.

42. One might object that humans could acquire design plans naturalistically. For instance, suppose a race of super-advanced aliens from another galaxy is responsible for creating humans and conferring onto them their design plans. But this merely pushes the problem back a step. To ultimately account for how human faculties function properly, we'd need an account of how the aliens' faculties function properly, too. That account requires that their cognitive faculties were created by some other intentional being or beings. In order to prevent an infinite regress, there must be a conscious, intelligent agent who does not have a design plan conferred on it by some other conscious, intelligent agent. And hence we are back at square one.

43. David Hume writes, "In every system of morality, which I have hitherto met with, I have always remark'd, that the author proceeds for some time in the ordinary ways of reasoning, and establishes the being of a God, or makes observations concerning human affairs; when all of a sudden I am surpriz'd to find, that instead of the usual copulations of propositions, *is*, and *is not*, I meet with no proposition that is not connected with an *ought*, or an *ought not*. This change is imperceptible; but is however, of the last consequence. For as this *ought*, or *ought not*, expresses some new relation or affirmation, 'tis necessary that it shou'd be observ'd and explain'd; and at the same time that a reason shou'd be given, for what seems altogether inconceivable, how this new relation can be a deduction from others, which are entirely different from it." David Hume, *A Treatise on Human Nature*, eds. Dave Fate Norton and Mary J. Norton (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), Book 3.1.2.

44. Sartre writes, “When we conceive God as the Creator, He is generally thought of as a superior sort of artisan . . . when God creates He knows exactly what he is creating. Thus, the concept of man in the mind of God is comparable to the concept of a paper-cutter in the mind of the manufacturer, and, following certain techniques and a conception, God produces man, just as the artisan, following a definition and a technique, makes a paper-cutter. Thus, the individual man is the realization of a certain concept in the divine intelligence . . . if God does not exist . . . man exists, turns up, appears on the scene, and, only afterwards, defines himself . . . Thus, there is no human nature, since there is no God to conceive it.” Jean-Paul Sartre, *Essays in Existentialism*, ed. with a forward by Wade Baskin (New Jersey: The Citadel Press, 1965), 34–36.

45. For more on this possibility, see Del Ratzsch, “Perceiving Design,” in *God and Design: The Teleological Argument and Modern Science*, ed. Neil A. Manson, 125–145 (Routledge, 2003) and Plantinga, *Where the Conflict Really Lies*, 236–239.

46. Perhaps Robert Audi’s moral intuitionism, defended in *The Good and the Right: A Theory of Intuition and Intrinsic Value* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2004), and/or his account of moral perception, articulated in *Moral Perception* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2013), could be extended in the requisite way or serve as a suitable starting point for this sort of project.

47. Edward Feser, *Aquinas: A Beginners Guide* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2009), 117.

48. This point is made in Tyler Dalton McNabb, *Closing Pandora’s Box: A Defence of Alvin Plantinga’s Epistemology of Religious Belief*, Thesis, University of Glasgow, 2016.

49. Alvin Plantinga, *Where the Conflict Really Lies*, 344–345.

50. Bergmann, “Common Sense Naturalism,” 68.

51. Plantinga suggests that this is an option in Alvin Plantinga, *Warrant and Proper Function*, 231.

52. Patricia Churchland, “Epistemology in the Age of Neuroscience,” *Journal of Philosophy* 84, no. 10 (1987): 548–549.

53. Plantinga, *Warrant and Proper Function*, 225–226.

54. Is there any reason to believe that natural selection couldn’t have resulted in a situation where depression pumps adrenaline and not wanting to become dinner triggers laughter? We are not sure why natural selection couldn’t have gerrymandered our emotions and desires differently in regard to what biological reactions they trigger.

55. Jerry Fodor, “Is Science Biologically Possible?” in *Naturalism Defeated? Essays on Plantinga’s Evolutionary Argument Against Naturalism*, ed. James Beilby (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002), 30–42; Evan Fales, “Darwin’s Doubt, Calvin’s Calvary,” in *Naturalism Defeated? Essays in on Plantinga’s Evolutionary Argument against Naturalism*, ed. James Beilby (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002), 43–58.

56. Though Law has published recently on this topic, here we refer to Stephen Law, “Latest Version of EAAN Paper,” last modified November, 2010, accessed October 27, 2014, <http://stephenlaw.blogspot.com/2010/11/latest-version-eaan-paper-for-comments.html>. For print reference see Stephen Law, “Naturalism, Evolution, and True Belief,” *Analysis* 72, no. 1 (2012): 41–48.

57. Law, "Latest Version of EAAN Paper."
58. Plantinga, "Reply to Beilby's Cohorts," in *Naturalism Defeated?: Essays on Plantinga's Evolutionary Argument Against Naturalism*, ed. James Beilby (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002), 265.
59. *Ibid.*, 253–254.
60. Fodor, "Is Science Biologically Possible?" 34.
61. Plantinga, "Reply to Beilby's Cohorts," 254.
62. Paul Churchland, *The Engine of Reason, the Seat of the Soul: A Philosophical Journey into the Brain* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1995), 19.
63. *Ibid.*, 19.
64. Daniel Dennett, *Breaking the Spell: Religion as a Natural Phenomenon* (New York: Viking, 2006), 107.
65. See Plantinga's discussion of their views in Plantinga, "Reply to Beilby's Cohorts," 260.
66. Kai Nielsen, *Ethics Without God* (London: Pemberton, 1973), 123–127.
67. Daniel Dennett, *Darwin's Dangerous Idea: Evolution and the Meanings of Life* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995), 507.
68. Mark Linville, "The Moral Argument," in *The Blackwell Companion to Natural Theology*, eds. William Lane Craig and J. P. Moreland (Chichester, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 409.
69. *Ibid.*, 409.
70. Michael Ruse, "God is Dead. Long Live Morality," last modified March 15, 2010, accessed July 25, 2018, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/belief/2010/mar/15/morality-evolution-philosophy>.
71. Patricia and Paul Churchland, "Patricia and Paul Churchland," in *Conversations on Consciousness: What the Best Minds Think About the Brain, Free Will, and What It Means to Be Human*, ed. Susan Blackmore (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 62.
72. John Searle, *Minds, Brains, and Science* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984), 98.
73. *Ibid.*, 99.
74. *Ibid.*, 98.
75. Daniel Dennett, *The Intentional Stance* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1987), 313.
76. Plantinga, "Reply to Beilby's Cohorts," 261. For Michael Rea's arguments, see, for instance, his *World Without Design* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002). David Lewis wrote a lot about gunk, beginning with his *Parts of Classes* (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1991).
77. Lewis, *Parts of Classes*, 20–21.
78. See Rea, *World Without Design*.
79. Thomas Crisp, "On Naturalistic Metaphysics," in *The Blackwell Companion to Naturalism*, ed. Kelly James Clark (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley and Sons Inc., 2016), 61–74.
80. *Ibid.*, 64.
81. *Ibid.*

Chapter 3

Plantingian Religious Epistemology and World Religions

In chapter 1, we discussed in detail the core elements of Plantingian religious epistemology, namely, reformed epistemology, proper functionalism, and the standard and extended Aquinas/Calvin models. Very briefly, the core insight of reformed epistemology is that belief in God can be properly basic. Thus defined, it should be obvious that reformed epistemology may be affirmed by many non-Christians. For instance, Jews, Muslims, and monotheistic Hindus can easily accept the view. Even atheists and agnostics can accept that it is epistemically possible that, for at least some people, belief in God is or can be properly basic. Similarly, one can accept proper functionalism without having any particular religious affiliation. More interesting and more contentious is the claim that if various non-Christian religions adumbrate or affirm, perhaps implicitly, something very much like the standard Aquinas/Calvin model as well some unique extension of it, then the members of these religious traditions can claim that their religious beliefs are properly basic. The goal of this chapter is to introduce a schematic argument for thinking that there are or at least could be multiple viable extensions of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model. In Parts II and III, we fill in the details for several candidate world religions.

THE FIVE THESES OF PLANTINGIAN RELIGIOUS EPISTEMOLOGY

In order to make progress we need a way to succinctly distill the main points of Plantingian religious epistemology. Five theses are well suited for the task: three theses cover reformed epistemology, proper functionalism, and the standard Aquinas/Calvin model and two theses cover the extended Aquinas/Calvin model.¹

A good litmus test of whether a religious epistemology counts as Plantingian is to check and see whether it affirms the following three theses (or theses very much like them):

- (I) The Dependency Thesis: Humans are ontologically and epistemologically dependent on and created by God.
- (II) The Design Thesis: Humans are created in accord with a design plan one aim of which is the production of true belief.
- (III) The Immediacy Thesis: God endows humans with special cognitive faculties or belief-forming processes through which theistic belief can be known in an epistemically immediate and basic manner.

Some clarifications are in order. If one accepts the Design Thesis, one accepts that there is a way our cognitive faculties are supposed to work when they are functioning as they ought to and nothing is going wrong with them, and so on. Note, however, that one can think that proper functionalism is sufficient for warrant but deny the stronger claim that it is necessary *and* sufficient for warrant. For instance, the members of a religious tradition might think that we can have knowledge (of at least some things) without proper function. Perhaps reliabilism would be enough for us to know many things but the members of the tradition still believe proper function would work too.

In like manner, the following two theses capture the core components of the extended Aquinas/Calvin model:

- (IV) The Internal Inspiration of the Holy Spirit Thesis: There is a special belief-forming process the purpose of which is to produce specifically Christian beliefs (immediately and non-inferentially), about the nature of God, salvation, forgiveness of sins, eternal life, and the like.
- (V) The Scriptural Revelation Thesis: By means of scripture, which is identified with the Christian Bible, God propositionally reveals (immediately and non-inferentially) to important divine teachings and doctrines to humans.

(IV) and (V) each propose a special means by which God causes Christians to have, immediately and in a properly basic way, faith that certain components of Christian belief are true. We take it that if in addition to (I)–(III) someone also affirms (IV) and (V) that is sufficient to say he or she accepts (at least implicitly) the Christian extension of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model. In sum, we maintain that no one who reflectively accepts (I)–(V) could reasonably reject the core elements of Plantingian religious epistemology, and vice versa.

Note that while a Christian Plantingian accepts (I)–(V), a non-Christian Plantingian who accepts (I)–(III) won't accept (IV) and (V) but rather suitable analogues of them that make claims that correspond to his or her

non-Christian religious tradition. For instance, very briefly, Muslims, Jews, and certain monotheistic Hindus Plantingians who accept (I)–(III) will go on to affirm suitable analogues of (IV) and (V) that capture the core creedal statements of their respective faiths.

NON-CHRISTIAN EXTENSIONS OF THE STANDARD AQUINAS/CALVIN MODEL

Ours is a daunting task. Fortunately, it will be made easier if we first set in place an argument schema. Doing so will enable us to utilize the same general argument form for each world religion that may purportedly make use of Plantingian religious epistemology. For each world religion we consider, we may then fill in the specifics in order to determine whether its members are able to make full use of Plantingian religious epistemology. The argument schema goes like this:

- (1) The members of a non-Christian religion R can make full use of Plantingian religious epistemology *if and only if* they are the beneficiaries of intellectual and conceptual resources internal to R which are necessary and sufficient for the articulation of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model as well as a unique non-Christian extension of it.
- (2) The members of a non-Christian religion R are beneficiaries of intellectual and conceptual resources internal to R which are necessary and sufficient for the articulation of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model as well as a unique non-Christian extension of it *if and only if* (a) the central and formative doctrinal teachings of R entail or suggest (I) the Dependency Thesis, (II) the Design Thesis, and (III) the Immediacy Thesis and unique analogues of (IV) the Internal Inspiration of the Holy Spirit Thesis and (V) the Scriptural Revelation Thesis, and (b) the metaphysical claims and/or presuppositions of R are fully compatible with (I)–(III) and in no way preclude theses relevantly analogous to (IV) and (V).
- (3) Both (a) and (b) of (2) hold.
- (4) Thus, the members of R are beneficiaries of intellectual and conceptual resources internal to R which are necessary and sufficient for the articulation of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model as well as a unique non-Christian extension of it. [From (2) and (3)]
- (5) Thus, the members of R can make full use of Plantingian religious epistemology. [From (1) and (4)]

The argument is clearly valid. If (1)–(3) are true, (4) and (5) clearly follow. Only (3) makes an empirical claim. Considering whether it is plausible to think that (3) holds true for various world religions is the task of Parts II and

III of the book. We say no more about that here. But why should one think that (1) and (2) are true? We contend that whether one accepts (1) and (2) primarily hangs on meanings and definitions and that once the terms are made sufficiently clear, there won't be any substantive objections to them.

To say that a member S of a religion R is able to make full use of Plantingian religious epistemology amounts to saying that S may affirm the core elements of Plantingian religious epistemology, including the claim that S's beliefs about God are properly basic (the thesis of reformed epistemology), his proper-function account of warrant, and the standard Aquinas/Calvin model as well as some extension of it, and that as such S is able to make the same sorts of claims about the epistemic status of the creedal-specific beliefs of R that Plantinga makes about Christian belief. Moreover, S can claim that there are no plausible de jure objections to the creedal-specific beliefs of R that are independent of de facto objections and that neither historical criticism of their foundational religious texts, nor the facts of religious diversity, nor the problem of evil poses a serious problem for the members of R. Additionally, S may claim that if the standard Aquinas/Calvin model and the extension of it that covers the core creedal beliefs of R are correct, then S's religious beliefs are, if true, very probably warranted.²

A member S of a religious tradition R is a beneficiary of conceptual resources of the tradition to which he or she belongs in the sense that S, on account of being a member of R, can draw on and benefit from that which their intellectual tradition has passed down to them. Conceptual resources of a tradition are internal to a religious tradition R if and only if they suggested or entailed by R's core creedal beliefs. In other words, (1) asserts that the conceptual resources that are necessary and sufficient for the formulation of Plantingian religious epistemology are internal to the religious tradition in question and it's not necessary for members of R to import or borrow conceptual resources from an outside tradition in order to formulate and account for the core features of Plantingian religious epistemology.

(2) captures, in terms of necessary and sufficient conditions, criteria according to which religious traditions are such that their members, in virtue of their being members of the tradition in question, are beneficiaries of conceptual resources that are necessary and sufficient for the articulation of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model as well as a unique non-Christian extension of it. So long as (a) and (b) of (2) hold, all such accounting is satisfied. Before going any further, first consider what sorts of things the creedal statements of a religion are.

A religious creed is an authoritative statement of religious belief or doctrine that expresses the core elements and teachings of a religious faith. Examples of religious creeds include *The Five Pillars of Islam*, *The Nicene Creed of Christianity*, and *The Four Noble Truths* of Buddhism. A creedal statement of a religion is a centrally important proposition or doctrinal

affirmation that is, so it is claimed, affirmed or implied by a religious text. Sometimes, religious traditions draw out different religious creeds from a religious text. For instance, while all branches of Vedānta accept the authority of *The Brahma Sūtra*, various branches interpret the meaning of the text differently. As such different branches of Vedānta draw out different creedal statements from the text. For instance, Śaṅkara's *Brahma-sūtra bhāṣya*, a monistic interpretation of *The Brahma Sūtra*, provides Advaita (nondualist) Vedāntans with resources for the formulation of the creedal statements of their tradition, whereas Sri Vyasaṭirtha's *Prameya Śloka* is a succinct creedal statement of Dvaita (dualist) Vedānta.

Recall that (a) of (2) states that the central and formative doctrinal teachings of R entail or suggest (I)–(III) and unique analogues of (IV) and (V). The central and formative doctrinal teachings of a religion R just are those that are affirmed by its creedal statements. The creedal statements of a religious tradition R entail or suggest a thesis T just in case the formative texts of R explicitly express, anticipate, approximate, or adumbrate T. Recall Plantinga's view that belief in God is properly basic for Christians. We find this view expressed in Calvin's *Institutes of the Christian Religion* I, iii, I thus: "That there exists in the human mind, and indeed by natural instinct, some sense of Deity, we hold to be beyond dispute, since God himself, to prevent any man from pretending ignorance, has endued all men with some idea of his Godhead."³ Calvin's *Institutes*, naturally, draws from Christian scripture, particularly Rom. 1:19-20 (NKJ), which states that "because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse." Clearly, *Romans* and Calvin's *Institutes* provide initial textual support for conclusion that the Christian tradition entails or suggests the Immediacy Thesis. Other Christian texts clearly entail or suggest the Design Thesis and Dependency Theses. For instance, in Col. 1:16 we read: "For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him." In like fashion, we shall go on to consider whether the central and formative teachings and creedal statements of world religions anticipate, approximate, or adumbrate the Dependency, Design, and Immediacy Theses as well as unique analogues of the Internal Inspiration of the Holy Spirit and the Scriptural Revelation Theses.

Recall that (b) of (2) states the requirement that the metaphysical claims and/or presuppositions of R are fully compatible with (I)–(III) and in no way preclude theses relevantly analogous to (IV) and (V). A metaphysical claim or presupposition of R is fully compatible with (I)–(III) only if it is not only logically consistent but also sits naturally and harmoniously with the central

and formative teachings of that religion and its formative creeds. To help cash out this metaphor, a claim sits naturally with another if the affirmation of the second isn't surprising, jarring, or unexpected given the first, and a claim fits harmoniously with another if there is a high degree of coherence and congruity between them. For example, take the proposition that God exists. This proposition sits naturally and harmoniously with the proposition that a complex universe exists, for theists maintain that we'd expect God to create a universe such as the one we find ourselves in. Briefly, a metaphysical claim or doctrine precludes another claim if the truth of the former rules out the possible truth of the latter. For instance, various Hindu traditions affirm that the universe is infinitely old. This teaching precludes the possible truth of the doctrine of creation ex nihilo, briefly, the doctrine that God created the world "out of nothing" and not out any preexistence matter or stuff, but it doesn't preclude the truth of emanationism, the view that the physical universe eternally emanates from God. With respect to Plantingian religious epistemology, it is an open question whether world religions other than Christianity make metaphysical claims or presuppositions that in some way preclude the possible truth of analogous of (IV) and (V).

CONCLUSION

We wrap things up with a few concluding points. Some may object to (1) and/or (2) for various reasons. For instance, one may be in general disagreement with or otherwise opposed to Plantingian religious epistemology and/or his proper-functional account of warrant. Alternatively, one may be skeptical about religious claims in general or have specific objections to the truth of theism, in general as well as its various instances, including Christianity. For the sake of argument, and so that we may move forward with our main task, namely, that of considering the prospects and problems of Plantingian religious epistemology in the world's religions, in Parts II and III we shall assume that Plantingian religious epistemology is correct and bracket skepticism about religious claims and objections to theism.

NOTES

1. These theses are derived from Baldwin, *Fully Informed Reasonable Disagreement and Tradition Based Perspectivalism*, 27–28.
2. For more on these claims, see, for instance, Alvin Plantinga, *Knowledge and Christian Belief* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015), 125–126 and *Warranted Christian Belief*, 498–499.
3. Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 43.

Part II

**THE PROSPECTS OF PLANTINGIAN
RELIGIOUS EPISTEMOLOGY IN
NON-CHRISTIAN RELIGIONS
I: INDIA AND CHINA**

Chapter 4

Plantingian Religious Epistemology and *Advaita Vedānta* and *Sāṃkhya*

Rose Ann Christian suggests that a follower of Śaṅkara's *Advaita Vedānta* tradition could adopt Plantingian religious epistemology.¹ This is problematic, she argues, for it would seem to greatly weaken Plantingian religious epistemology if there are epistemological systems that could allow members of a religious tradition vastly different from Christianity to also have warranted religious beliefs without the support of an argument. James Beilby makes the point that there might be objections to such a worldview, yet that perhaps potential defeaters could be dealt with in a way similar to how Plantinga deals with potential defeaters for Christianity.² Once more, it is important to reiterate that Plantinga himself seems to grant that various religious traditions could use his religious epistemology:

But, you say, isn't this just a bit of logical legerdemain; are there any systems of beliefs seriously analogous to Christian belief for which these claims cannot be made? For any such set of beliefs, couldn't we find a model under which the beliefs in question have warrant, and such that given the truth of those beliefs, there are no philosophical objections to the truth of the model? Well, probably something like that *is* true for the other theistic religions: Judaism, Islam, some forms of Hinduism, and some forms of Buddhism, some forms of American Indian religion. Perhaps these religions are like Christianity in that they are subject to no *de jure* objections that are independent of *de facto* objections.³

Over the course of the next three chapters, we explore whether Plantinga's claim as it pertains to Hinduism is correct. Before we can do that, however, we first need to provide a short introduction to Hinduism simpliciter and survey the specific Hindu traditions that we will engage.⁴

HINDUISM 101

There are six orthodox schools of classical Indian philosophy, called *darśanas*, literally, “visions” or “ways of seeing.” They are *Vaiśeṣika*, *Sāṃkhya*, *Yoga*, *Nyāya*, *Mīmāṃsā*, and *Vedānta*. These traditions are considered orthodox because they accept the authority of the Vedas and the Upaniṣads, as well as the notions of *saṃsāra* (the cycle of birth, death, and rebirth), *karma* (the “residue” of deliberate action that binds one in *saṃsāra*), and *mokṣa* (final liberation, or release from *saṃsāra*, which is the highest good of human life). Because all orthodox *darśanas* accept the authority of the Upaniṣads, and since those texts explicitly teach the doctrine that *Ātman* is *Brahman* (roughly, that self, or pure consciousness, is ultimate reality), all of them accept that doctrine as well. All of the *darśanas* also affirm the metaphysical views that the universe is eternal, without beginning or end, and that time is cyclical. More specifically, all maintain that the basic substantial elements, such as earth, air, water, fire, time, and space, exist eternally and that there is an endless succession of universes composed of those basic substantial elements that come to be and are in turn dissolved over extremely long but finite periods of time are called *yugas*.⁵ There are, of course, real differences between these traditions about the details of these views. For example, there is a great deal of debate about just how the doctrine that *Ātman* is *Brahman* should be understood and how many basic substances there are. In addition, the orthodox traditions also disagree about epistemological sources. This can be most clearly seen in the debate about which list of *pramāṇas* is correct.

Central to classical Indian epistemology is the view that all knowledge is *pramāṇa* born. The term “*pramāṇa*” means “that by which true cognition is arrived at.”⁶ In epistemological contexts, “*pramā*” means knowledge, veridical cognition, or veridical presentational experience, and “*pramāṇa*” is defined as a knowledge source, a means to *pramā*.⁷ Using these terms, an occurrent belief is *pramāṇa* born if and only if it is produced by a *pramāṇa*. Thus, if S knows *p*, then *p* must have been produced in the right way by some *pramāṇa* or other.⁸ In classical Indian epistemology, *pramāṇa* born cognitions are assumed to be veridical, or reliable. According to Nyāya epistemology, the main points of which are widely accepted by the other orthodox *darśanas*, if a belief is *pramāṇa* born, so long as the believer is aware of no counter considerations that reasonably challenge that belief, then the believer has animal knowledge, the sort of unreflective knowledge that animals and young children have despite their inability to provide reasons in favor of their beliefs.⁹ On this point Stephen Phillips writes, “A cognition’s being found to be produced [by a *pramāṇa*] ends [the certification, or justification, process] unless there is a good reason to doubt the second-order judgment that the first-level is *pramāṇa* born.”¹⁰ And Christopher Bartley writes, “A *pramāṇa*

is an epistemic capacity (*śakti*) or process that produces *knowledge* rather than merely true beliefs, which may have been arrived at accidentally or by chance. To do so it has to be functioning efficiently in the absence of defects (*doṣa*) that may prevent its proper operation.”¹¹

Nyāyan epistemology is externalist in the sense that it doesn't accept views that are characteristic of all forms of internalism. According to Michael Bergmann, all forms of internalism affirm that if S's belief that *p* is justified, then S must be (at least potentially) aware of something contributing to *p*'s justification.¹² In contrast, Nyāyan epistemology characterizes knowledge as arising when cognitions arise in the right sort of way by the right sorts of mechanisms, often by inaccessible processes. Phillips writes, Nyāyan epistemology affirms a causal theory of knowledge, one “according to which self-conscious justification by a subject S is not required for S to know that *p* . . . Instead, S needs to stand in the right causal relation to the truth of *p*. Furthermore, S may well know that *p* without knowing that she knows that *p*.”¹³ In other words, Nyāyan epistemology denies the KK thesis, the thesis that if S knows *p*, then S knows that S knows *p*. It also denies characteristically internalist requirements on knowledge, such as inner access and epistemic responsibility, focusing rather on *pramāṇa* knowledge sources, “processes that consistently generate true belief or veridical cognition.”¹⁴ The Nyāya maintain that “Knowledge depends on various sorts of processes operating properly.”¹⁵ They also affirm that knowledge requires the presence of epistemic excellences (*guṇa*) and the absence of flaws or defects (*doṣa*) in one's sense organs and belief-forming faculties, that one's beliefs are formed in appropriate environmental conditions, and the like. This strongly suggests that the Nyāya accept proper-function constraints on knowledge.¹⁶

Regarding the justification of beliefs that are reasonably challenged, however, the Nyāya affirm epistemological theses that are characteristic of internalism but in a qualified way. When the status of a belief is reasonably challenged, one has reason to doubt the second-order judgment that a first-level belief is *pramāṇa* born. For a doubtful belief to count as knowledge, it is necessary to bring to bear considerations in favor of thinking that it really is *pramāṇa* born. In such cases, S's belief that *p* counts as knowledge only if *p* is justified, and *p* is justified for S only if S recognizes *p* as being rightly produced by the relevant *pramāṇa*. In other words, when the reasonability of S's belief that *p* is reasonably challenged, S's belief that *p* is justified for S only if S reflectively and self-consciously attends to the belief and to the conditions under which *p* was formed. In so doing, S adequately deals with doubts about *p* by acquiring a higher-order, reflective knowledge of *p*. Nevertheless, since the view assumes that S's belief that *p* is justified unless S has reasons to think that *p* is false, the internalist requirement (namely, S's belief that *p* is justified only if S is at least potentially aware of something contributing to *p*'s

justification) isn't a *necessary* condition for justification, and thus, the theory rightly counts as an externalist theory.

Since all *darśanas* accept it is a veridical *pramāṇa*, consider an example involving sense perception. Suppose Joe casually looks out the window and, upon seeing a bird, immediately forms the belief "there's a bird outside the window." If there really is a bird outside the window, and if nothing is amiss either with respect to the functioning of Joe's faculties or his cognitive environment, then Joe knows there's a bird outside the window. Suppose, however, Jane tells Joe that their next-door neighbor has a lot of cleverly designed fake birds in his yard. Joe, having reason to trust Jane's testimony, acquires a reason to doubt the truth of his belief. ("Did I see a real bird? Or did I actually see a cleverly designed fake bird?") Joe takes another, more careful look at the bird in question. He doesn't just casually look at it but observes and studies it. He thinks to himself that a fake bird wouldn't engage in *those* kinds of activities, not unless it were a highly sophisticated robot bird. But he doesn't have any reason to think that their neighbor has any such bird, for he has good reason to think that robot bird technology hasn't been sufficiently developed yet, and so he reasonably rules that possibility out. After some reflection, he remains confident in his original belief that there's a bird outside his window.

While not every reason to doubt whether he really sees a bird has been considered or eliminated, the salient grounds for Joe's doubt (namely, testimony from Jane that their next-door neighbor has fake birds in his yard) have been adequately dealt with. And because cognitions are presumed to be veridical unless one has sufficient reason to think otherwise, Joe needn't consider and rule out more outlandish skeptical scenarios in order for his belief to be epistemically justified or to count as knowledge. For instance, he needn't rule out the possibility that he is being deceived by a malevolent demon or that he is a brain in a vat in order to have knowledge by means of sense perception. Moreover, no infinite regress of justification arises because, ultimately, the factors that make Joe's justified belief that *p* an instance of knowledge are extrinsic to his mental states and hence not the sorts of things that could get an infinite regress up and running.

In addition to having perceptual cognitions of things like birds, the Nyāya affirm that we can also have meta-cognitive awareness, or apperception, of our seeing things like birds. More specifically, they affirm that some perceptual cognitions, our meta-cognitions, are such that they take another perceptual cognition as the object of cognition. For example, Joe has a perceptual cognition if he sees the bird and Joe has an apperceptive cognition if Joe sees that he sees a bird.¹⁷ Putting all of this together, in cases of apperceptive cognition—for example, when one sees that one sees a bird—if the salient reasons for doubting the veridicality of the object-level cognition have been adequately dealt with, and so long as there is no longer any reasonable challenge to the

truth of the object-level cognition, there is no need to bring in additional justification. An analogy involving light and lamps offered by the founder of Nyāya, Akṣapāda Gautama (250–450 CE), helps to illustrate how this goes. According to Gautama, “*pramāṇa* are certified in the way that the light of a lamp is used in certification.”¹⁸ Phillips writes that Gautama’s point isn’t that apperceptive cognition is self-certifying, but rather that “an instrument like a lamp can be both a means and, non-concurrently for an individual subject S, an object of knowledge.”¹⁹ The idea is that perceptual cognitions can themselves be objects of perceptual cognition. And since there is a presumption of truth in favor of perceptual cognitions, once an object-level perceptual cognition has been certified by an apperceptive cognition, there is no need for one who lacks further reasons for doubt to continue certifying their perceptual cognitions and beliefs. Hence, once again, no infinite justificatory regress arises.²⁰

Nyāyan epistemology is fallibilistic. To return to a variation of our earlier case, perhaps Joe really is being deceived by a very cleverly designed robot bird. In that case, Joe’s object-level cognition, which is the subject of his higher-order cognition, isn’t veridical. It follows that his higher-order cognition (namely, that his object-level cognition is veridical) isn’t veridical either. In this case Joe lacks knowledge. Nevertheless, in the original case, Joe lacks any good reason to think that he’s in a situation in which his higher-order cognition isn’t veridical, even though he is aware of the (remote) possibility that he might. So long as the bird is as it seems, Joe’s belief that it is a bird and not a cleverly designed robot bird constitutes knowledge.²¹

For our purposes, because it is so widely accepted by the other orthodox *darśanas*, we shall, for the most part and unless otherwise noted, work with the *pramāṇa* theory of the Nyāya tradition when going about evaluating the prospects of Plantingian epistemology for all of the orthodox *darśanas*. Table 4.1 systematizes each tradition’s list of *Pramāṇas* (see Table 4.1).

While all orthodox *darśanas* accept that Brahman is the most fundamental reality, that Ātman is Brahman, and the eternal and cyclical nature of time, beyond this, the metaphysics of the orthodox *darśanas* varies considerably. There is no single coherent metaphysic that can be constructed or abstracted from these traditions. There are non-dualistic traditions, qualified non-dualistic traditions, and dualistic traditions. There are theistic traditions and non-theistic traditions. There are traditions which emphasize *māyā* and the distrust of our cognitive faculties, and there are traditions which emphasize their reliability. Because there is no standard metaphysic in Hinduism, it isn’t easy to address its ability to provide the necessary conceptual resources that would render Plantingian religious epistemology intelligible. So, for the purposes of this book, we will first distinguish non-theistic traditions and theistic traditions. Even with this division, we lack room to interact with a host of traditions. In this chapter, we focus on those thinkers and traditions

Table 4.1 List of *Pramāṇas*

<i>Darśanas</i> , “ways of seeing” or philosophical systems	Independent <i>pramāṇas</i> , basic or non-derived sources of true cognition	Derived <i>pramāṇas</i> , non-basic sources of true cognition
Vaiśeṣika	Sense perception and logical inference.	Comparison, roughly, analogy (e.g., “Y is like X”), which is reduced to sense perception. <i>Śabda</i> , scriptural testimony and testimony from trustworthy people, paradigmatically gurus (“teachers”) and rishis (“seers”), which are reduced to logical inference and sense perception.
Sāṃkhya-Yoga	Sense perception, logical inference, and <i>śabda</i> (trustworthy testimony).	Comparison, which is reduced to sense perception. Non-perception, or <i>anupalabdhi</i> , which is reduced to sense perception. (Roughly, non-perception is being aware of the absence of something; for example, “There is no Z in this room,” where Z is a thing that <i>would be</i> perceived if it were in the room.)
Nyāya	Sense perception, logical inference, <i>śabda</i> (trustworthy testimony), and comparison (roughly, analogy; for example, “Y is like X”).	Non-perception, or <i>anupalabdhi</i> , which is reduced to sense perception.
Mīmāṃsā-Vedānta	Sense perception, logical inference, <i>śabda</i> , comparison, postulation (assuming a fact in order to make another fact intelligible), and <i>anupalabdhi</i> (non-perception).	None are explicitly mentioned (so far as we know), although it should be noted that Mīmāṃsā, being primarily concerned with justifying the authority of the Vedas, places special emphasis on <i>śabda</i> , going so far as to maintain that it is self-certifying.

Sources: Chatterjee and Dhirendramohan Datta (1984), Phillips (2012), J. N. Mohanty (2000), Bartley (2011).

which we think are the most philosophically robust and thus ripe for exploration given our purposes, specifically, Śaṅkara’s Advaita Vedānta tradition and Sāṃkhya, the founding of which is traditionally attributed to Kapila. The former represents a non-dualistic school while the latter a dualistic one. In chapters 5 and 6, we consider two more branches of theistic Vedānta, *Viśiṣṭādvaita* Vedānta and *Dvaita* Vedānta.

Now, one might be inclined to think that since the traditions dealt with in this chapter are non-theistic that right off the bat we should think that these traditions fall short of being able to endorse the Dependency, Design, and Immediacy Theses. However, for our purposes, we leave room for the possibility that non-theistic branches of Hinduism are such that their members are beneficiaries of conceptual resources sufficient for the articulation of the relevant theses, or ones very much like them. Note also that given that Mīmāṃsā is so close to the Vedānta tradition and the Yoga tradition is so close to the Sāṃkhya tradition, a lot of what we say here can be applied equally well to Yoga and Mīmāṃsā, but we do not go on to show just how these things are so.

A BRIEF BIOGRAPHY OF ŚĀṂKARA

In order to have a sufficient understanding of the Advaita Vedānta tradition, it is important to explain the context in which Śāṃkara lived and taught.²² Śāṃkara, also known as Śāṃkarācārya, was likely born in 788 CE into a Namburdri Brahmin family in a place called Kaladi.²³ Early in life, he showed a high aptitude for abstract thinking and soon renounced the world. At a young age, he began to study under Govinda, a disciple of Guḍapāda, who is purported to have been the founder of Advaita Vedānta.²⁴ He soon became famous for going from city to city, reforming Hindu practices, starting monasteries, and debating famous gurus on certain religious, metaphysical, and epistemological claims.²⁵ At the heart of all of his teaching was the doctrine of *Nirguṇa Brahman*, that Brahman is without qualities.²⁶

Though Śāṃkara's debating skills were unrivalled, he was even better known for his writings. He wrote commentaries on the Upaniṣads, the Bhagavad Gītā, and the Vedānta Sūtras. The most influential and well-known philosophical writings that are attributed to him include the *Upadeśasāhasri* (or *A Thousand Teachings*) and the *Vivekachudamani* (or the *Crest-Jewel of Discrimination*).²⁷ His writings gave rational thinkers a way to embrace Hindu teachings and gave the religious a way to interpret scriptures in a consistent and philosophically sophisticated manner.²⁸ Summarizing the life of Śāṃkara, Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan writes:

The life of Sankara makes a strong impression of contraries. He is a philosopher and a poet, a savant and a saint, a mystic and a religious reformer. Such diverse gifts did he possess that different images present themselves, if we try to recall his personality. One sees him in youth, on fire with intellectual ambition, a stiff and intrepid debater; another regards him as a shrewd political genius, attempting to impress upon the people a sense of unity; for a third, he is a calm philosopher engaged in the single effort to expose the contradictions of life

and thought with an unmatched incisiveness; for a fourth, he is the mystic who declares that we are all greater than we know. There may have been few minds as universal as his.²⁹

Śaṅkara's Philosophy

Śaṅkara bases his philosophy on one of the most famous passages in the Upaniṣads, the proclamation that “thou art that,” first found in the Chāndogya Upaniṣad 6:8.7.³⁰ As Śaṅkara reads this formative text, Uddālaka teaches his son, Śvetaketu, that his individual nature, that is, his Ātman, or innermost self, is none other than Brahman. Śaṅkara believes that Brahman is absolute being, devoid of qualities, having no genus and related to nothing.³¹ Śaṅkara makes this clear when he states, “Brahman is the reality—the one existence, absolutely independent of human thought or idea. Because of the ignorance of our human minds, the universe seems to be composed of diverse forms. It is Brahman alone.”³² Thus, for Śaṅkara, ultimately, all that exists is the unified and absolute oneness that is Brahman. Although Śaṅkara concedes that the Vedas and the Upaniṣads at times seem to indicate that Brahman is personal and interacts with creation, he thinks that, ultimately, they teach that Brahman is without quality. To support this interpretive move, he distinguishes different layers of reality. Victoria Harrison summarizes Śaṅkara's categories in the following way:

Layer 1: Absolute reality

Nirguṇa Brahman, Qualityless Brahman, Brahman/Ātman.

Layer 2: Absolute reality seen through categories imposed by human thought

Saguṇa Brahman, Brahman with qualities. Creator and governor of the world and a personal god (Īśvara, or Iswara).

Layer 3: Conventional reality

*The material world, which includes “empirical” selves.*³³

Christopher Isherwood draws a similar distinction within Śaṅkara's thought. He writes, “Are there then two Gods—one the impersonal Brahman, the other the personal Iswara? No—for Brahman only appears as Iswara when viewed by the relative ignorance of maya. Iswara has the same degree of reality as maya has. God the Person is not Brahman in his ultimate nature.”³⁴

Immanuel Kant's distinction between the phenomenal and noumenal realms is somewhat analogous to the way in which Śaṅkara distinguishes these three layers of reality. As such, Kant's distinctions can be used to shed light on Śaṅkara's views. In *The Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant argues that human conceptualization involves a kind of cognitive projection. While the objects

of empirical sense perception are intuited immediately through sensation, as phenomenal objects of perception, those objects are presented to us in terms of a priori categories of the understanding, such quantity, number, unity, and the relations of substance-and-accident and cause-and-effect. But these phenomenal objects don't genuinely represent the noumenal world, the ultimate realm or layer of existence. For example, one who has an empirical sense perception of a coffee cup is presented with a phenomenal coffee cup, not the noumenal coffee cup as it is independent of one's phenomenal perception of it.³⁵ In like manner, Śaṅkara argues that, because of *māyā*, human faculties are aimed toward producing conventional beliefs that don't reflect or represent ultimate reality. Moreover, even after overcoming conventional ways of perceiving the world, human faculties still project onto Nirguṇa Brahman categories that lack existence at the ultimate level. It isn't until one stops projecting human categories onto Nirguṇa Brahman that "all sense of duality is obliterated"³⁶ that one may be illuminated and thus capable of knowing the fundamental truth of the first layer of reality, namely, that all is impersonal Brahman. In Kantian terms, this layer of reality would be the noumenal realm.

Heinrich Zimmer, drawing out the consequences of Śaṅkara's views, writes, "only knowledge (*vidya*) effects release (*mokṣa*) from the sheaths and bondages of nescience, and moreover this knowledge is not something to be obtained but is already present within, as the core and support of our existence."³⁷ Following the orthodox tradition, Zimmer goes on to state that realization can be attained through critical thought and by practicing mind-amplifying yoga techniques.³⁸ Zimmer puts a special emphasis on yoga practices within Śaṅkara's thought as he states, "yogic exercises of intensive concentration are the main implement for the realization of the truth communicated by the guru; but these cannot be undertaken by anyone who has not already prepared himself, by means of cleaning austerities and impeccable conduct, in a spirit of virtuous self-abnegation."³⁹

By way of summary, the ultimate layer of reality consists solely of impersonal Brahman. Although impersonal Brahman is the only thing that exists in the ultimate sense, *māyā* creates the illusion of diversity. Human beings are ensnared or deceived by cognitive faculties that consistently produce belief in diversity, including the belief in the existence of empirical self. To escape this trap, one must have the right realization that, ultimately, all that exists is impersonal Brahman. One can come to this right realization through dedicating their lives to the right practices, which especially includes being instructed by a guru and engaging in yoga techniques. Upon faithfully doing this, according to Paul Devanandan, "by the cogitation of absolute identity, [one] finds absolute rest in the Self, consisting of bliss, then he is freed from the fear of transmigratory existence."⁴⁰

Advaita Vedānta and the Proper-Function Condition

Having explained the central tenets of Śaṅkara's Advaita Vedānta tradition, we take a closer look at Śaṅkara's epistemology. This will help further articulate Rose Ann Christian's claim that Advaita Vedānta could be warranted in the same way that Christian belief could be. Using the work of Thomas Forsthoefel, we argue that Śaṅkara's epistemology shares much in common with Plantingian epistemology. However, despite important epistemological similarities, unlike Christianity, Advaita Vedānta lacks the resources necessary to account for the preconditions that make Plantingian religious epistemology intelligible.

Forsthoefel argues that Śaṅkara held that, ultimately, it is by means of introspective access that one comes to the knowledge of impersonal Brahman. This access is self-justifying, giving a subject immediate knowledge of Brahman.⁴¹ Though there is a strong internalist component to Śaṅkara's epistemology, introspective access is not sufficient. It is also necessary for certain cultural and external mechanisms to be in place. Śaṅkara required that immediate knowledge of Brahman be accompanied and supported by certain external processes, such as religious texts (the Vedas and the Upaniṣads), tradition, a guru,⁴² and the mind working in the way it should.⁴³ Forsthoefel makes this clear when he states the following:

It remains for Advaita, and for all traditions, I think, to establish a culture of liberation in which doctrine, value, text and interpretation weave together a coherent circuit of doxastic practices. These belief-forming mechanisms have a variety of internal checks—norms of exegesis, standards of argument, the coherence of a received tradition, and, as we will see, the examples of extraordinary teachers and saints. When these mechanisms function properly, they contribute to a reliable cognitive output. And in the case of Advaita, although liberation ultimately negates constructive discourse, various cognitive inroads are nevertheless made to understand, communicate and evoke the truth and experience of Brahman. Teachings, texts, practices, and the examples of saints and gurus, thus help constitute the “cognitive environment” of a subject. Combined with the subject's own “properly functioning” mental equipment—in a mundane sense, but also with respect to doxastic practices of the particular culture of liberation—the cognitive outputs of these processes may enjoy *prima facie* justification. We see, therefore, in addition to traditional Advaita's internalism, a deeply implicated externalism in its epistemology of religious experience.⁴⁴

Given that Śaṅkara's epistemology maintains that certain external things, including one's mental equipment, need to be properly functioning, it would seem that Śaṅkara should and would endorse Plantinga's proper-function condition for warrant. Moreover, it also seems that he'd grant that in order for a subject to have the right sort of internal access or awareness, it is

necessary to engage in the right sorts of doxastic practices in the right sort of way in one's epistemic environment. Thus, in addition to the first condition of Plantinga's theory of warrant, Śāṃkara would likely agree with the right epistemic environment condition. We now move on to discuss the similarities and differences between Śāṃkara and Plantinga with regard to Plantinga's truth-aimed condition.

Advaita Vedānta and the Truth-Aimed Condition

At some level, both Plantinga and Śāṃkara advocate that human beliefs produced in a certain way lead one to knowledge. Plantinga's emphasis is on human cognitive proper function and on having a design plan aimed at producing true beliefs. Śāṃkara, however, emphasizes how human beliefs and practices bring about certain effects that lead one to the right state where one can then have the appropriate internal access or awareness. For Śāṃkara, this is especially so regarding conventional beliefs and illusions that don't reflect or represent ultimate reality. For instance, a man who thinks he sees a snake when looking at a rope can still die from the heart attack that the illusion helps to produce. Thus, even though human cognitive faculties are aimed toward producing beliefs about things that don't exist at the ultimate layer of reality, these beliefs can still have a real impact on how humans function and how they gain knowledge.

Even if one granted this, wouldn't it still be obvious that Śāṃkara's worldview fundamentally denies Plantinga's truth-aimed condition (and thus the Design Thesis, too), given that the truth-aimed condition requires that faculties are geared toward producing true belief according to what is ultimately real? By way of response, one could argue that our cognitive faculties can still be indirectly aimed toward producing true belief. For instance, one might argue that human faculties are aimed toward producing conventional beliefs that don't reflect ultimate reality but go on to maintain that, through the effects of the Vedas and gurus, our cognitive faculties could indirectly be aimed at producing true belief in Brahman. Just as the illusion of a snake can have a real effect on a man's heart, so the illusion of the Vedas and the gurus can cause the right realization. Along these lines, Śāṃkara, expounding classic objections, writes:

If we acquiesce in the doctrine of absolute unity, the ordinary means of right knowledge, perception, &c., become invalid because the absence of manifoldness deprives them of their objects; just as the idea of a man becomes invalid after the right idea of the post (which at first had been mistaken for a man) has presented itself. Moreover, all the texts embodying injunctions and prohibitions will lose their purport if the distinction on which their validity depends does not

really exist. And further, the entire body of doctrine which refers to final release will collapse, if the distinction of teacher and pupil on which it depends is not real. And if the doctrine of release is untrue, how can we maintain the truth of the absolute unity of the Self, which forms an item of that doctrine?⁴⁵

Śaṅkara responds to these objections as follows:

These objections, we reply, do not damage our position because the entire complex of phenomenal existence is considered as true as long as the knowledge of Brahman being the Self of all has not arisen; just as the phantoms of a dream are considered to be true until the sleeper wakes. For as long as a person has not reached the true knowledge of the unity of the Self, so long it does not enter his mind that the world of effects with its means and objects of right knowledge and its results of actions is untrue; he rather, in consequence of his ignorance, looks on mere effects (such as body, offspring, wealth, &c.) as forming part of and belonging to his Self, forgetful of Brahman being in reality the Self of all. Hence, as long as true knowledge does not present itself, there is no reason why the ordinary course of secular and religious activity should not hold on undisturbed.⁴⁶

Here Śaṅkara argues that if one doesn't come to the knowledge that all is impersonal Brahman by way of one's own experiences, the Vedas and gurus can still aid in bringing about full realization and enlightenment. One is able to benefit from the utility of conventional beliefs in the same way that a man could be affected by a heart attack from the illusion of seeing a snake. Even if real knowledge is lacking, external conditions can still create the right sort of environment necessary for enlightenment. In the next section, we argue that this sort of attempt to ground the proper-function and truth-aimed conditions fails.

The Preconditions of Warrant and Advaita Vedānta

There appears to be an obvious reason why the Advaita Vedānta tradition couldn't account for the preconditions that make Plantinga's theory of warrant intelligible. Namely, given Advaita Vedānta's view of reality, at the ultimate layer of reality there are no cognitive faculties that form beliefs via proper function. All that exists at the ultimate layer of reality is Brahman without qualities. According to Plantinga, however, there must be cognitive faculties that function properly in accord with their design plan. Another reason to think that Advaita Vedānta can't account for the preconditions that make proper function intelligible is that it, like naturalism, denies that there is something like a personal and intentional conscious designer at the ultimate level of reality. In chapter 2 we argued that well-accepted naturalistic

attempts to account for proper function fail. If these arguments are successful, it's hard to see how Advaita Vedānta could provide the necessary resources to account to account for the proper-function condition.

Perhaps in response to these two objections, the Advaita Vedānta proponent could distinguish their views from those of the naturalist by arguing that Plantinga's proper-function condition is necessary insofar as one is referring to the second or third layer of reality and that it is in some sense correct to say that things like faculties, design plans, and a personal God have conventional existence at these layers of reality. So, while she must reject the Dependency, Design, and Immediacy Theses at the first layer of reality, she could endorse them at the conventional level. Along these lines, Śāṅkara might endorse the following proper-function account:

(SPF) For something to be properly functioning on the conventional layer of reality, it must be fulfilling an intention given to it by an intentional agent that exists outside of it.

This move seems to be unavailable to the naturalist. We think that this move won't work for Śāṅkara either for at least three reasons. First, making this move would require a drastic and fundamental change to Plantinga's theory of warrant. Cast in Advaita Vedāntan terms, we can say that Plantinga's theory of warrant pertains to the sorts of conditions that need to be in place at the ultimate level of reality for a subject to have warranted beliefs. This gloss of Plantinga's theory of warrant, however, would introduce several layers of reality, two of which that ultimately aren't real, something that is very much at odds with Plantinga's metaphysical views. It's not at all clear that Plantinga's metaphysical views can be divorced from his epistemological views in a way that would allow for such amendments by Advaita Vedāntans. Second, it's hard to see what motivation Advaita Vedāntans would have to amend Plantinga's account of warrant along these lines. If, ultimately speaking, there aren't things like design plans or a personal God to account for them, why would an Advaita Vedāntan argue that the conditions for warrant are found at layers of reality that aren't ultimately real? Perhaps, this way of looking at things might be conducive for achieving enlightenment, but it's hard to see how this way of thinking about things would be efficacious toward that end. Lastly, suppose the proponent of the Advaita Vedānta tradition were to attempt to make use of Plantinga's theory of warrant to show how Advaita Vedāntan belief could be warranted having already accepted that the proper-function condition fails to hold at the ultimate layer of reality. Rejecting the proper-function condition at the ultimate layer of reality is tantamount to rejecting knowledge at the ultimate layer of reality. For a Plantingian to make that move isn't internally coherent. It follows that the Advaita Vedānta

advocate couldn't endorse the Dependency, Design, and Immediacy Theses. Hence, it would seem that the Advaita Vedānta proponent should reject the proper-function condition, not try to make use of it.

Turning our attention elsewhere, could the advocate of Advaita Vedānta indirectly account for the truth-aimed condition of warrant and the Design Thesis? As discussed earlier, one could argue that given the causal power of illusions, so long as certain illusions function in a way that they should, it's possible for illusions to reliably produce true beliefs in a subject. Along these lines, perhaps conventional beliefs gleaned from the Vedas and transmitted by gurus can cause a person to act in such a way that gets them to see truth of reality, namely, that all that exists is impersonal Brahman. But would that belief really have a tight connection to truth given if it were held by way of an illusion? For Plantinga, the truth-aimed condition is a part of the design plan for how cognitive faculties should operate. If there are no cognitive faculties that function properly at the ultimate layer of reality, then it isn't possible to account for the truth-aimed condition at the ultimate layer of reality either.

Perhaps the Advaita Vedānta advocate could just deny the proper-function condition, the truth-aimed condition, and the Design Thesis and maintain that so long as illusions or conventional beliefs reliably produce true beliefs, that's enough for them to have warrant. Two things would follow should one make this move. First, the theory proposed is no longer recognizably Plantingian, for all of the conditions that are essential to his theory of warrant have been eliminated. Why think that this theory is Plantingian in any relevant or significant sense? Moreover, if illusions or conventional beliefs aren't designed to accomplish the goal of bringing a subject to enlightenment and rather just happen to work that way, there would be a loose connection to truth, as the Swampman examples discussed in chapter 1 demonstrate. But this loose connection to truth isn't sufficient for beliefs to have warrant.

In conclusion, although Śaṅkara's epistemology affirms some of the same conditions on warrant that are found in Plantingian epistemology, due to its ontological commitment to an impersonal ultimate reality, Advaita Vedānta can't accommodate for how humans could have a cognitive design plan that functions properly. Additionally, it appears that the Advaita Vedānta tradition doesn't have the resources to give it an edge over naturalism either, for it, too, is unable to account for proper-function without a personal God. Nor can it account for the truth-aimed condition of Plantinga's theory, the satisfaction of which is part of the overall design plan of how one's faculties should function. And because the truth-aimed condition can't be separated from the proper-function condition, it can't account for the proper-function condition or the Design Thesis either. Taking these arguments in a cumulative manner,

there are good reasons for thinking that Advaita Vedānta fails to account for the relevant preconditions that are required to make Plantinga's theory of warrant intelligible. It follows that, contrary to Rose Ann Christian, belief in Advaita Vedānta can't be warranted in the same way that belief in Christianity can be warranted. Having addressed this non-theistic Hindu tradition, we will now move on to the dualistic Sāṃkhya tradition.

THE SYSTEM OF KAPILA

Kapila is the assumed founder of the Sāṃkhya *darśana*. Tradition informs us that Kapila was seen as a mystical and legendary figure. He was thought to be the incarnation of Viṣṇu, the incarnation of Agni, and even the very son of Brahman.⁴⁷ The man Kapila likely lived sometime during the seventh century before the Common Era.⁴⁸ This would make Sāṃkhya one of the oldest philosophical traditions in all of Hinduism.

During Kapila's time, so far as we can tell, contemporary theological thinking and religious practice emphasized putting trust in ritualistic practices. That priests should make the right animal sacrifices and perform the right rituals were central to pre-Kapila Vedic religion.⁴⁹ The Sāṃkhya system challenged this paradigm by criticizing both the traditional understanding of heaven and its emphasis on cultic practices. It is important to note that though Kapila's system criticizes these practices, it doesn't hold that these practices and views toward them were totally useless or completely wrong.

Sāṃkhya contrasts sharply with Advaita Vedānta. Unlike Advaita Vedānta, Sāṃkhya is dualistic, recognizing the existence of two ultimate substances, *prakṛti* and *puruṣa*. *Prakṛti* is primordial matter, the stuff from which the world evolves.⁵⁰ It is unmanifested, undifferentiated, undecaying, and unconscious.⁵¹ Harrison states, "prakṛti can be imagined as an inert mass of dark matter that only becomes active when puruṣa [consciousness] starts taking an interest in it."⁵² *Prakṛti* is made up of distinct infra-atomic potentials called *guṇas*.⁵³ *Guṇas* are "constitutive elements or components"⁵⁴ of the substance of *prakṛti*, or modes through which it acts,⁵⁵ and not qualities or properties of it. The three *guṇas* are *sattva* (light), *rajas* (passion, or energy), and *tamas* (inertia).⁵⁶ These *guṇas* are always in a state of flux.⁵⁷ The *guṇas* can assemble and connect in different ways and when they do, the *guṇas* are called *dharmas*.⁵⁸ These different combinations of the *guṇas* (or *dharmas*) are primarily responsible for our illusions of pleasure, pain, and cognitive malfunction.⁵⁹ One could properly call these illusions *māyā*.⁶⁰ *Puruṣa* is pure consciousness. By consciousness, it is important to note that the claim isn't that reality is an individual or a self as one might understand consciousness in Western philosophy. Rather, consciousness is thought to be something more

analogous to what the Advaita Vedānta tradition understands about Brahman on the first layer of reality, that of Brahman without qualities.

Pulinbihari Chakravarti schematizes the arguments that Īśvara Kṛṣṇa (the purported author of the *Sāṃkhya Kārikā*, the oldest work in the Sāṃkhya tradition) and his commentators advance to establish the existence of the *puruṣa*. The makings of these arguments are found in the *Sāṃkhya Kārikā* XVII, which reads:

Since the assemblage of sensible objects is for another's use; since the converse of that which has the three qualities, with other properties (before mentioned), must exist; since there must be superintendence; since there must be one to enjoy; since there is a tendency to abstraction; therefore, soul is.⁶¹

There are five distinct arguments to be gleaned from this passage. Drawing from Chakravarti, as well as Henry Thomas Colebrooke's commentary on the *Sāṃkhya Kārikā*, outlines of the arguments may be constructed as follows:

- a. Because all composite bodies are for the use of another, and because the products of the *guṇas* are not for their own sake, *puruṣa*, that which makes us of composite objects for its own sake and for its own purposes, must exist.
- b. Since the existence of that which is opposite to the three *guṇas* has been declared (per the first argument), *puruṣa* must exist apart or opposite from the three *guṇas*.
- c. There must be a presiding entity for which *prakṛti* produces this variegated universe, and that entity is *puruṣa*.
- d. There must be someone to enjoy the products of *prakṛti* which are either agreeable or disagreeable, and that one is *puruṣa*, who exists for the sake of enjoying them.
- e. Since there is a tendency towards liberation, and since this tendency towards liberation can't be accounted for by *prakṛti*, *puruṣa* must exist.⁶²

Arguments along these lines help to explain why members of the Sāṃkhya tradition might think it is rational to accept the doctrines of *puruṣa* and *prakṛti*. The next step in defense of the Sāṃkhya system is to show how these substances come together.

Though Sāṃkhya would deny that these two substances had a beginning,⁶³ *puruṣa* and *prakṛti* have at times existed apart from one another, which goes to show that they are not inherently connected, but only superficially or accidentally so. It is, therefore, unnatural for one to be affected by the other. For example, just as a transparent crystal lying close to a red flower can be contaminated by the redness of the flower, *puruṣa* can be

contaminated by *prakṛti*.⁶⁴ Sāṃkhya is nearly silent on the matter of what causes *puruṣa* to become contaminated with *prakṛti*. This is seen as a sort of “cosmic blip.”⁶⁵ Sāṃkhya’s philosophy is essentially atheistic;⁶⁶ there is no reason or room for God to play any role for anything that happens in the universe.⁶⁷ According to Sāṃkhya, the Vedic gods aren’t anything more than mortal superhumans who upon dying go back into the cycle of rebirth.⁶⁸

Like in contemporary Western naturalistic philosophy, Sāṃkhya appeals to evolutionary processes (or to a process significantly similar to it) to explain things. According to Sāṃkhya, evolutionary processes are responsible for *puruṣa* coming into contact with *prakṛti*. As is the case for contemporary naturalists, Sāṃkhyans don’t think that this evolutionary process is guided by any intentional being. In the Sāṃkhya tradition, because *prakṛti* is responsible for the universe and everything that happens within it, postulating the existence of God would be useless and unwarranted.⁶⁹

Evolutionary processes, according to the Sāṃkhya tradition, also explain why the world looks the way that it does, which would include an explanation of why people experience pain and evil. The problem with the current condition of humankind is that humans lack the ability to discriminate between *puruṣa* and *prakṛti*. In reality, “the individual is not body, life, or mind, but the informing self, silent, peaceful, eternal. The self is pure spirit.”⁷⁰ The empirical self that exists is the free soul (*puruṣa*) combined with evolved *prakṛti*. The empirical self is *puruṣa* that has forgotten its true nature, so to speak, and has become deluded with the belief that it thinks, feels, and acts.⁷¹ According to Chakravarti, “So long as this conjunction exists, it [*puruṣa*] thinks itself to be one with *prakṛti* and thereby attributes to its own self miseries and such other properties which actually belong to the latter . . . this is where one cognizes the non-eternal as eternal and the impure as the pure. It is opposed to right knowledge.”⁷²

Because the empirical self is trapped into thinking that *puruṣa* is one with *prakṛti*, it needs liberation. This liberation comes by way of right knowledge. According to Zimmer, “True insight, ‘discriminating knowledge’ (*viveka*), can be achieved only by bringing this mind to a state of rest.”⁷³ One must suppress certain activities of the mind in order for desire to disappear. The five things that need to be suppressed go as follows:

1. Right notions, derived from accurate perception (right perception, inference, and testimony),
2. Erroneous notions derived from misapprehension,
3. Fantasy or fancy,
4. Sleep, and
5. Memory.⁷⁴

For the Sāṃkhya tradition, in order to achieve enlightenment, minds need to enter into a state of rest. All of these mental activities (for mental activity still goes on while one sleeps) need to be suppressed, and when they are suppressed, desires automatically disappear.⁷⁵ Through the appropriate practice of yoga and through the suppression of mental activities, one develops the capacity to rightly discriminate between *prakṛti* and *puruṣa*. This will lead to the realization that there exists an ontological distinction between one's self (more specifically, the experiential or phenomenal self that is none other than *puruṣa*) and *prakṛti*. Only when this occurs, can one achieve enlightenment and obtain salvation from the pain and evil in the world.

Sāṃkhya and the Proper-Function Condition

As Advaita Vedānta maintains that correct yogic practice, or techniques to discipline one's mind and body so that one can enter into certain cognitive states of enlightenment, Sāṃkhya emphasizes the necessity of correct yogic practice in order to properly discriminate between *puruṣa* and *prakṛti*. The right practice of yoga is therefore essential to the Sāṃkhya tradition. This being the case, there is a way in which yoga ought to be done so that the goal of the practice is achieved. That seems to entail or presuppose that humans have a design plan that dictates what counts as engaging in correct and successful or incorrect and unsuccessful yogic practice, which in turn suggests that people can engage in correct and successful yogic practice only if the proper-function condition is satisfied. For instance, when one engages in yogic practices properly, in accord with their design plan, one is in an epistemic environment that is favorable to the production of true belief. The design plan can be considered to be a good one to the degree that belief produced while of subsequent to engaging in correct yogic practice have a high objective probability of being true. Furthermore, recall that one of Sāṃkhya's arguments for the existence of *puruṣa* is that everything that we perceive to exist exists for the sake of something else. If this argument is sound, it would seem that each thing has a function that is connected with its existence for something else. To use a classic example taken from Chapter XVII of Gaurapáda's *Sāṃkhya Kārikā*, the function of a bed is to let a person sleep and the function of the sheets is to keep the person sleeping warm.⁷⁶ For these items to fulfill their purpose, that of allowing a person to sleep or of keeping a person warm, requires that they function properly functioning according to what these items were designed to do. Sheets that are too thin to provide warmth or beds that are too fragile to lay down on won't suffice. Perhaps, appealing to this function argument supplies another reason for affirming that the Sāṃkhya tradition might endorse the Plantinga's proper-function condition.

Sāṃkhya and the Preconditions for Warrant

Recall that earlier in this chapter we argued that Advaita Vedānta fails to account for the proper-function condition. We gave two reasons for this. Briefly, one of those reasons hinges on Plantinga's argument that all current and well-known naturalistic accounts of proper function fall prey to fatal counterexamples. Second, we argued that Plantinga's proper function requires a conscious designer of the sort the existence of which is ruled out by Advaita Vedānta, making it unable to account for proper function. We think these reasons can be extended to the Sāṃkhya tradition. Recall that according to Sāṃkhya, there is no conscious and intentional designer and humans came about through an evolutionary process that was unguided by gods or any other intentional agents. Thus, Sāṃkhya shares with naturalism the same features that would make the satisfaction of something like proper-function condition unattainable. As long as there is nothing within the Sāṃkhya tradition that gives in some edge over naturalism, and since naturalism entails the rejection of the proper-function condition, it follows that we should conclude the Sāṃkhya tradition does, too. This argument can be condensed as follows:

- (1) If naturalism cannot account for the proper-function condition, then the Sāṃkhya tradition cannot account for the proper-function condition.
- (2) Naturalism cannot account for the proper-function condition.
- (3) Therefore, the Sāṃkhya tradition cannot account for the proper-function condition.

If the Sāṃkhya tradition can't account for proper function, then there isn't much hope that the Sāṃkhya tradition can account for the Dependency and Immediacy Theses either.

Sāṃkhya and the Truth-Aimed Condition

In regard to the truth-aimed condition and the Design Thesis, according to Sāṃkhya, our cognitive faculties have come about by the way of unguided evolution, the result of some cosmic blip. This would mean that our cognitive faculties are products of an accidental process. Regarding this, Harrison states, "They claimed, for instance, that our capacities of sense—hearing, feeling, seeing, tasting and smelling—evolved from the ego (the sense we have of being a self), which itself is an evolutionary product, once removed, from primordial matter."⁷⁷ Now, even if one were to grant that this somehow allows for the possibility that one could have properly functioning faculties, what reason is there for thinking that there is an objectively high probability that one's cognitive faculties would produce true beliefs? What reason is

there to trust cognitive faculties that came about through an accidental and unguided process? Given Sāṃkhyan metaphysical commitments, it would be irrational to think that one's cognitive faculties are reliable and produce warranted beliefs. Reflection on the junkyard aircraft example supports this judgment.

Imagine a junkyard that contains a sufficient amount of material to create an X-15 aircraft, the world's fastest aircraft. Now, imagine that all of the material necessary to construct an X-15 is strewn about the junkyard. Suppose that a tornado comes through the junkyard and hits all of the material just so and something that looks like an X-15 emerges. Would one be rational to think that the tornado has produced a fully functional, reliable, and safe-to-fly X-15? Careful reflection on the case reveals, we suggest, a strong intuitive pull for thinking otherwise. Even if random forces constructed a fully functional, reliable, and safe-to-fly X-15, the probability of this is so low that one wouldn't be warranted in believing that to be the case. Similarly, Sāṃkhya have a good reason to believe that their cognitive faculties have no proper function and that they aren't reliable, for the Sāṃkhya tradition holds that human cognitive faculties are produced by random processes analogous to those that produced the X-15 in the junkyard aircraft example. This suggests that it would be unsafe for them to put any doxastic trust or weight on beliefs that are produced by their cognitive faculties. Apparently, the best the Sāṃkhya advocate could do to undermine the force of the junkyard aircraft example would be to appeal to a principle of natural selection to explain how it could be that the probability that their cognitive faculties produce true beliefs is relatively high even though they are the accidental products of evolution. However, as we argued in chapter 2, this solution doesn't seem promising because beliefs that are conducive to survival and reproduction can be wildly false.

Even if we grant that the Sāṃkhya tradition could give a good response to the concerns raised by the junkyard aircraft example, it would still be unable to account for warrant along Plantingian lines. Given that the Sāṃkhya advocate is convinced that the probability of their cognitive faculties being reliable is either low or inscrutable, then, lacking a further reason that could override this low probability or inscrutability (such as nonpropositional evidence which could outweigh the propositional evidence against the reliability of one's cognitive faculties), the Sāṃkhya advocate would acquire a defeater for the belief that their cognitive faculties are reliable. Moreover, because this defeater is motivated by doctrines that are internal to and definitive of the Sāṃkhya tradition, it threatens to show that the central teachings of Sāṃkhya are self-defeating. Let SM stand for the proposition that the central teaching of the Sāṃkhya tradition are correct and let R stand for the reliability of one's cognitive faculties. Consider the following argument, essentially a reworking

of Plantinga's evolutionary argument against naturalism with "naturalism" being replaced with "the Sāṃkhya tradition":

- (1) P(R/SM) is low or inscrutable.
- (2) Anyone who accepts SM and see that P(R/SM) is low or inscrutable has a defeater for R.
- (3) By definition, anyone who has a defeater for R has a defeater for any other belief she has, including SM.
- (4) Therefore, because anyone who both accepts SM thereby acquires a defeater for SM, SM is self-defeating and cannot rationally be accepted.

The success of this argument hinges the truth of (1). If the above arguments provide good reasons to affirm (1), the rational acceptance the core beliefs of the Sāṃkhya tradition are called into question. Even if the Sāṃkhya tradition could account for proper function, its members (or at least those who both fully understanding its teachings and their implications for the reliability of their cognitive faculties) wouldn't be warranted in believing that the Design Thesis or any sufficiently similar thesis could be true. It follows that the Sāṃkhya advocate can't claim that their religious belief could be warranted in the manner that Plantingian religious epistemology proposes.

Possible Responses

Perhaps an advocate of the Sāṃkhya tradition could argue that although the process of evolution began by a cosmic blip, unintended by anyone or anything, there is a sense in which it is correct to say that design plans arose on account of *puruṣa* evolving along with *prakṛti* by way of intelligible laws. Another related suggestion is that the evolution of *puruṣa* itself, or perhaps the evolution of *puruṣa* along with *prakṛti*, somehow gives rise to at least one intelligent, intentional being with a design plan whose creative activity is in turn responsible for the human design plan. Perhaps the Sāṃkhya advocate could make either of these moves in order to account for the proper function of human faculties. To be clear, we aren't saying that either of these responses would actually be attractive to classical Sāṃkhyans. After all, both proposals require significant modifications to the nature of *puruṣa* as well as the way in which it interacts with *prakṛti*. But we do want to raise them as possible responses that an advocate of Sāṃkhya might make. Setting that issue aside, we don't think that either possible response is adequate.

According to the first response, so long as there is an intelligible way in which *puruṣa* should evolve in accord with intelligible laws, there are evolutionary processes that have or operate in accord with some design plan that can confer onto humans their design plans. On this account, *puruṣa* is

supposed to function rather like a machine that somehow comes out the function of which is to produce other machines. However, even if such a machine develops and acts in an intelligible and law-like way, it couldn't very well produce machines that have design plans unless it has a design plan that stipulates how it should go about producing these machines. Moreover, we'd still need an explanation of the teleological nature of the law-like development of *puruṣa*. Making this move just pushes the problem back a step. Regarding the second response, whatever evolutionary processes that are at work here wouldn't be aimed toward the production of true beliefs. As addressed earlier, according to the Sāṃkhya tradition, when *puruṣa* and *prakṛti* came together, there is only a superficial connection between them. The looseness of that connection explains both why human cognitive faculties tend to produce all false beliefs and why it is necessary to perform certain techniques in order to get our faculties rightly aimed toward producing true beliefs. But under such conditions, how could beliefs produced by our cognitive faculties be warranted?

To get a better grasp of what is involved in making the second move, let us briefly return to the example of the individual who comes to believe that he has taken the XX pill. For the sake of this example, let us modify the case and suppose that the likelihood that one will acquire serious cognitive malfunction upon taking such a pill is very high. If the man is informed that there is a corrective process that would allow him to avoid the effects of taking the XX pill (after he had already taken it), even if he followed the instructions correctly, he wouldn't be warranted in his belief that there is such a corrective process or that the beliefs that he'd have after undergoing that process would be warranted. This is because any information about the corrective process and its purported results would be understood and obtained by means of cognitive faculties that are no longer trustworthy. That is, having already taken the XX pill, he has a defeater for the belief that there is a corrective process that would allow him to avoid suffering its adverse effects. To generalize, if one has a defeater for one's beliefs, then one would be irrational and thus unwarranted in holding to them.

The modified XX pill case illustrates that sort of epistemic situation that one would be in given the truth of the central teachings of the Sāṃkhya tradition. Perhaps the advocate of the Sāṃkhya tradition would accept that human faculties are hindered to such an extent and agree that she has a defeater for most of her beliefs (including the beliefs that are required for the process of liberation) but nonetheless think that upon being enlightened in the right way by means of a reliable process, one is provided with self-certifying or incorrigible awareness states or cognitions the propositional content of which serves to confirm that the central teachings of Sāṃkhya are true. Arguably, there is some room for this move, for some philosophers associate *puruṣa*

with “witness consciousness,” or *sākṣī*, which is a kind of self-luminous, self-validating internal witness or introspective apperception of the self qua self.⁷⁸ As glossed in contemporary truth-maker terminology, the Sāṃkhya advocate might extend *sākṣī* to include the ability to immediately “see” the relationship between the truth maker and truth bearer and can thus immediately “see” the incorrigible nature of these truths. With this sort of account, perhaps the Sāṃkhya advocate could reasonably claim that that the belief in question has a tight enough connection to truth for it to be warranted, and that would be so even if were formed by way of an unwarranted system of beliefs.

We think there are two important points to be made here. First, even if Sāṃkhyans accept the notion that their central beliefs could be self-certified in something like the above manner, we aren’t convinced that the Sāṃkhya advocate would be willing to accept all that is involved in taking up this second option at this stage. Recall that this move was made in order to secure the belief that the evolution of *puruṣa* itself, or perhaps the evolution of *puruṣa* along with *prakṛti*, somehow gives rise to at least one intelligent, intentional being with a design plan whose creative activity is in turn responsible for the human design plan. But classical Sāṃkhya stridently maintains that only *prakṛti* is responsible for the cause of the universe and all causes within it.⁷⁹ Its roots are atheistic through and through, its founders going so far as to provide various arguments against the existence of God, several of which are explicitly aimed against the notion that there could be any sort of controller that guides the activity of *prakṛti*.⁸⁰ There is no room within classical Sāṃkhya for *puruṣa* to have the sort of creative role that has been described. There is, however, at least one theistic strand of Sāṃkhya pioneered by Vijñāna Bhikṣu in the fifteenth century CE.⁸¹ According to Chatterjee and Datta, Vijñāna Bhikṣu maintains that God isn’t “possessed of creative power” and as such doesn’t intentionally act on *prakṛti*. Rather God is “the eternally perfect spirit who is the witness of the world and whose mere presence (sannidhimātra) moves prakṛti to act and create, in the same way in which the magnet moves a piece of iron.”⁸² While Vijñāna Bhikṣu provides a scripturally grounded version of the ontological argument for the existence of such a god,⁸³ Classical Sāṃkhyans would remain unmoved by his line of reasoning because they maintain that the existence of such a god wouldn’t do anything that couldn’t be accomplished by *puruṣa* alone. Moreover, classical Sāṃkhyans may argue that Vijñāna Bhikṣu’s views derive not from the teachings of Kapila and classical Sāṃkhya, but rather stem from external influences, such as Vedānta and Yoga.⁸⁴

Second, suppose either that this approach is somehow consistent with the classical Sāṃkhya position or that it is inconsistent with it but the classical Sāṃkhya advocate is fine with making the requisite amendments, including going beyond Vijñāna Bhikṣu’s theism to maintain that God is possessed

of genuine creative activity. This would involve making several substantial modifications to central aspects of classical Sāṃkhya. But making these moves still wouldn't be enough to show that Sāṃkhya belief could be warranted in the same way that belief in Christianity could be warranted in Plantingian religious epistemology. This is due to the proper-function condition alone not being sufficient for grounding warrant on this modified or neo-Sāṃkhya view. Recall that self-certifying or incorrigible perception was introduced in order to deal with our argument that Sāṃkhya is self-defeating. Having made this move, we grant that it is theoretically possible that the Sāṃkhya tradition could utilize some of the relevant theses of Plantingian religious epistemology, or at least ones sufficiently similar to them. However, this move is quite costly, for positing and making use of self-certifying or incorrigible perception in this way denies the principles of fallibilism (roughly, that S 's knowing that p is logically consistent with the truth of not- p) and defeasibility (briefly, that substantive and knowledge claims are defeasible), both of which are taken to be eminently plausible by most contemporary epistemologists.⁸⁵

CONCLUSION

In this chapter, we gave several compelling reasons for thinking that non-theistic Hindu traditions lack the resources to make full use of Plantingian epistemology. In reference to Advaita Vedānta, we argued that because it does not countenance the existence of a personal designer on the first layer of reality, it cannot account for proper function. Moreover, given that ultimate reality is the propertyless and qualityless Brahman, there can't be any cognitive faculties that are capable of obtaining a design plan. We also looked at the dualistic Sāṃkhya tradition. We paired this tradition off with contemporary naturalism and argued that given that naturalism can't account for Plantingian epistemology, neither can the Sāṃkhya tradition. Given the arguments that we laid out here, we think that the Sāṃkhya tradition is incompatible with Plantingian religious epistemology. It should now be clear why we think that given its metaphysical commitments, non-theistic Hinduism cannot adequately account for any of the core theses of Plantingian religious epistemology.

We may now summarize our argument using the argument schema provided in chapter 3:

- (1) The members of the Advaita Vedānta and Sāṃkhya traditions can make full use of Plantingian religious epistemology *if and only if* they are beneficiaries of intellectual and conceptual resources internal to the Advaita

Vedānta and Sāṃkhya traditions which are necessary and sufficient for the articulation of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model as well as uniquely Advaita Vedānta and Sāṃkhya extensions of it.

- (2) The members of the Advaita Vedānta and Sāṃkhya traditions are beneficiaries of conceptual resources necessary for the articulation of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model as well as uniquely Advaita Vedānta and Sāṃkhya extensions of it *if and only if* (a) the central and formative doctrinal teachings of Advaita Vedānta and Sāṃkhya entail or suggest (I) the Dependency Thesis, (II) the Design Thesis, and (III) the Immediacy Thesis and unique analogous of (IV) the Internal Inspiration of the Holy Spirit Thesis and (V) the Scriptural Revelation Thesis, and (b) the metaphysical claims and/or presuppositions of Advaita Vedānta and Sāṃkhya are fully compatible with (I)–(III) and in no way preclude these relevantly analogous to (IV) and (V).
- (3) It's not the case that both (a) and (b) of (2) hold for the Advaita Vedānta and Sāṃkhya traditions, for while the central and formative doctrinal teachings of the non-theistic orthodox *darśanas* of Advaita Vedānta and Sāṃkhya entail or suggest some aspects of Plantinga's proper-function theory of warrant, and *perhaps* highly qualified analogous of (IV) and (V), some of their central teachings and metaphysical claims and/or presuppositions are not fully compatible with (I)–(III).
- (4) Thus, the members of the Advaita Vedānta and Sāṃkhya traditions are not beneficiaries of intellectual and conceptual resources internal to those traditions which are necessary and sufficient for the articulation of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model as well as a uniquely Advaita Vedānta and Sāṃkhya extensions of it. [From (2) and (3)]
- (5) Thus, the members of the Advaita Vedānta and Sāṃkhya traditions can't make full use of Plantingian religious epistemology. [From (1) and (4)]

Having addressed the most philosophically informed non-theistic traditions of the philosophical-religious traditions of India, in the next chapter we turn our attention to some of its theistic traditions in order to see whether they fare any better in accounting for the resources necessary to make Plantinga's epistemology intelligible.

NOTES

1. Rose Ann Christian, "Plantinga, Epistemic Permissiveness, and Metaphysical Pluralism," *Religious Studies* 28, no. 4 (1992): 553–573.
2. Beilby, *Epistemology as Theology*, 131.
3. Plantinga, *Warranted Christian Belief*, 350.

4. We are aware of the view that speaking of “Hinduism” is contentious, on grounds that the notion is viewed by many as a false social construction, a mere product of modernity. As Robert E. Frykenberg writes,

There has never been any such a thing as a single “Hinduism” or any single “Hindu community” for all of India. Nor, for that matter, can one find any such thing as a single “Hinduism” or “Hindu community” even for any one sociocultural region of the continent. Furthermore, there has never been any one religion—nor even one system of religions—to which the term “Hindu” can be accurately applied. No one so-called religion, moreover, can lay exclusive claim to be defined by the term “Hinduism.” The very existence of any single religious community by this name has been falsely conceived.

See Robert E Frykenberg, “The Emergence of Modern ‘Hinduism’ as a Concept and as an Institution: A Reappraisal with Special Reference to South India,” in *Hinduism Reconsidered*, eds. D. Sontheimer and H. Kulke (New Delhi, India: Manohar, 1989), 29–49. Nevertheless, while we make no attempt to give anything like a formal definition of “Hinduism,” following Brian K. Smith, we take the term to refer to those religions and/or philosophical traditions that take the authority of the Vedas as a starting point. See Brian K. Smith, “Exorcising the Transcendent: Strategies for Defining Hinduism and Religion” *History of Religions* 27, no. 1 (1987): 32–55. It is in this sense that the term is useful for picking out and calling attention to the particular religions and philosophical traditions of India that we will engage with here and the next two chapters.

5. For more on this, see Rallapalli Venkateswara Rao, *The Concept of Time in Ancient India* (Delhi: Bharatiya Kala Prakashan, 2004), 88–91 and David R. Kinsley, *Hinduism: A Cultural Perspective* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1993), 90.

6. J. N. Mohanty, *Classical Indian Philosophy* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2000), 16.

7. Stephen Phillips, *Epistemology in Classical India: The Knowledge Sources of the Nyaya School* (London: Routledge, 2012), 167.

8. Stephen Phillips, “Epistemology in Classical Indian Philosophy,” *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2017 Edition), ed. Edward N. Zalta, accessed July 25, 2018, <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2017/entries/epistemology-india>.

9. Phillips, *Epistemology in Classical India*, 5–7, 14–15, 20.

10. *Ibid.*, 26.

11. Christopher Bartley, *An Introduction to Indian Philosophy* (London: Continuum, 2011), 106.

12. Bergmann, *Justification Without Awareness*, 9.

13. Phillips, *Epistemology in Classical India*, 14, 5.

14. Gautama, *The Nyāya-Sūtra: Selections with Early Commentaries*, trans. with introduction and explanatory notes by Matthew Dasti and Stephen Phillips (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2017), 12.

15. *Ibid.*, 13.

16. Phillips, *Epistemology in Classical India*, 23–24.

17. *Ibid.*, 18.

18. In *Ibid.* See Gautama’s *Nyāya-Sūtra* 2.1.19 for the original text.

19. *Ibid.*

20. Ibid.

21. Note that Nyāya posits a difference between genuine certification and merely apparent certification, or pseudo-certification, that is, “justification that looks right from a first-person point of view but that is misleading in fact.” In contrast, genuine certification is indefeasible; in such cases of cognition, “S’s evidence for regarding a cognition as veridical would hold no matter what else she come to know.” But the Nyāya do not affirm that a belief counts as knowledge *only if* it is genuinely certified; as Phillips writes, “an unchallenged belief does not have to be certified in order to count as knowledge.” (Ibid., 21.) For more on the Nyāya method of dealing with doubts, see Gautama, *The Nyāya-Sūtra*, Chapter Two.

22. The following sections on the Advaita Vedānta tradition can be found in McNabb, “Warranted Religion.”

23. Eliot Deutsch and Rohit Dalvi, *The Essential Vedānta: A New Source Book of Advaita Vedānta* (Bloomington: World Wisdom, 2004), 161.

24. Ibid., 157, 161.

25. Ibid., 161–162.

26. Ibid., 162.

27. Though *Vivekachudamani* might not have been written by Śaṅkara, it is seen an orthodox text that stems from and accurately represents his thought by the Vedānta community.

28. Deutsch and Dalvi, *The Essential Vedānta*, 162.

29. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy: Volume 2* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1998), 450.

30. Heinrich Zimmer, *Philosophies of India* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1951), 414.

31. Paul Devanandan, *The Concept of Maya* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1950), 98.

32. Śaṅkarācārya, *Shankara’s Crest-Jewel of Discrimination*, trans. Swami Prabhavananda and Christopher Isherwood (Hollywood: Vedānta Press, 1978), 70.

33. Victoria Harrison, *Eastern Philosophy: The Basics* (London: Routledge, 2012), 58.

34. Śaṅkarācārya, *Shankara’s Crest-Jewel of Discrimination*, 18.

35. See, in particular, Kant’s *Critique of Pure Reason* A70/B95–A93/B109, A80/B106, and B159. We realize this explication of Kant is dense, but it is worthwhile to provide all the same, as we assume that our many of our readers are likely to be much more familiar with Kant’s thinking than Śaṅkara’s. For two excellent and generally accessible introductions to Kant’s general philosophy, we recommend Allen W. Wood, *Kant* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005) and Paul Guyer, *Kant* (London and New York: Routledge, 2006). For a set of essays that shed light on Kant’s project in *The Critique of Pure Reason*, see *The Cambridge Companion to Kant’s Critique of Pure Reason*, ed. Paul Guyer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

36. Śaṅkarācārya, *Shankara’s Crest-Jewel of Discrimination*, 104.

37. Zimmer, *Philosophies of India*, 416.

38. Ibid., 416.

39. Ibid., 417.

40. Devanandan, *The Concept of Maya*, 99.
41. Thomas Forsthoefel, *Knowing Beyond Knowledge: Epistemologies of Religious Experience in Classical and Modern Advaita* (Alderhot, England: Ashgate, 2002), 71.
42. *Ibid.*, 61–62.
43. *Ibid.*, 53.
44. *Ibid.*, 61–62.
45. Selections from Śaṅkara's *Upadeśasāhasrī*, in Deutsch and Dalvi, *The Essential Vedānta*, 230.
46. *Ibid.*
47. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan and Charles A. Moore, *The Sāṃkhya-Karika*, in *A Sourcebook in Indian Philosophy*, eds. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan and Charles A. Moore (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1957), 425.
48. *Ibid.*, 425.
49. Pulinbihari Chakravarti, *Origin and Development of the Sāṃkhya System of Thought* (New Delhi: Oriental Books Reprint Corp, 1975), 4.
50. Harrison, *Eastern Philosophy: The Basics*, 63.
51. Chakravarti, *Origin and Development of the Sāṃkhya System of Thought*, 208.
52. Harrison, *Eastern Philosophy: The Basics*, 63.
53. Chakravarti, *Origin and Development of the Sāṃkhya System of Thought*, 93; Ishvara Krishna, *The Sāṃkhya-Karika*, in *A Sourcebook in Indian Philosophy*, eds. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan and Charles A. Moore, 431.
54. Satischandra Chatterjee and Dhirendramohan Datta, *An Introduction to Indian Philosophy* (Calcutta: University of Calcutta Press, 1984), 260.
55. K. B. Ramakrishna Rao, "The Guṇas of Prakṛti According to the Sāṃkhya Philosophy," *Philosophy East and West* 13, no. 1 (1963): 64.
56. Harrison, *Eastern Philosophy: The Basics*, 63.
57. Chakravarti, *Origin and Development of the Sāṃkhya System of Thought*, 209.
58. *Ibid.*, 209.
59. *Ibid.*, 213.
60. *Ibid.*, 209.
61. Īswara Krishna, *The Sāṅkhya Kārikā*, trans. Henry Thomas Colebrooke (Oxford: A. J. Valpy, 1837), 65.
62. *Ibid.*, 66–68. While the basic form of these arguments is due to Chakravarti and Henry Thomas Colebrooke, we have significantly modified and paraphrased these arguments, and in some cases expanded on them, for sake of clarity and intelligibility.
63. *Ibid.*, 12.
64. *Ibid.*, 319.
65. Harrison, *Eastern Philosophy: The Basics*, 63–64.
66. *Ibid.*, 66.
67. See Harrison, *Eastern Philosophy: The Basics*, 66 and Krishna, "The Sāṃkhya-Karika," in Deutsch and Dalvi, *A Sourcebook in Indian Philosophy*, 442.
68. Zimmer, *Philosophies of India*, 298; 305.

69. Matthew Dasti, "Hindu Theism," in *Routledge Companion to Theism*, eds. Charles Taliaferro, Victoria Harrison, and Stewart Goetz (New York: Routledge, 2013), 35; Krishna, "The Sāṃkhya-Kārikā," 442.
70. Radhakrishnan and Moore, *A Source Book in Indian Philosophy*, 425.
71. *Ibid.*, 425.
72. Chakravarti, *Origin and Development of the Sāṃkhya System of Thought*, 319.
73. Zimmer, *Philosophies of India*, 287.
74. *Ibid.*, 287–288.
75. *Ibid.*, 288.
76. Colebrooke, *The Sāṃkhya Kārikā*, 66.
77. Victoria Harrison, *Eastern Philosophy: The Basics*, 63.
78. For instance, Sri Aurobindo writes, "The passive & fundamental consciousness is the Soul, the Purusha, Witness or Sakshi; the active & superstructural consciousness is Nature, Prakriti, processive or creative energy of the Sakshi." See *Essays Divine and Human: Writings From Manuscripts 1910–1950*, The Complete Works of Sri Aurobindo (Pondicherry, India: Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust, 1997), 195. For more on this definition of *sākṣī*, see Deepak Sarma, *An Introduction to Mādhva Vedānta*, Ashgate World Philosophies Series (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), 28–30.
79. Dasti, "Hindu Theism," 35.
80. Chatterjee and Datta, *An Introduction to Indian Philosophy*, 285–286.
81. T. S. Rukmani, "VijñāNabhikṣu On Bhava-Pratyaya And UpāYa-Pratyaya YogīS In Yoga-Sutras," *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 5, no. 4 (1978): 311–317.
82. Chatterjee and Datta, *An Introduction to Indian Philosophy*, 286–287.
83. See *The Yogasara-Sangraha of Vijñāna Bhikṣu*, trans. Gaṅgānātha Jha (Bombay: The Bombay Theosophical Fund, 1894), 27–30. For an argument along similar lines, see Patañjali, *The Yoga-Darśana, the Sutras of Patañjali with the Bhāṣya of Vyasa* (Bombay: Rajaram Tukaram Tatya, 1907), 24–27.
84. See, for instance, Andrew Nicholson, "Reconciling Dualism and Non-Dualism: Three Arguments in Vijñānabhikṣu's Bhedābheda Vedānta," *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 35, no. 3 (2007): 371–403.
85. For a seminal defense of defeasibility, see Marshall Swain, "Epistemic Defeasibility," *American Philosophical Quarterly* 11, no. 1 (1974): 15–25. In defense of fallibilism, Trent Dougherty and Patrick Rysiew argue, "denying that one can know on the basis of non-entailing evidence is, it seems, not an option if we're to preserve the very strong appearance that we do know many things." See their "Fallibilism, Epistemic Possibility, and Concessive Knowledge Attributions," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 78, no. 1 (2009): 123. For other recent defenses of knowledge fallibilism, see Jason Stanley, "Fallibilism and Concessive Knowledge Attributions," *Analysis* 65, no. 2 (2005): 126–131 and Jason Stanley, "Knowledge and Certainty," *Philosophical Issues* 18, no. 1 (2008): 35–57. Plantinga argues against infallibilism in Chapter Six of *Warrant and Proper Function*, among other places.

Chapter 5

Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta

We discussed the non-theistic *darśanas* of Advaita Vedānta and Sāṃkhya in the last chapter. We now move on to consider theistic *darśanas*, Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta in this chapter and Dvaita Vedānta in the next. While often misleadingly translated as qualified non-dualism, “Viśiṣṭādvaita” is best translated as “the integral unity of complex reality.”¹ The meaning of this phrase will become clear as we unpack the core doctrines of Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta.

HINDU PERSONALISM

As Patricia Sayre writes, “Personalism, in the broadest sense, is a philosophical stance that, takes the concept of personhood to be indispensable and central to a proper understanding of reality.”² In India *circa* 700 CE, people began to understand Brahman along explicitly personalist lines with the advent of the worship of personal deities in the *Vaiṣṇava* traditions. This group includes the *Śaivite*, *Shakti*, and *Smarta* traditions, who worship deities such as Viṣṇu, Shiva, Ganesha, Surya, and Devi (*aka* Shakti). Hindu personalism was influenced by various strands of devotional Hinduism, or *Bhakti*, the path of devotion. This development is best represented by the theism of the Bhagavad Gītā. Christopher Bartley writes that the *Vaiṣṇava* affirm that “God is a person, a being with will, agency and purposes, upon whom one is radically dependent and in whom one may take refuge” and that “God is a compassionate personal being who deserves praise and love [who is] entirely self-sufficient [and] creates and sustains the cosmos for no purpose other than his own delight (*līlā*).”³

Although these personalist traditions are non-Vedic in origin, and hence unorthodox, because of their influence on the faith and practice of Hinduism, Brahmins had to engage with these traditions and their texts. In this way, the personalist traditions exerted a strong formative influence on the development of the orthodox *darśanas* of Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta and Dvaita Vedānta. But it is important to note that the advent of personalism in Vedānta was not merely an external importation of non-Vedic ideas. The worship of personal deities in India arose well before the Vedas were written down. Many of the early Vedic hymns are addressed to personal deities, such as Agni, Mitra, Varuna, and Indra. Over 1,000 of these hymns are addressed to Indra alone.⁴ The Vedas present Viṣṇu as a sun God that is associated with creation. He is portrayed as the measurer of the realms of the earth who props up the sky and earth, the creator of space.⁵ Moreover, there are theistic and devotional aspects in the Upaniṣads. In several spots, Śaṅkara notes that other commentators affirm that the individual is not strictly identical to Brahman and that the individual soul as such is real, which suggests early theistic tendencies in the Vedānta tradition.⁶ Both Rāmānuja and Mādhva, the founders of Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta and Dvaita Vedānta, respectively, understood themselves as recovering the theism of the Vedas and the Upaniṣads that had been overlooked or obfuscated by the spread of Buddhism and Advaita Vedānta.⁷

The Vaiṣṇava identify the numerous divinities mentioned in the Ṛgveda with Viṣṇu. They regard Viṣṇu as Īśvara, the supreme being, or Lord, the all-pervasive, inner controller, the ground of and sovereign over all that exists in the universe, and the supreme spiritual goal.⁸ S. M. Srinivasa Chari argues that the principal doctrines of Vaiṣṇava are found in the Upaniṣads. He writes that the *puruṣa-sukta* (Ṛgveda 10.90) “established decisively that *Puruṣa* who is equated with Viṣṇu, is the Supreme Being.”⁹ Chari recounts that the Subābla Upaniṣad teaches that prior to creation, only the supreme being, Nār̥yaṇa, existed. The Mīmāṃsakas and Rāmānuja argue that “Nār̥yaṇa” is a specific term denoting the same entity described elsewhere in the Upaniṣads as *Paramātma*, the absolute Ātman or supreme spirit. Chari concludes that the issue is settled by the Vaiṣṇava reading of the Mahānār̥yaṇa Upaniṣad, which, he argues, “clearly states that the *Puruṣa* referred to in *The Ṛgveda* is the Ruler of the universe and that He is Nār̥yaṇa, the *Para-Brahma* and *Para-tattva*.”¹⁰ He concludes “that the Viṣṇu of the Ṛgveda who is also identified with *Puruṣa* is the Supreme Deity.”¹¹

Both Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta and Mādhva Vedānta accept, each in their own ways, the theistic personalism of Vaiṣṇava. In the remainder of this chapter, we consider Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta as it was developed by its founder, Rāmānuja. In the next chapter, we consider Mādhva Vedānta, developed by Mādhvācārya.

A BRIEF BIOGRAPHY OF RĀMĀNUJA

According to traditional sources, which are accepted as historically reliable by Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta, Rāmānuja was born to a Tamil Brāhmin family in the city of Sriperumbudur in 1017 CE and died in 1137 CE. When he was young, he was educated under Yadavaprakasa, an Advaitan philosopher. Ultimately unsatisfied with his teachings, Rāmānuja broke with his first guru. Still a young man, he took into his household Periya Nambi along with his wife so that he could continue his studies. Soon thereafter, Rāmānuja's wife got into a bitter disagreement with Periya's wife, one so severe that the Nambi's left Rāmānuja's household. Rāmānuja decided domestic life wasn't for him and dismissed his wife and became a *saṃnyāsin*, or renunciant, one who renounces material goods and worldly possessions in pursuit of liberation (*mokṣa*, or *moksha*). Living the life of a wandering ascetic monk, eventually, he founded his own monastic order and traveled throughout India engaging members of other philosophical traditions and spreading his message. Over the course of his travels, he sharpened his critical thinking, reasoning, and debating skills, gained a better and deeper understanding of his own Viśiṣṭādvaita views, and expanded on and extended Vaiṣṇava personalism. By the time of Rāmānuja's death, Viśiṣṭādvaita had become widely known throughout India. Rāmānuja's great synthesis of Vedic religion and Vaiṣṇava personalism gave Vaiṣṇavas what they needed to establish themselves firmly among the orthodox *darśanas* of the Vedic religious traditions.¹²

VIŚIṢṬĀDVAITA VEDĀNTA 101

Rāmānuja's system is a synthesis of Vaiṣṇava theism and the teachings of the Vedas and the Upaniṣads. As such, there are many points of difference between Śaṅkara's interpretation of these texts and Rāmānuja's. Recall that Śaṅkara affirmed that, ultimately, Brahman is impersonal and without quality or attribute and maintained that since there is a strict identity between Ātman and Brahman, the world of everyday experience is an unreal mirage (*māyā*). In contrast, Rāmānuja maintains that Brahman is personal, the first cause and sovereign ruler of all, and that the world of everyday experience is a real, non-illusory world in which we find non-thinking material beings and thinking, conscious individual persons (*jīva*) that are not strictly identical to Brahman. Each person, being an individual, is a unique subject of experience with their own first-person phenomenological perspective.

The Nature of Brahman, or God

According to Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta, Brahman, or God, is ultimate personality, endowed with the qualities of being (*sat*), consciousness (*cit*), and bliss (*ānanda*). Among God's attributes are those ascribed to Him by traditional theism. God is perfect and without defect; he is not the cause of evil and suffering. He is all-powerful and sovereign. God is the efficient cause of the world and establishes its natural laws. Everything exists in and is sustained by God and all things are subject to His will and act according to his purposes. God is all-knowing; He has unmediated omniscient knowledge of all things. He is loving and merciful, ever helping devotees to attain *mokṣa*.¹³

Rāmānuja's views about God differ from traditional Western theism in important respects. One striking contrast is that the world and everything in it exists within God in the same manner in which attributes exist within a substance. The basic idea is that God is related to the world as its animator, its inner controller, as a soul is related to its body. As M. Hiriyanna puts it, "God, together with the souls and matter is an organic whole, just as the soul with its physical body is an organic unity."¹⁴ And Datta and Chatterjee write, "[the material universe] is a part of God and controlled by God just as the human body is controlled from within by the human soul."¹⁵ Rāmānuja maintains that God and the material world form a complex organic unity that is completely dependent on God. According to this view, while the divine person of Brahman universally pervades all finite entities, including material bodies and individual souls, there is no strict identity between them, for although they have the same substantial nature as Brahman, they are entirely dependent on Him for their existence whereas Brahman is in no way dependent on them. According to this view, the divine person of Brahman universally pervades all finite entities, including material bodies and individual souls. However, there is no strict identity between them, for although they have the same substantial nature as Brahman, they are entirely dependent on Him for their existence, but Brahman is in no way dependent on them.

Rāmānuja ascribes to Brahman all the attributes of the God of traditional Western theism but goes further, maintaining that God has infinitely many attributes. He writes that Brahman "possesses an infinite number of qualities of unimaginable excellence" and is "adorned with infinite, supremely excellent and wonderful qualities—splendour, beauty, fragrance, tenderness, loveliness, youthfulness, and so on."¹⁶ Arguably, Rāmānuja maintains that God himself is a complex plurality having parts. As Antony Manalapuzhivila puts it, because the relationship between Brahman and his attributes is like unto that of attributes of consciousness inhering in a human soul, the consciousness of Brahman is likewise complex. That is, in Brahman, "the divine

attributes are really distinct from the divine essence and from one another.”¹⁷ Bartley provides a scriptural motivation for Rāmānuja’s acceptance of this view. He writes,

Rāmānuja holds that there is a structural isomorphism between truly descriptive language and its referents. If scriptural language is found to be complex, then the object must be complex also. The relational co-referential Upaniṣadic texts convey that *Brahman* is qualified by various properties.¹⁸

To use a concrete example, Bartley quotes the Bhagavad Gītā 7:8-11: “I am the flavor (*rasa*) in water, I am the radiance (*prabhā*) of the sun and moon, I am the subtle sound essence in all the Vedic scriptures, sound in the atmosphere, the manhood of men.”¹⁹ In keeping with their monistic metaphysics, Advaitans interpret such texts to imply that Brahman is essentially identical to the flavor of the water, the sun, the moon, and the like. In contrast, Bartley argues that Rāmānuja takes it that the key terms in these texts are applied to Brahman in co-referential constructions. Thus, the Bhagavad Gītā 7:8-11 should be read as meaning: “I can be spoken of as the flavour in water since water and its taste are aspects of a physical universe that are essentially dependent on me since they are modes constituting my body.”²⁰ To sum up, Rāmānuja argues that because the Upaniṣads attribute various qualities to Brahman, there cannot be a strict identity between these qualities, nor between that of Brahman and his infinite qualities, it follows that the nature of Brahman must be complex.²¹

Another point of difference between Rāmānuja’s conception of God and that of traditional Western theism, in keeping with the notion that everything exists in God, is the view that God is not only the efficient cause of the universe but is also its material cause and its inner controller. Rāmānuja’s main argument for this is that since there isn’t anything external to Brahman from or out of which things could come to exist, all things exist within and have the being of God.²² Since the material world and individual souls exist, and since they did not begin to exist, it follows that they exist eternally, as does Brahman. According to Manalapuruzhava, regarding God’s creation of the world, Rāmānuja maintains that, the effect, the world, preexists in Brahman, the cause. Again, he points out that God is the material cause of the world in that all things exist in and are utterly dependent on him, as he is their sustainer and controller. He writes, “When God exists with the individual souls and matter in the unmanifested form [i.e., prior to creation of the world], he may be considered the cause or Brahman in the causal state (*Karanavasta*) and when these become evolved and manifest [i.e., after the creation of the world], he is in an effected state (*Karyavasta*).”²³

The Nature of Individual Selves and Their Relation to God

Rāmānuja argues that individual souls aren't strictly identical with Brahman, for if they were, the imperfections of individual selves would be imputed to Brahman, which can't be because Brahman is perfect. Rather than Brahman being reduced to or identical with individual selves, as Chatterjee and Datta put it, Rāmānuja maintains that individual souls are "eternally and inseparably related to [Brahman] as parts to their whole."²⁴ Even so, Bartley maintains, in contrast to the absolutely unified consciousness of Brahman as conceived by the Advaita, an individual soul has experiences and is not reducible to a stream of experience, has an ineffable identity, and is a subject of experience with an essentially first-person perspective.²⁵ Bartley writes, "The soul is a permanent principle of identity that underpins the synthetic unity of experience in the present and through time."²⁶ And while the tradition holds that the inner self, the "I" of authentic first-person experience, is an individual that thinks, intends, and acts, the inner self is "itself ensouled by God, its inner guide and sustainer."²⁷ Although individual selves are distinct substantial entities, in that they share in the same substance of Brahman, they are entirely dependent on God for their existence, and in that sense are finite modes of divine substance with no essence, actuality, or purpose of their own independently of Brahman.²⁸ These statements shed light on why Bartley maintains that the term "Viśiṣṭādvaita" is best translated as "the integral unity of complex reality."

Recall from the last chapter that Śaṅkara maintains that the "That thou art" passages in the Upaniṣads teach that there is a strict identity between Brahman and the individual soul. Rāmānuja rejects Śaṅkara's reading of these texts. Radhakrishnan writes that Rāmānuja held that these theses are "intended to deny the real existence of things apart from the supreme spirit which is identical to all things."²⁹ Underlying this view is this view is a sophisticated theory of property attribution. Radhakrishnan continues:

Ramanuja argues that . . . every judgment is a synthesis of distincts. When Brahman and the individual soul are placed in relation of subject and predicate (sāmānādhikarāṇya), it follows that there is a difference between the two. Subject and predicate are *distinct* meanings referred to the *same* substance. If the two meanings cannot cohere in the same substance, then the judgment fails. We distinguish subject and predicate in their meaning or intension, but unite them in their application or extension. So the text, "That art thou," brings out the complex nature of the ultimate reality, which has individual souls inhering in it. Brahman and the jiva [the individual soul] are related as substance and attribute (viśeṣa and viśeṣaṇa), or soul and body. If there were not a difference between the two, we could not say that one is the other.³⁰

On these matters, Bartley writes:

According to the Viśiṣṭādvaita exegesis, the “that” stands for the creator God, the inner guide of the soul, of whom all entities are modes since they form his body. “Thou” stands for an individual self, an essentially dependent mode of God. “*Tat*” denotes the Highest Self, which is the cause of the universe, whose purposes are ever-actualized (*satya-saṃkalpa*), who possesses every exalted quality and who is devoid of every trace of imperfection. “*Tvam*” denotes the same Brahman embodied by the individual self, along with the body of the latter. The grammatical co-ordination conveys the unity (not identity) of the two. The co-referential terms apply in their primary senses.³¹

Summing up, we may say that while Brahman constitutes all reality, and that all individual selves dwell within His infinite being, reality is a unified plurality of distinct individual material and mental things that ontologically depend on and inhere within Brahman as modes of his divine substance.

Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta and the Proper-Function Condition

Like other classical *darśanas*, Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta accepts *pramāṇa* theory, the outlines of which were discussed in chapter 4. Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta accepts the *pramāṇas* of perception (*pratyakṣa*), inference (*anumāna*), and testimony. Recall, too, our argument that the *pramāṇa* theory of the Nyāya is externalist and assumes proper function (or at least something very close to it). In light of this, it would seem, at least at first glance, that Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta could account for Plantinga’s proper-function condition as well. But that conclusion doesn’t necessarily follow. After all, as we saw in the last chapter, even though Advaita Vedānta and Sāṃkhya both accept *pramāṇa* theory, we argued that they are ultimately unable to account for proper functionalism.

Recall that Advaita Vedānta affirms that there are three levels of reality. Ultimately, what really exists is *Nirguṇa* Brahman, or qualityless Brahman. Reality as it is seen through the categories of human thinking is not ultimately real but exists only relative to *Nirguṇa* Brahman. The world is an illusion (*māyā*) that results from ignorance (*avidya*); human faculties are aimed toward producing conventional beliefs that don’t reflect ultimate reality, which leads us to accept all manner of false beliefs. At best, cognitive faculties function properly only on the conventional level of reality, which isn’t ultimately real. Rather, all conventional realities are appearances. Therefore, even though they affirm *pramāṇa* theory, the central *Advaita Vedānta* doctrines preclude advocates of Advaita Vedānta from accepting proper functionalism. As we’ve seen, Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta does not accept these

problematic doctrines; it maintains that Brahman has qualities, namely, those that are associated with personalist theism. Rāmānuja maintains that all conscious states, even misleading sense perceptions, must be conscious states of or about something, and affirms the epistemic principle that whatever is, is both knowable and namable, in stark contrast to the Advaita Vedānta view that we can have thoughts about a reality that lacks all qualities.³² Moreover, he maintains that we can't make sense of the passages in the Vedas and the Upaniṣads that ascribe personal attributes to Brahman if we suppose that the referent of these passages is an ultimate reality that is undifferentiated and without any qualities.³³ Rāmānuja is full-blooded metaphysical and epistemological realist; the objects of human cognition are immediately perceived, external-to-mind realities that exist independently of human perception, and the world contains many spatiotemporal objects, including substantial entities, or individual substances, including individual souls.³⁴ He holds that sense perception is a valid means of cognition because it is the means by which we are made cognitively aware of external-to-mind objects.

Naturally, because he maintains that Brahman and Ātman are distinct, Rāmānuja rejects Śaṅkara's account of *māyā*, according to which the empirical world is an illusion that has only phenomenal, or relative, existence. As Nancy Ann Nayar writes, Rāmānuja interprets *māyā* as "the wonderful actions/creations of God."³⁵ This understanding of *māyā* crucially depends on Rāmānuja's understanding of the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad 4:9-10, which reads:

From it the artificer (*māyin*) sends from all this:

Metres, sacrifices, rites, and vows.

What has been, what is to be, and what the Vedas teach.

The other trapped in it by the artifice.

One should know nature (*prakṛti*) as the artifice,

The Great Lord as the artificer,

And the whole world as pervaded

By beings that are parts of him.³⁶

For our purposes, the key part of this passage is the line that says that the Great Lord, or the supreme person, is called *māyin*, the artificer. In his commentary on this passage Rāmānuja writes, "The Supreme Person is called Māyin simply because He is the owner of that māyā; know then that *prakṛti* is *māyā* and the Great Lord is Māyin."³⁷ Regarding *avidya*, P. T. Raju writes that Rāmānuja takes *avidya* to have both a negative and positive sense. Understood negatively, *avidya* is a lack of cognition. Understood positively, it is the same as *karma*, "the potency of past actions, the unseen force . . . which is explained as fate."³⁸

The fact that Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta accepts the standard Indian cosmological theory accepted by traditional Hindus, according to which the universe is

cyclical in nature, coming to be and dissolving over the course of extremely long periods of time, coupled with the view that individual souls exist eternally, raises problems for its being able to satisfy the proper-function criterion. According to standard Hindu cosmology, both the manner in which our cognitive faculties come about and the material that constitutes them, depend on an actually infinite number of cosmological cycles. If this is the case, then the design plan of our cognitive faculties presupposes that there is an actual infinite. But if actual infinities aren't metaphysically possible, then none of the orthodox *darśanas*, including Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta, will be able to account for an intelligible cognitive design plan.³⁹ Can this problem be overcome? We think philosophers will be split on this point.

The success of this line of argument depends on whether one accepts the view that humans can have an intelligible design plan only if there isn't an actual infinite series of events. If one accepts this claim, then one ought to conclude that the orthodox *darśanas* can't account for or make use of a robust extension of Plantinga's extended Aquinas/Calvin model. However, if this claim isn't correct, we don't see any reason why this should prevent a Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta extension of Plantinga's extended Aquinas/Calvin model. We will once again turn to the subject of actual infinities and Hindu theology and cosmology in the next chapter. For now, we conclude that there are some significant and substantive theological dissimilarities that might ultimately prevent the viability of a robust Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta extension of the Aquinas/Calvin model. Because all of the orthodox *darśanas* are impacted by this problem, we bracket problems related to actual infinities and focus on problems that are unique to Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta. Let us focus, then, on a deeper problem for Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta, one that stems from the metaphysics of pantheism.

Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta maintains that individual souls are modes of the divine substance of Viṣṇu. It's not at all clear how modes are the sorts of things that can have design plans. Perhaps we can say that individual souls qua modes of Viṣṇu have design plans in a derivative sense: insofar as Viṣṇu has a design plan, then modes of Viṣṇu, too, have design plans that are included in Viṣṇu's design plan. But it's not clear how Viṣṇu could have a design plan. Perhaps Viṣṇu could have a design plan in an extended or metaphorical sense, rather like how Plantinga suggests we can think about how God knows things by using analogies.⁴⁰ Along these lines, we might say that it is analogically true that the modes of Viṣṇu have cognitive faculties and a design plan in virtue of Viṣṇu's having a design plan and leave it a mystery as to how Viṣṇu could have a design plan. But if we accept this claim, then, strictly speaking, humans don't really have design plans and consequently we would be largely in the dark about how we actually know things. That this is so calls into question whether Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta can affirm a

proper-function account of warrant, and therefore undermines the claim that there could be a viable Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta extension of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model. This critical problem would need to be adequately dealt with in order for Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta to be able to satisfy the proper-function condition.

Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta and the Truth-Aimed Condition

In chapter 4, we argued that while Advaita Vedāntans might argue that given the causal power of illusions, if certain illusions function in a way that they should, illusions might reliably help a subject produce true beliefs at the level of conventional reality. But what is at the level of conventional reality is ultimately not real. And because there is no such thing as proper function at the ultimate layer of reality, Advaita Vedāntans can't account for the truth-aimed condition at the ultimate layer of reality either. Advaita Vedāntans can't account for humans having a cognitive design plan that functions properly due to its ontological commitment to an impersonal ultimate reality. Plantinga's truth-aimed condition is part of the overall design plan of how one's faculties should function. If the truth-aimed condition can't be separated from the proper-function condition, then the Advaita Vedānta tradition can't account for this condition and thus the Design Thesis either. We concluded that the core beliefs of Advaita Vedānta can't be warranted in the same way that the core beliefs of Christianity can be warranted.

Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta might be able to avoid these pitfalls. As we saw above, they are metaphysical and epistemological realists; they affirm the existence of an external-to-mind world and they do not think that the empirical world is illusory. Their understanding of *māyā* as the creative activity of Brahman doesn't lend itself to overly skeptical problems. Thus, we haven't found anything in Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta that would decisively preclude its acceptance of the truth-aimed condition. Hence, we tentatively conclude that our initial impression that it can accommodate it stands. However, unless Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta can ultimately account for the proper-function condition, it's not altogether clear that they can ultimately account for the truth-aimed condition.

The Preconditions of Warrant and Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta

It is far from clear that Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta can satisfy the preconditions of warrant for Plantingian religious epistemology. As we've brought up, one major obstacle is the controversy about whether an actual infinite is metaphysically possible, and whether, if so, the existence of an actual infinity precludes the metaphysical possibility and intelligibility of the human design plan.

Another major obstacle is that given that we can't say that individual souls have design plans in a literal, non-analogical sense, Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta can't accommodate the proper-function condition. Nevertheless, there may be reasons for thinking that these problems may be addressed, and it is worth considering whether and to what extent Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta may be able to accommodate Plantinga's standard and extended Aquinas/Calvin models.

VIŚIṢṬĀDVAITA VEDĀNTA AND PLANTINGA'S STANDARD AND EXTENDED AQUINAS/CALVIN MODELS

To set the stage for evaluating whether Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta is consistent with the standard and extended Aquinas/Calvin models, recall the three theses of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model:

- (I) The Dependency Thesis: Humans are ontologically and epistemologically dependent on and created by God.
- (II) The Design Thesis: Humans are created in accord with a design plan one aim of which is the production of true belief.
- (III) The Immediacy Thesis: God endows humans with special cognitive faculties or belief-forming processes through which theistic belief can be known in an epistemically immediate and basic manner.

And recall the three theses of the extended Aquinas/Calvin model:

- (IV) The Internal Inspiration of the Holy Spirit Thesis: There is a special belief-forming process the purpose of which is to produce specifically Christian beliefs about the nature of God, salvation, forgiveness of sins, eternal life, and the like.
- (V) The Scriptural Revelation Thesis: By means of scripture, which is identified with the Christian Bible, God propositionally reveals to humans important divine teachings and doctrines.

As we've seen, while Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta affirms that God is the efficient cause of the world, it also affirms that God is its material cause and affirms that individual souls are coeternal with God, having no beginning in time. Thus, according to Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta, only in an extended and highly analogical sense could it be true that God is our creator and that God created us in accord with an actual design plan. Putting those problems aside, it seems to us that Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta can account for the Dependency Thesis and the Design Thesis. But can it also account for the Immediacy Thesis?

And does it affirm or imply that there are unique analogues of the Internal Inspiration of the Holy Spirit and the Scriptural Revelation Theses?

Rāmānuja was a staunch critic of those who thought that there were good arguments in favor of the existence of Brahman and that he is the creator of the world. In *Sri Bhasya* I:1.3, he defends the claim that, Brahman, “being raised above all contact with the senses, is not an object of [sense] perception and the other means of proof, but to be known through Scripture only.”⁴¹ Arguments for the existence of God fail because, as S. R. Bhatt writes, “no amount of generalisation based on the characteristics exhibited by the material world can suffice to prove [His] existence.”⁴² Since the arguments of natural theology fail, and since we can’t have sense perception of Brahman, Rāmānuja maintains that the scriptural authority of the Vedas and the Upaniṣads is the only fully authoritative means by which most people are able to have knowledge of Brahman.⁴³ However, while most people must rely on the testimony of scripture for knowledge of Brahman, avid devotees of Viṣṇu, through being ethically and spiritually purified on account of living a life of faith and worship, are able to come to have immediate and intuitive knowledge of Him. The Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad IV: 20 states, “His form is not accessible to the sight: No one see him with the eye. Those who, with heart and mind, See him dwelling in the heart become immortal.”⁴⁴ In a note explicating this verse, Swāmi Tyāgīśānanda writes that “intuition” here refers to a kind of super-sensuous and super-rational way of knowing Brahman. Rather than taking this special way of knowing God to be a unique distinct faculty, Tyāgīśānanda writes that the language of the text implies “that intuition is only the heightened power of cognition born of the refinement and concentration of all the faculties of the mind—feeling, thought, and will.”⁴⁵ This implies, he maintains, that devotees who have purified their feelings, thoughts, and their will through living an ethical life are able to focus their standard cognitive faculties such that they have direct and immediate experience of Brahman. This focusing provides “a form of cognition [of Brahman] that gives [devotees] unerring and unshakeable certainty [of the reality of Brahman].”⁴⁶

The upshot of this is that while it would seem that Rāmānuja doesn’t think that there is a special cognitive faculty the function of which is to produce either basic belief in Viṣṇu or the core doctrines of Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta, he does maintain that the human design plan is such that by faith and through worship, devotees’ cognitive faculties are purified so that they are able to come to realize the reality of Viṣṇu in an epistemically basic way by means that are rooted in experience. While this way of knowledge is not open to all members of Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta, all have testimonial knowledge of Brahman by means of scriptural revelation. The means by which members of Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta come to hold their beliefs is sufficiently analogous to

the way Plantingian religious epistemology takes it that Christians can come to know Christian belief in a properly basic way. Thus, we conclude that there are analogues of the Internal Inspiration of the Holy Spirit Thesis and the Scriptural Revelation Thesis in Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta. It would seem, therefore, that there are reasons for thinking that Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta can sustain its own unique extension of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model. But this is so *only if* Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta can accommodate Plantinga's proper functionalism, which remains to be shown.

CONCLUSION

It seems to us that while Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta can't make full use of Plantingian religious epistemology, there are reasons for thinking that it can make use of it at least in part. For the most part, Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta can accommodate all five theses of Plantingian religious epistemology. However, its panentheistic overtones pose significant obstacles that are seriously out of sync with the monotheistic bent to Plantingian religious epistemology. Second, although it may be able to accommodate the truth-aimed condition, on account of being committed to the existence of actual infinities and to the notion that individual souls are uncreated and lack actual design plans, it's doubtful that it can accommodate the proper-function condition. Being extremely charitable, perhaps, assuming that we grant that it makes sense to speak of humans having something analogous to a design plan, we can grant that the proper-function condition is satisfied and the possibility that there is a model of that shows how the core doctrines of Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta could be both basic and warranted for its members. On the other hand, one might argue that because making this move leaves us with a deep mystery as to how humans could possibly have a design plan, it can't actually accommodate a proper-function account of warrant and hence there isn't room for a Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta extension of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model. While we remain open to the possibility that Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta may be able to overcome these difficulties, we conclude that the prospects of Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta being able to make full use of Plantingian religious epistemology don't seem very promising. We may now fill in the argument schema introduced in chapter 3 for Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta.

- (1) The members of Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta can make full use of Plantingian religious epistemology *if and only if* they are the beneficiaries of intellectual and conceptual resources internal to Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta which are necessary and sufficient for the articulation of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model as well as a uniquely Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta extension of it.

- (2) The members of Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta are beneficiaries of conceptual resources necessary for the articulation of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model and a uniquely Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta extension of it *if and only if* (a) the central and formative doctrinal teachings of Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta entail or suggest (I) the Dependency Thesis, (II) the Design Thesis, and (III) the Immediacy Thesis; and unique analogues of (IV) the Internal Inspiration of the Holy Spirit Thesis and (V) the Scriptural Revelation Thesis, and (b) the metaphysical claims and/or presuppositions of Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta are fully compatible with (I)–(III) and in no way preclude theses relevantly analogous to (IV) and (V).
- (3) It's doubtful that (a) and (b) of (2) hold for Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta, for while the central teachings of Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta entail or suggest (I), (III), (IV), and (V), some of those teachings (particularly, the claim that there is an actual infinite) are in logical tension with (II) the Design Thesis and some of the central metaphysical claims and/or presuppositions of Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta are not fully compatible with (I)–(III).
- (4) Thus, probably, the members of Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta are not the beneficiaries of intellectual and conceptual resources internal to Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta which are necessary and sufficient for the articulation of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model as well as a uniquely Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta extension of it. [From (2) and (3)]
- (5) Thus, probably, the members of Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta can't make full use of Plantingian religious epistemology. [From (1) and (4)]

NOTES

1. Bartley, *An Introduction to Indian Philosophy*, 169.
2. Patricia A. Sayre, "Personalism," in *A Companion to Philosophy of Religion*, second edition, eds. Charles Taliaferro, Paul Draper, and Philip L. Quinn (Wiley-Blackwell: Malden, Mass., 2010), 151.
3. Bartley, *An Introduction to Indian Philosophy*, 170.
4. See Klaus K. Klostermaier, *A Survey of Hinduism*, second edition (New York: State University of New York Press, 1994), 132–133.
5. See, for instance, *Ṛgveda* 1.154, 10.121.8, 10.184. See also *The Rig Veda: An Anthology*, translated by Wendy O'Faherty, (London: Penguin Books, 1981), 29, fn. 8.
6. S. R. Bhatt, *Studies in Rāmānuja Vedānta* (New Delhi: Heritage Publishers, 1975), 184–185.
7. *Ibid.*, 186.
8. S. M. Srinivasa Chari, *Vaiṣṇavism: Its Philosophy, Theology and Religious Discipline* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2017), 7–10.
9. *Ibid.*, 18.

10. Ibid, 13–14.
11. Ibid., 14.
12. These details of Rāmānuja’s life are gleaned from Jon Paul Sydnor, *Ramanuja and Schleiermacher: Toward a Constructive Comparative Theology* (Cambridge: James Clarke & Co, 2012), 20–24.
13. See M. Hiriyanna, *The Essentials of Indian Philosophy* (London: Diamond Books, 1996), 181–182 and Radhakrishna, *Indian Philosophy: Volume Two* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1998), 682–684.
14. Hiriyanna, *The Essentials of Indian Philosophy*, 181.
15. Chatterjee and Datta, *An Introduction to Indian Philosophy*, 413.
16. Sri Rāmānuja, *The Vedānta-Sūtras with the Commentary of Rāmānuja: Part III*, trans. George Thibaut (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1904), 240.
17. O. C. D. Fr. Antony Manalappuzhavila, “Nature and Origin of the World According to Rāmānuja” (Pontificia Universitas S. Thomas Aquinas, 1966), 42.
18. C. J. Bartley, *The Theology of Rāmānuja: Realism and Religion* (London: Routledge Curzon, 2002), 127.
19. Ibid., 88.
20. Ibid.
21. While we find Bartley’s argument in favor of plurality in Brahman to be sufficiently convincing, some scholars disagree. Martin Ganeri specifically argues against Bartley’s view. Carefully examining a few key texts, Ganeri writes that according to Rāmānuja, “what it means for Brahman to have these attributes of reality and consciousness is very different from what they mean in the case of finite entities.” In light of such texts, he concludes, “we have to be cautious about any suggestion that Rāmānuja intends to set out precisely what it means for such perfections to be like in Brahman’s case and certainly resist the idea that he means that they are predicated univocally of Brahman and finite reality.” See Martin Ganeri, *Indian Thought and Western Theism: The Vedānta of Ramanuja* (London: Routledge, 2015), 83–84.
22. Hiriyanna, *Essentials of Indian Philosophy*, 182.
23. Manalappuzhavila, “Nature and Origin of the World According to Rāmānuja,” 48.
24. Ibid., 423.
25. Bartley, *An Introduction to Indian Philosophy*, 176.
26. Ibid., 176.
27. Ibid., 178.
28. See Bartley, *The Theology of Ramanuja*, 75–77, 91.
29. Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy: Volume 2*, 687.
30. Ibid., 688.
31. Bartley, *An Introduction to Indian Philosophy*, 181–182.
32. See, for instance, *ibid.*, 173–174.
33. Ibid, 174.
34. Bartley, *The Theology of Rāmānuja*, 27.
35. Nancy Ann Nayar, *Poetry as Theology: The Śrīvaiṣṇava Stotra in the Age of Rāmānuja* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz Verlag, 1992), 206.
36. Quoted from *The Upaniṣads*, ed. and trans. Valeria J. Roebuck (London: Penguin Books, 2003), 306.

37. Ann Nayar, *Poetry as Theology*, 206.
38. P. T. Raju, *Structural Depths of Indian Thought* (New York: SUNY Press, 1985), 487.
39. For a defense of actual infinities being metaphysically impossible, see Tyler Dalton McNabb and Erik Baldwin “Reformed Epistemology and the Pandora’s Box Objection: The *Vaiśeṣika* and Mormon Traditions,” *Philosophia Christi* 18, no. 2 (2016): 451–465.
40. Alvin Plantinga, “Divine Knowledge,” in *Christian Perspectives on Religious Knowledge*, eds. C. Stephen Evans and Merold Westphal (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 62–63.
41. Rāmānuja, *The Vedānta-Sūtras with the commentary of Rāmānuja*, 161.
42. Bhatt, *Studies in Rāmānuja Vedānta*, 17. For a good discussion of why Rāmānuja thinks that these arguments fail, see Surendranath Dasgupta, *A History of Indian Philosophy: Volume III* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1922), 189–192.
43. See S. R. Bhatt, *Studies in Rāmānuja Vedānta*, 17 and Bartley, *An Introduction to Indian Philosophy*, 173–175.
44. *The Upaniṣads*, ed. and trans. Valeria J. Roebuck (London: Penguin Books, 2003), 308.
45. *Ibid.*, 97–98.
46. *Ibid.*, 98.

Chapter 6

A Mādhva Vedānta Extension of the Standard Aquinas/Calvin Model

In this chapter, we assess the prospects of the view that Mādhva Vedānta, also referred to as Dvaita Vedānta, is compatible with Plantingian religious epistemology and if so whether the members of Mādhva Vedānta, Mādhvas for short, may also claim that Mādhva Vedānta belief is probably warranted if true. Specifically, we consider whether Mādhvas are beneficiaries of conceptual resources for the articulation of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model as well as a unique non-Christian extension of it. Recall the necessary and sufficient conditions for being able to do this: (a) the central and formative doctrinal teachings of Mādhva Vedānta must entail or suggest (I)–(III) and unique analogs of (IV) and (V) and (b) the metaphysical claims and/or presuppositions of Mādhva Vedānta must be fully compatible with (I)–(III) and in no way, preclude theses relevantly analogous to (IV) and (V). While there are some obstacles that may hinder Mādhvas from adopting Plantingian epistemology, we don't think those obstacles are unsurmountable. However, there are some significant and substantive theological dissimilarities that might ultimately prevent the viability of a robust Mādhva Vedānta extension of the Aquinas/Calvin model.¹

A BRIEF BIOGRAPHY OF MADHVĀCĀRYA

Mādhva (1238–1317 CE), also known as Madhvācārya, was born in the village of Pājakakṣetra. Much of our knowledge of him and his life comes from the *Madhvavijaya* (or the *Triumph of Madhvācārya*), a hagiographic text written by his disciple Nārāyaṇa Paṇitācāry. Mādhvas accept this text to be historically accurate and reliable. A student of the Vedas, Madhvācārya was familiar with Advaita Vedānta but was unsatisfied with what he had

learned from his teachers. He decided to become a *saṃnyāsin*, or renunciant, and severed all ties to his Brahmanical caste in order to fully dedicate himself to the achievement of *mokṣa*. While a student of the Advaita Vedānta scholar Acyutaprekṣa, Mādhva developed his own teachings and achieved *mokṣa*. Acknowledging the superiority of his views, Acyutaprekṣa allowed Madhvācārya to take charge of his monastery. Mādhva then traveled around India and participated in public debates with other scholars and religious teachers of Vedānta in which he refuted the other orthodox and nonorthodox *darśanas*. He eventually became the student of Vyāsa, an avatar of Lord Viṣṇu and author of the *Brahma Sūtra*. Under the guruship of the Lord Viṣṇu himself, he composed the *Brahma Sūtra Bhāṣya*, his commentary on the *Brahma Sūtra*. Mādhvas believe Madhvācārya is identified with the third avatar of Vāyu, the wind God. Since they identify him with Vāyu, Mādhvas believe that Madhvācārya guides devotees on the path to *mokṣa* and is the mediator between them and Viṣṇu. After establishing the eight monasteries of Mādhva Vedānta, Madhvācārya is said not to have died but to have disappeared. He is believed to be residing in the Himālayas with Vyāsa-Viṣṇu, his teacher and father.²

AN OVERVIEW OF MĀDHVA VEDĀNTA EPISTEMOLOGY

The Mādhva Vedānta tradition, more so than any tradition that we have engaged so far, is most closely aligned with the epistemological stance of the Nyāya tradition, which, as we argued in chapter 4, endorses a proper-functional view of warrant. Recall our argument that Advaita Vedānta can't account for Plantingian religious epistemology because it claims that no conventional beliefs are true at the ultimate level of reality, a metaphysical view that can't account for proper function. Comparatively, because it affirms a realist and pluralist metaphysic, one according to which the doctrine of *māyā* isn't interpreted as "illusion" but rather "the will of the Lord," Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta fared much better. However, because of its commitment to cyclical time and its pantheistic nature, there are some serious obstacles that stand in the way of Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta being fully compatible with Plantingian religious epistemology. Mādhva Vedānta, on the other hand, is fully theistic. Madhvācārya affirms is a philosophy of difference, that Ātman is fully dependent on Brahman and that there is a real distinction between the two. As such, even though it, too, accepts a theory of cyclical time, Mādhva Vedānta has the best shot of being fully compatible with Plantingian religious epistemology.

Mādhva Vedānta, like all branches of Vedānta, accepts *pramāṇa* theory. In order to make the case that it is fully compatible with Plantingian religious

epistemology, we need to take a closer look at the details of *pramāṇa* theory as it was accepted and developed by Mādhva Vedānta. Recall that a *pramāṇa* is a valid means of knowledge. Mādhva maintains that there are two kinds of *pramāṇa*: *kevala-pramāṇa*, direct knowledge of an object as it is, and *anu-pramāṇa*, indirect knowledge, the instrument that gives rise to or generates direct knowledge.³ Deepak Sarma writes that *kevala-pramāṇa* is “an innate self-reflective knowledge and immediate intuition of objects that is possessed of all beings.”⁴ Mādhvas rank four kinds or types of *kevala-pramāṇa* in descending order of merit “on the basis of intrinsic differences in quality, luminosity, and range.”⁵ Regarding their directness and immediacy, there is no difference between the types of *kevala-pramāṇas*. Lord Vishnu’s knowledge, *Īśvara-jñāna*, ranks highest, second only to that of his consort, Lakṣmī, who has *Lakṣmī-jñāna*. Ranked third and fourth is *yogi-jñāna*, the knowledge of the *yogi*, the spiritual seeker who has achieved a vision of Viṣṇu through yogic practice, and the *ayogi*, the sort of knowledge had by those who lack *yogi-jñāna*.⁶

Mādhvas affirm that there are three *anu-pramāṇas*, indirect knowledge sources or instruments. First, there is *pratyakṣa*, or perception, which is defectless contact of a sense organ with an object. There are six external physical sense organs; the five senses: smell, taste, sight, hearing, and touch; and the mind (*manas*), which serves to coordinate and organize information received from the other five senses.⁷ Another form of perception, *sākṣī*, is the self-luminous, self-validating internal witness or introspective apperception of the self qua self.⁸ Second, there is *anumāna*, or defectless inference, for example, “where there is smoke, there is fire.” This involves knowledge of *vyāpti*, the logical ground that secures universal concomitance between the *hetu*, reason, and the *sadhya*, the thing to be proven. Third is *āgama*, verbal testimony, of which there are two broad categories. The first broad category of *āgama* pertains to scriptural texts. This category includes texts that are *apauruṣeya-āgama*, “self-valid” (*śruti*) eternal texts that are without human authorship (in the sense that the words and phonemes of the texts are always composed the same), such as the Vedas, the Brāhmaṇas, the Āraṇyakas, and the Upaniṣads. It also includes texts that are *pauruṣeya-āgama*, or *smṛti*, texts which are not eternal and have human authors, including commentaries (*bhasyas*) and epics (such as the Mahābhārata and the Rāmāyaṇa), treatises on law (*dharmaśāstra*), and reliable or authoritative utterances from gurus (*āpta*). The meanings of these texts are always the same but the words in them and their compositions may vary. The second category of *āgama* is *śabda*, which consists of simple testimony from an honest person, including everyday people, but also from gurus and even the Lord Viṣṇu himself.⁹ Stephen Phillips writes that *śabda* “is a knowledge-generator, *pramāṇa*, and its result, *śabda-bodha*, is testimonial knowledge . . . unless (*bādhaka-abhāvāt*, ‘unless

there is a defeater’) we have reasons to suspect the truth of the statement.”¹⁰ This position doesn’t entail that we should give every bit of testimony the benefit of doubt, but it presupposes a minimal principle of charity according to which it is appropriate to accept that which is communicated to us by expert or trustworthy authorities whom we trust.¹¹

It is important to note that Mādhvas distinguish two types of intuitive knowledge of Viṣṇu. First there is *svarupa-jñāna*, or a priori knowledge. This sort of knowledge is inherent to or part of the nature of a cognizer and which is never linked to any imperfect sense organs. This intuitive knowledge of Viṣṇu is a kind of *kevala-pramāṇa*. A narrower kind of *svarupa-jñāna* is *aparokṣa-jñāna*, the direct intuitive vision or realization of Brahman, or God. *Aparokṣa-jñāna* is limited to yogis and is impossible to achieve without arduous devotion and then only with the grace of God.¹² Second, there is *manovṛtti-jñāna*, experiential knowledge that is dependent on mental modifications and which is obtained by means of sense organs. This second type of intuitive knowledge of Viṣṇu is categorized as *anu-pramāṇa*.¹³ For example, a layperson has this sort of knowledge if, in response to hearing a guru’s message she comes to hold true beliefs about Viṣṇu.

MĀDHVA VEDĀNTA AND PLANTINGIAN EPISTEMOLOGY

Having described the main points of Mādhva Vedānta epistemology, we go on to evaluate whether the central and formative doctrinal teachings of Mādhva Vedānta entail or suggest (I)–(III) as well as unique analogues of (IV) and (V) and whether the metaphysical claims and/or presuppositions of Mādhva Vedānta are fully compatible with (I)–(III) and in no way preclude theses relevantly analogous to (IV) and (V).

A natural place to start is to consider the propositional content of Mādhva-Vedānta belief, paying special attention to the formative creeds and texts of the tradition. Doing that will enable us to tell whether the central and formative doctrinal teachings of Mādhva Vedānta entail or suggest (I)–(III) and unique analogues of (IV) and (V).

The Prameya Śloka: A Statement of Mādhva Vedānta Belief

Sri Vyasaṭirtha (1460–1539), one of the founders of Mādhva Vedānta, summarizes the nine fundamental principles of Mādhva Vedānta in the *Prameya Śloka*. The nine principles are as follows: (a) in all respects Lord Viṣṇu is supreme and highest, (b) this entire universe is truly and ultimately real, (c) the five-fold difference (*pañca-bheda*) is fundamental, (d) the manifold

embodied souls (*jīva*) are all dependent on Viṣṇu, (e) the embodied souls are inherently graded as higher and lower, (f) liberation is enjoying the bliss befitting to one's original form, (g) the means to secure liberation is pure devotion to Lord Viṣṇu, (h) the means to valid knowledge are only three: namely, perception, inference, and verbal testimony, and (i) Lord Viṣṇu alone is made known by the entire mass of scriptures.¹⁴ Before commenting on each principle, it is worthwhile to quote in full the five-fold difference:

The universe has five [intrinsic] differences: There is difference between the *jīva* and Lord [Viṣṇu]. There is difference between Lord [Viṣṇu] and *jaḍa*, non-sentient material entities. There is difference between the individual *jīvas* and *jaḍas*, non-sentient material entities. There is difference between one *jaḍa* and another. The [difference between these five] is real.¹⁵

In order to fully explicate the content of Mādhva Vedānta belief, and in order to call our attention to whether the central and formative doctrinal teachings of Mādhva Vedānta entail or suggest (I)–(III) and unique analogues of (IV) and (V), we explicate each point of the *Prameya Śloka* below.

In All Respects Lord Viṣṇu is Supreme and Highest

Mādhvas affirm a fundamental two-fold division of reality: between *svatantra*, or fully independent reality, that is, the supreme being Viṣṇu, and *asvatantra*, dependent reality, that is, the created order, including the material world and the various beings that inhabit it. In other words, all entities other than Viṣṇu are metaphysically dependent beings.¹⁶ Sarma writes that Viṣṇu is “the first cause which is self-caused and does not necessitate another cause.”¹⁷ B. N. K. Sharma writes that Mādhva affirms that “God or Brahman is the only independent Reality or the highest reality, so to speak.”¹⁸ And Shanbhag writes that Viṣṇu, as supreme being, fully possesses the attributes of “complete sovereignty, valour, renown, lustre, general and intimate knowledge of all things,” and is for that reason called *Bhagavan*, literally, possessing fortune, prosperous.¹⁹ Note that Mādhvas affirm that Viṣṇu is the efficient cause of the universe, but not its material cause. Thus, when Mādhvas affirm or say that Viṣṇu is creator, they use the term “creator” in an extended or analogical sense. That is, they affirm that Viṣṇu is creator in the sense that he forms, shapes, and introduces order and unity into the universe.²⁰

This Entire Universe is Truly and Ultimately Real

Mādhvas are metaphysical dualists and accept a realist theory of perception. They maintain that perception is a valid means of knowledge. Scripture cannot be contrary to experience or else it has no validity. But scripture has

validity. Therefore, what is known by means of perception must be reconciled with scripture. Hence, they conclude, the world of experience is not unreal, illusory, or merely ideal. The dependent world, consisting of both insentient matter and sentient souls, has real existence.

The Five-Fold Difference (Pañca-Bheda) is Fundamental

In keeping with their realist views, Mādhvas accept the *Tattvavāda*, the “doctrine of real entities,” according to which there are five real and fundamental types of difference: difference between God and sentient soul; difference between God and insentient matter; difference between one soul and another; difference between soul and matter; and difference between one material object and another.²¹ The five-fold difference is fundamental to the Mādhvan system, and awareness of it is instantaneous and unmediated; that is, awareness of the five-fold difference is epistemically basic. According to Madhvācārya, having the concept of difference (*bheda*) requires having a prior cognition of the given object that differs (*dharmi*) and the object from which the given object differs (*pratiyogī*).²²

The Manifold Embodied Souls (Jīva) are all Dependent on Viṣṇu

Jīvas are personal agents that bear moral responsibilities and have limited power and intelligence. Sri Radhakrishnan writes, “The individual soul [*jīva*] is dependent (*paratantra*) on God, since it is unable to exist without the energizing spirit [*Viṣṇu*], even as the tree cannot live with sap.”²³ Strictly, *Viṣṇu* does not create *jīvas* but rather molds and shapes them. This is somewhat analogous to the view, accepted by theistic realists in the Platonic tradition, that God does not create individual human essences but rather weakly actualizes them in virtue of creating a particular world that contains instantiations of these individual human essences.²⁴ An important difference is that Mādhvas maintain that *Viṣṇu* does not decide which individual essences are to be instantiated and which are not, and he does not do the actualizing either. Rather, all *jīvas*, like *Viṣṇu*, have eternal, beginningless, albeit dependent, existence. Even so, *Viṣṇu* has a vast degree of power over the manner and way in which individual *jīvas* are manifested and act in the universe.

The Embodied Souls are Inherently Graded as Higher and Lower

Humans are perfected, in terms of goodness, intelligence, character, and the like, to greater or lesser degrees. They acquire their degree of perfection in accordance with laws of karma and as such are held accountable for their degree of perfection. Some humans have a degree of perfection suited for *moksha* (also *mokṣa* or *mukti*), spiritual release from *saṃsāra*, and some do

not. Humans, in accord with their own natures, determine what they will or will not do.

Liberation is Enjoying the Bliss Befitting to One's Original Form, and the Means to Secure Liberation is Pure Devotion to Lord Viṣṇu

Mādhvas seek *mokṣa*, or liberation, from *saṃsāra*, the cycle of birth, death, and rebirth. In other branches of Vedānta, three methods of obtaining *mokṣa* are recognized: *karma-yoga*, the path of action and ritual, *jñāna-yoga*, the path of knowledge, and *bhakti yoga*, the path of devotion. Mādhvas maintain that *bhakti yoga* is the only genuine method of obtaining *mokṣa*.

The Means to Valid Knowledge are only Three; Namely, Perception, Inference, and Verbal Testimony

Perception is apprehension by means of our senses. On Madhvācārya's theory of perception by apprehension, Radhakrishnan writes, "Apprehension . . . is the direct evidence of the thing that is apprehended" and "the relation between the knower and the known is direct and immediate."²⁵ In other words, Madhvācārya accepts a version of direct realism according to which we have perceptual knowledge of objects that are distinct from ourselves.

According to Mādhvas, it is possible to apprehend God by means of meditation. Radhakrishnan writes that Madhvācārya affirms that "it is in the act of meditation that the soul can by divine grace arrive at a direct intuitive realisation of God (*aparokṣa-jñāna*)."²⁶ On Madhvācārya's view, he continues, "It is knowledge [of God by means of *aparokṣa-jñāna*] that produces the feeling of absolute dependence on God and love for him. A correct knowledge of all things, material and spiritual, leads to a knowledge of God, which naturally results in a love for God."²⁷ As such, *aparokṣa-jñāna* is similar in function to the *sensus divinitatis*.²⁸

Swami Satprakashananda writes that by means of induction (*anumāna*), we derive consequent knowledge (*anumiti*) based on prior perceptual knowledge. A classic example of inference in the Indian tradition is as follows:

[Major premise] Whatever has smoke has fire.

[Minor premise] The hill has smoke.

[Conclusion] Therefore, the hill has fire.

On inference, Satprakashananda writes, "The inference that the hill has fire results from the [perceptual] apprehension of smoke as a mark on the hill followed by the recollection of the invariable concomitance between smoke and fire."²⁹ Invariable concomitance (*vyāpti*) holds between the middle term (*hetu*) and the major term (*sadhya*), which "implies a universal relation of

co-existence between the things denoted.”³⁰ As a theist, Madhvācārya holds that Viṣṇu creates and maintains things like hills, smoke, and fire and sustains the causal relations between them, insuring that that invariable concomitance holds.

Lord Viṣṇu Alone Is Made Known by the Entire Mass of Scriptures

Many truths are apprehended means of perception and inference, but Mādhvas think that we must rely on the scriptural testimony of the Vedas and the Upaniṣads for a true and complete knowledge of reality.³¹ Scriptural revelation is accepted as a basic source of knowledge. For example, humans can acquire testimonial knowledge of God by reading the Vedas or by talking to gurus.

MĀDHVA VEDĀNTA AND THE FIVE THESES OF PLANTINGIAN RELIGIOUS EPISTEMOLOGY

Recall the three theses that capture the core elements of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model:

- (I) The Dependency Thesis: Humans are ontologically and epistemologically dependent on and created by God.
- (II) The Design Thesis: Humans are created in accord with a design plan one aim of which is the production of true belief.
- (III) The Immediacy Thesis: God endows humans with special cognitive faculties or belief-forming processes through which theistic belief can be known in an epistemically immediate and basic manner.

And recall the two theses that capture the core elements of the extended model:

- (IV) The Internal Inspiration of The Holy Spirit Thesis: There is a special belief-forming process the purpose of which is to produce specifically Christian beliefs about the nature of God, salvation, forgiveness of sins, eternal life, and the like.
- (V) The Scriptural Revelation Thesis: By means of scripture, which is identified with the Christian Bible, God propositionally reveals to humans important divine teachings and doctrines.

From what was said in section earlier during our discussion of the *Prameya Śloka*, we see that the central and formative doctrinal teachings of Mādhva

Vedānta entail or suggest the Dependency Thesis, the Design Thesis, and the Immediacy Thesis. To see this, one need only consider the content of Mādhva Vedānta belief, as expressed in the *Prameya Śloka*, and recognize that it entails these three theses. We consider each in turn.

The content of Mādhva Vedānta belief entails the Dependency Thesis. Recall that Mādhvas believe (a), in all respects Lord Viṣṇu is supreme and highest, and (d), the manifold embodied souls (*jīvas*) are all dependent on Viṣṇu. (a) and (d) entail that humans are ontologically dependent on God, that is, Viṣṇu. If Viṣṇu didn't exist, humans wouldn't exist either. Having introduced a qualification on what it means to say that Viṣṇu is creator, we see that (d) also entails that Viṣṇu creates humans, at least in this analogous sense. Thus, (a) and (d) entail the Dependency Thesis: humans are ontologically and epistemologically dependent on and created by God.

The content of Mādhva Vedānta belief entails the Design Thesis. The notion that humans have a design plan is an essential feature of Mādhva epistemology. Recall (h), the means to valid knowledge are only three: namely, perception, inference, and verbal testimony. The affirmation of (h) is tantamount to the claim that humans have a design plan such that perception, inference, and verbal testimony are basic sources of belief. As stated, Mādhvas accept *Nyāya* epistemology, an externalist causal theory of knowledge, and in so doing recognize certain proper-function constraints on knowledge: namely, that epistemic excellences (*guṇa*), no flaws or defects (*doṣa*) in one's sense organs and belief-forming faculties, appropriate environmental conditions, and so on. All of this assumes that human cognitive faculties are aimed at true belief. We've already shown the sense in which Mādhva Vedānta belief entails that Viṣṇu is the creator. Thus, we've shown how the content of Mādhva Vedānta belief entails the Design Thesis.

It is important to draw a further distinction regarding how Mādhvas would maintain that we have design plans. There is a design plan that only relates to our physical faculties which God crafts from the eternal matter that exists. However, given that *jīvas* have existed eternally with Viṣṇu, as individual souls apart from their bodies, they, too, must also have a design plan. Thus, *jīvas*, at whatever stage of their existence, have design plans insofar as their faculties form beliefs appropriately by way of forming beliefs in line with God's determined will. An account of the cognitive proper function of *jīvas* could be understood as following:

Jīva J should produce belief that *p* in circumstance *c* if and only if God makes it the case that J should produce the belief that *p* in *c*.

As mentioned however, *jīvas* get an additional design plan when Viṣṇu forms them into human persons.

The content of Mādhva Vedānta belief entails the Immediacy Thesis. We argued above that Mādhvas affirm that humans can have immediate and direct perception of God, *aparokṣa-jñāna*, and showed how this involves a cognitive process that is similar in function to the *sensus divinitatus*. This suffices to show that Mādhva Vedānta belief entails the Immediacy Thesis: God endows humans with special cognitive faculties or belief-forming processes through which theistic belief can be known in an epistemically immediate and basic manner.

Similarly, reflection on the content of Mādhva Vedānta belief reveals that it entails or suggests analogues of the Internal Inspiration and Scriptural Revelation and the Mādhva Vedānta Scriptural Revelation theses:

(IV-M) The Mādhva Vedānta Internal Inspiration Thesis: There is a special belief-forming process the purpose of which is to produce specifically Mādhvan beliefs about the nature of God, salvation, forgiveness of sins, eternal life, and the like.

(V-M) The Mādhva Vedānta Scriptural Revelation Thesis: By means of scripture, which is identified with the Vedas and the Upaniṣads, God propositionally reveals to humans important divine teachings and doctrines.

Mādhvas affirm that through devotion and meditation, one can immediately and directly perceive Lord Viṣṇu. Being devoted to Viṣṇu, one experiences Viṣṇu as he who is made known by the entire mass of scriptures. That is, through devotion and mediation, Mādhvas have direct experiences of Viṣṇu as the same being who is made known by means of verbal testimony in the Vedas and the Upaniṣads. Divine testimony, conveyed by scriptures and by direct experience of Viṣṇu, are cognitive processes that led to the formulation of the creeds that express the content of Mādhva Vedānta belief. All this straightforwardly entails the Mādhva Vedānta Scriptural Revelation Thesis.

We conclude that (a) of (2) is satisfied. But are the metaphysical claims and/or presuppositions of Mādhva Vedānta fully compatible with (I)–(III). Is (b) of (2) also satisfied? That is, is it true that the metaphysical claims and/or presuppositions in no way preclude theses relevantly analogous to (IV) and (V)? We address that question in the next section.

IS THE METAPHYSICS OF MĀDHVA VEDĀNTA CONSISTENT WITH THE METAPHYSICS ASSUMED BY PLANTINGIAN RELIGIOUS EPISTEMOLOGY?

One way to ascertain whether metaphysical claims and/or presuppositions of Mādhva Vedānta preclude theses relevantly analogous to (IV) and (V) is to

consider whether there are elements of Mādhva Vedānta belief that stand in the way of the acceptance of suitably modified and/or qualified versions of the standard and extended Aquinas/Calvin models.

One possible obstacle is whether the faculty by which one has immediate perception of Viṣṇu, let us call it the *aparoksajñāna* faculty, is sufficiently disanalogous to the *sensus divinitatus* so as to preclude Mādhvas from accepting a thesis relevantly analogous to the Internal Inspiration of the Holy Spirit Thesis. Mādhvas call those who obtain knowledge of Viṣṇu by means of contemplative mediation *yogis*. The type of knowledge attained by *yogis* is called *yogi-jñāna*, of which there are three types. Those who have the highest level of *yogic* knowledge, *rjyuyogins*, have straightforward knowledge of Viṣṇu that is “entire and without beginning but increases with their meditative effort.”³² *Rjyuyogins* achieve *mokṣa* by practicing *bhakti* yoga, but only by the grace of Viṣṇu. Mādhvas think that only *rjyuyogins* have properly basic belief in Viṣṇu (*kevala-pramāṇa*) by means of the *aparoksajñāna* faculty. *Tattvika-yogins* have incomplete knowledge and *yogins* have partial knowledge that is mixed with error. Compared to the Christian extension of the Aquinas/Calvin model, far fewer Mādhvas have properly basic warranted belief in the target propositions of the Mādhva Vedānta extension due to the *aparoksajñāna* faculty performing its proper function than Christians have properly basic warranted belief in the target propositions of the Christian extension due to the *sensus divinitatus* performing its proper function. But why should that worry Mādhvas? After all, Mādhvas fully recognize and heartily endorse their own central views. From the fact that the human design plan according to Mādhva Vedānta is such that relatively few people have properly basic knowledge of Viṣṇu by means of the *aparoksajñāna* faculty performing its proper function, it doesn’t somehow follow that there can’t be a viable Mādhva Vedānta extension of the Aquinas/Calvin model. Moreover, differences between the Christian and the Mādhva Vedānta extensions are mitigated somewhat by the recognition that Mādhvas maintain that all three types of *yogis* have reliable knowledge of Viṣṇu and that by moving higher up that hierarchy one’s cognitive faculties may be repaired, putting the *yogi* in an improved epistemic position. This process of the refinement and repairment of the *aparoksajñāna* faculty through *bhakti* devotional practice culminates in one’s *aparoksajñāna* faculty being able to perform its proper function, that of producing warranted Mādhva Vedānta belief in a properly basic way in appropriate circumstances. Moreover, Mādhvas maintain that all members of their faith tradition, *yogis* or not, can have immediate knowledge of Viṣṇu by means of testimony conveyed to all who have access to the Vedas, the Upaniṣads, and to the teachings of *gurus*.³³

Another obstacle is the contention that our project is unmotivated and contrived. Why would any self-respecting Mādhva explicitly rely on Plantingian

religious epistemology to ground their beliefs or feel the need to make connections between their epistemological views and Plantinga's? And isn't it presumptuous of us to speak for Mādhvas and speculate about whether they'd find elements of Plantingian religious epistemology attractive enough to make use of in the ways we've suggested? This is all the more problematic given that the Mādhva Vedānta tradition doesn't share certain views with people who remain outsiders to their tradition.³⁴ Obviously, regarding what we've said in this chapter, we can't speak as or for Mādhvas or make any prescriptions about what they should or should not do or find plausible. Nevertheless, we think it is safe to say that at least some Mādhvas may find it dialectically attractive to present their epistemology in a way that is explicable to outsiders, and that one way of doing that might be to emphasize similarities between their religious epistemology and Plantingian religious epistemology. Moreover, insofar as ours is a work of substantive comparative and cross-cultural philosophy, our project is worthwhile enough. Finally, one of the main concerns of this book is whether from the fact that several extremely diverse religions non-Christian religions can appropriate or make use of Plantingian religious epistemology to show that their religious faith can be warranted apart from argument it follows that Plantingian religious epistemology is weakened or undermined. Thus, whether any Mādhvas are actually inclined to accept Plantingian religious epistemology, the fact that they *could* may nevertheless prove to be problematic for Plantingians. We take up this concern in Part IV of the book.

In our judgment, the problems and obstacles we have considered so far have been or could be satisfactorily dealt with and thus do not count against the claim that Mādhvas are beneficiaries of conceptual resources sufficient for the articulation of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model and a unique non-Christian extension of it. A more significant obstacle stems from the fact that Mādhvas deny creation *ex nihilo*, affirm reincarnation, and maintain that *jīvas* are coeternal, all of which deviates significantly from Traditional Theism in the West. That this is so, so the worry goes, threatens to block or undermine the claim that Mādhvas can accept Plantinga's Aquinas/Calvin models. While Mādhvas certainly accept theses that traditional theists do not, in our judgment these views are peripheral to and not inconsistent with theistic belief as such, at least not as it is construed by Plantinga. Moreover, there are theists in the West, including al-Fārābī, al-Kindī, and Philo who deny creation *ex nihilo* and Neoplatonist Christians, influenced by Origen, who accept the preexistence of the soul.³⁵ Other things being equal, such philosophers could accept the main tenets of Plantingian religious epistemology. Thus, even if Mādhvas affirm theses that many traditional theists do not, it doesn't necessarily follow that they are unable to affirm the Aquinas/Calvin model as well as their own unique extension of it.

Elsewhere, we have argued that in order for a religion R to utilize Plantingian religious epistemology, R must

- (1) Have a conscious and intentional designer,
- (2) Have the conscious and intentional designer's nature and past actions be compatible with Plantinga's truth-aimed conditions, and
- (3) Have a design plan that doesn't depend on there being an actual infinite.³⁶

We defended (1) in chapter 2. Bracket (2) for now, as we shall explain and defend it in chapter 10. Summarizing reasons in favor of (3), we write:

Craig and Sinclair have argued that an actual infinite cannot exist as it leads to all sorts of contradictions. For example, an infinite amount of odd numbers subtracted from an infinite amount of even numbers leaves one with an infinite amount of numbers. In this sense, infinity minus infinity is infinity. However, one could also subtract an infinite amount of numbers from an infinite amount of numbers and get a different result. For example, all numbers greater than three, subtracted from an infinite amount of numbers, equals 3. So in this case, infinity minus infinity is 3. Elsewhere, Craig argues that if an actual infinite were metaphysically possible, then it would be possible for a hotel that is fully occupied by an infinite number of guests to accommodate an influx of infinitely many new guests, each occupant moving into the room twice their own (1 into 2, 2 into 4, 3 into 6, and so on). Moreover, this procedure could be repeated infinitely many times! Clearly, that such a hotel could actually exist is absurd. Thus, Craig concludes it is absurd to suppose that there could be an actual infinite.³⁷

Note that different and mutually exclusive types of theism are consistent with (3). For instance, within theism there is a debate about how God's eternity should be conceived. Classical theism affirms that God is essentially atemporal, existing outside of time. Theistic personalism affirms that God is everlasting, fundamentally existing within time. Classical theists who endorse (3) affirm that the human design plan is located in and is fully dependent on the existence of God's timeless mind. According to Aquinas, for any created thing, its nature is distinct from its existence. God, being omniscient, has full knowledge of the natures of things he could create, regardless of whether he actually creates them. As such, it would follow that not only are there design plans for all actually existing creatures, including dogs, cats, horses, and monkeys, but there are design plans for things that God didn't create as well (such as, for example, unicorns and ewoks) and, insofar as these natures exist in God's mind (as ideas of things he could have created but decided not to), there are design plans for these creatures in God's mind, too.³⁸ Design plans do not begin to exist but, rather have eternal existence in God's intellect.³⁹ As John Peterson writes, Aquinas thought that universals, or natures,

“exist not only *post rem* and *in re* but also *ante rem* in the divine mind.”⁴⁰ If design plans exist *ante rem* in God’s mind, and if God is timelessly eternal, then the existence of design plan isn’t metaphysically dependent on the existence of an actual infinite but rather on God. Notice, too, that technically, the classical theist could endorse (3) while still denying creation *ex nihilo*. The motivation for doing that would be the conviction that we can know that creation *ex nihilo* is true only by divine revelation and that, for all we know, counterfactually, it could have been true that the universe has always existed, for human reason can’t show that it is metaphysically impossible for it to have everlasting existence.⁴¹ Note that making this move, the human design plan would nevertheless remain metaphysically dependent on God’s intellect and not on the existence of actual infinite. However, if the argument that actual infinities are metaphysically impossible is sound, then any account that the classical theist provides of how humans have faculties and design plans that involves the existence of actual infinite can’t be true. Thus, insofar as the plausibility of this sort of account depends on the false claim that actual infinities are metaphysically possible, it must be rejected. Note that, however, nothing we have said here precludes the contingent temporalist, who affirms that God existed timelessly without creation but in time with creation, from claiming that, ultimately, design plans are grounded in God’s mind as well.⁴²

Now, then, could the Mādhva Vedānta advocate accept (1)–(3), too? Viṣṇu is a conscious and intentional designer. And there is no reason to think that the past actions of Viṣṇu are incompatible with Plantinga’s truth-aimed conditions. So Mādhva Vedānta clearly satisfies (1) and (2). However, Mādhvas are committed to the existence an infinite amount of cosmological cycles in which our faculties are formed in. For instance, Sharma argues that time is infinite in both directions because for anytime one cares to pick, there will be a time before that time and a time after that time, which shows that time is a continuous chain of events.⁴³ Nevertheless, arguably, on their understanding, there is room to affirm (3) as well. The reason for this is that Mādhvas emphatically deny that our cognitive faculties metaphysically depend on the existence of an actual infinite. They maintain that given that that actual infinities are metaphysically possible (or even actual), the existence of human cognitive faculties and design plans do not metaphysically depend on the existence of an actual infinite but rather on the mind of an essentially temporal God. Mādhvas insist that Viṣṇu and Viṣṇu alone has independent existence and that all other entities are metaphysically dependent beings. Design plans are other than Viṣṇu. Therefore, design plans are metaphysically dependent on Viṣṇu. This argument, if sound, precludes the possibility that the human design plan somehow metaphysically depends on the existence of an actual infinite. Moreover, on this view, one might maintain that, for all we know, Viṣṇu *could* have created the world *ex nihilo*.

For all that has been said, however, that (3) nevertheless involves or entails a type of metaphysical dependence, given that the history of the development of human cognitive faculties or the history of their design plans involves or presupposes the existence of an actual infinite. Insofar as this kind metaphysical dependence is problematic, it might turn out that a Mādhva Vedānta extension of the standard Aquinas/Calvin isn't possible after all. There are various ways in which theists might take (3) to be true. We can't settle the debate about whether there are actual infinities, and determining which tradition holds the better argument is beyond the scope of this project. Just how Mādhvas think (3) is true might determine whether there could be a successful Mādhva extension of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model.

Even if Mādhvas can account for a fully robust extended Aquinas/Calvin model, however, it may yet be that Mādhva Vedānta belief may be subject to epistemic defeaters. In fact, we think that there is a problem here. Mādhva Vedānta affirms that Viṣṇu is a perfect being but certain of its doctrines seem to entail a rejection of perfect being theology, which shows there to be a logical tension or contradiction in their system. Why think Mādhva Vedānta has this problem? Arguably, a perfect being unconditionally loves all persons as much as it is possible.⁴⁴ According to Mādhva Vedānta theology, all dependent beings are intrinsically hierarchically ranked in terms of inherent differences that are fixed by their essential natures, with all their accompanying virtues and faults.⁴⁵ Viṣṇu possess all perfections. Lakṣmi, or Śrī, is the only sentient dependent being that is without suffering, never inhabiting the world and thus lacking the need to be released from *saṃsāra*. All other sentient dependent beings are connected with suffering and divided into the categories of those who have been released from suffering, *vimuktas*, and those who have not, *duḥkhas-saṃsthas*. This later group is divided into those who are suitable for release but will eventually reach *mokṣa*, and *mukti-yogyas*, who are eternally predestined to suffer. *Mukti-ayogyas* are further divided into *tamo-yogyas*, who will in fact never be released from *saṃsāra*, and *nitya-saṃsārins*, those who are fit only for the darkness of hell.⁴⁶ *Tamo-yogyas* are further divided into categories based on their intrinsic worth. For instance, some start out on the wheel of *saṃsāra* and, eventually, through successive rebirths, end up in the darkness of hell and some are so vile that they are born into one of many hellish realms.⁴⁷ Souls who have been released from *saṃsāra* are intrinsically greater than those who have yet to be released and those who will be forever trapped in *saṃsāra*.

In accord with the doctrine of karma, while Mādhvas accept that humans are real agents, having genuine causal power to make choices, their actions are determined by their natures and their past actions. But Mādhva doesn't think of *jīvas* as mere puppets in the hands of God, for, as Sharma notes,

Viṣṇu has given people the “power to do things in conformity with [their own] innate goodness or its opposite” and hence has given the “the right to choose between right and wrong.”⁴⁸ That this is so, Sharma notes, goes toward explaining why some people who now remain in bondage will be released at some point and why others are bound for hell. So, then, while without God *jīvas* are unable to do anything at all, God is not ultimately responsible for their actions, for he “merely *enables* the Jiva to pursue a course of action, not arbitrarily, but in relation to his former life and deserts . . . [God] does not *interfere* with the Jiva’s decision in any way. He sustains but never constrains. The Jiva chooses out of his freewill a particular line of action for good or for bad with sufficient foreknowledge of its moral worth and has himself to thank for the consequences.”⁴⁹ As Sharma notes, this position seems to contradict the teaching in the *Kauṣītakī Upaniṣad* 3.8, which states that God rules the universe, impelling some people to right action and others to wrong action. However, this tension is solved for God doesn’t arbitrarily impel or punish people, but rather does so in accord with their individual karma and their deserts.⁵⁰ Sharma writes:

Karma implies freedom and freedom implies a choice. But it does not explain why a particular choice is made unless the freedom itself is an expression of the innate nature of each soul. Even a chain of beginningless Karma could not explain why all souls are not equally good or bad, as all of them are equally eternal and their karmas too were equally beginningless and the start simultaneous. The only possible explanation is that offered by Madhva viz., that the Karma itself is the result of the distinctive nature of each soul (हृत्) which is intrinsic to it (Svarupa योग्यता).⁵¹

While this view may escape strict theological determinism, one according to which God arbitrarily controls whatever happens, it is ultimately deterministic. As such, we may say that Viṣṇu, in accord with each person’s karma, brings about or sustains, as it were, the actions of every person that exists. This would include those persons who reject Viṣṇu and don’t seek to live a righteous life. It would follow then that Viṣṇu nevertheless chooses or elects that some persons suffer in hell. Given that all sentient beings are hierarchically arranged and that some souls are inherently vile, it seems that Viṣṇu can’t or won’t love the worst of the worst, namely, those persons born in the deepest, darkest hell. But if Viṣṇu is a perfect being, he must love every person as much as it is possible, for if God only loved some persons, there would be a moral defect in God. Even if God loves everyone but loves some people more than others, there would still be an imperfection in God’s love. However, by definition, there are no imperfections in God. The above argument is succinctly stated in as follows:

- (1) According to Mādhva Vedānta, Viṣṇu is a perfect being, having all perfections.
- (2) A perfect being loves all persons unconditionally.
- (3) Therefore, if Viṣṇu exists, Viṣṇu loves all persons unconditionally. [From (1) and (2)]
- (4) But according to Mādhva Vedānta, Viṣṇu loves people conditionally, in accord with their inherent worth, their karma and their deserts.
- (5) Thus, according to Mādhva Vedānta, Viṣṇu loves all persons unconditionally and Viṣṇu doesn't love all persons unconditionally. [From (2) and (4)]
- (6) Any system of belief that entails a logical contradiction is rationally inconsistent.
- (7) Anyone who realizes that one's system of belief is rationally inconsistent has an internal rationality defeater for that system of belief.
- (8) Thus, members of Mādhva Vedānta have a defeater for their system of belief. [From (5) to (7)]

How might Mādhvas reply to this argument that they have a defeater for Mādhva Vedānta belief? Given strong intuitions about what it means to be God and what it means to be a perfect being, premise (2) seems unassailable. Mādhva Vedānta explicitly affirms (1) and there are ample reasons for thinking that it teaches (4). Both (6) and (7) seem obvious enough. The inferences are logically valid: (3) follows from (1) and (2), (5) follows from (3) and (4), and (8) follows from (5)–(7). Mādhvas who contest the conclusion of this argument must reject one of these premises. But which one? An initial candidate would seem to be (4). But that would be a difficult route for them to take, for while that view is not as central to Mādhva Vedānta as the view that Viṣṇu has all perfections, the view that Viṣṇu loves people conditionally, in accord with their inherent worth, their karma, and their deserts is one of their central doctrines. While undoubtedly many theists who accept perfect being theology have the strong seeming that (2) is true, it might very well be that Mādhvas won't, particularly given that their intuitions are influenced or shaped by elements of their intellectual and spiritual tradition. Could they, then, reasonably reject (2)? They can't very well give up the notion that Viṣṇu has infinite perfections, for that is a foundational teaching in the Vedas. As Sharma writes, "All Upanisadic texts, without exception, speak of the glory of Brahman as the abode of infinite perfections and attributes and free from all imperfections."⁵² Rather, it seems they must instead show that it's not necessarily true that a perfect being loves all persons unconditionally. To do that they could argue that the absolute perfection of Viṣṇu is logically consistent with his having the property of having conditional love for creatures. How might one argue for that view?

Contrary to the received view, Michael A. Hoonhout offers an exegetical argument that the Bible teaches that God's love is conditional using exegetical methods.⁵³ Along similar lines, John C. Peckham defends the notion that God's love is *foreconditional*, that it is "prior to any human action, love, merit or worth, while at the same time God implements conditions for the reception and continuance of that love."⁵⁴ Perhaps Mādhvas could run similar arguments based on interpretations of the Vedas and the Upaniṣads. As for a purely philosophical argument, a Mādhvan, might argue that we ought to understand the perfect being of God in terms of his being the greatest conceivable being, which is in turn cashed out in terms of his having the greatest compossible great-making properties. Along these lines, Thomas Morris writes that we can "characterize the core of perfect being theology as the thesis that: (G) God is a being with the greatest possible array of compossible great making properties."⁵⁵ Following Morris's cue, a Mādhvan might go on to argue that God's perfect love is constrained both by his perfect justice and his perfect goodness in such a way that precludes God from loving those who are truly unworthy of love and worthy only of hell. Perhaps the makings for such an argument may be found in the notion that *tamo-yogyas*, those thoroughly evil *jīvas* who revel in sin and are fit only for perdition, are responsible for their being in that condition, not Viṣṇu, and that Viṣṇu's justice precludes even a perfect being such as him from unconditionally loving such inherently despicable beings.⁵⁶ Another route may be to deny that *tamo-yogyas* are forever damned and affirm that their condition is rather like being in a state of purgatory and that as such even they may be purified, at least in principle.⁵⁷

We confess that we're not sure what to make of the plausibility of these arguments. If these arguments work, then well and good. But if they don't, then Mādhvas must either accept that they have a defeater for Mādhva Vedānta belief or give up on (4), either of which is tantamount to giving up one or more their central teachings. Neither option is very appealing. If they are unable to block this dilemma, then, even if there is an extension of the Aquinas/Calvin model that covers Mādhva Vedānta belief, it wouldn't be up and going for long. Perhaps serious amendments and modifications to Mādhva Vedānta must be made if it is to be able to fully make use of Plantingian religious epistemology.

CONCLUSION

There appear to be some reasons for thinking that Mādhvas can't make full use of Plantingian religious epistemology. After some reflection, it seems to us that while some of these obstacles aren't unsurmountable, some might ultimately stand in the way of the formulation of a robust Mādhva Vedānta

extension of the Aquinas/Calvin model. First, among the necessary preconditions on the intelligibility of Plantingian epistemology is that humans must have a design plan that doesn't depend on there being an actual infinite. Mādhvas, on account of maintaining that *jīvas* have everlasting existence, affirm that the human design plan does involve an actual infinite, a point which may ultimately prevent the viability of a robust Mādhva extension of the Aquinas/Calvin model. Second, we argued that even if this problem could be solved, central points of Mādhva Vedānta may generate a rationality defeater that could prevent Mādhva Vedānta belief from being warranted for Mādhvas. To wrap things up, we fill in the details of our argument schema for Mādhva Vedānta:

- (1) The members of Mādhva Vedānta can make full use of Plantingian religious epistemology *if and only if* they are the beneficiaries of intellectual and conceptual resources internal to Mādhva Vedānta which are necessary and sufficient for the articulation of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model as well as a uniquely Mādhvan extension of it.
- (2) The members of Mādhva Vedānta are beneficiaries of conceptual resources necessary for the articulation of the standard Aquinas/Calvin and a uniquely Mādhvan extension of it *if and only if* (a) the central and formative doctrinal teachings of Mādhva Vedānta entail or suggest (I) the Dependency Thesis, (II) the Design Thesis, and (III) the Immediacy Thesis, and unique analogues of (IV) the Internal Inspiration of the Holy Spirit Thesis and (V) the Scriptural Revelation Thesis, and (b) the metaphysical claims and/or presuppositions of Mādhva Vedānta are fully compatible with (I)–(III) and in no way preclude theses relevantly analogous to (IV) and (V).
- (3) There is reasonable disagreement about whether (a) and (b) of (2) both hold for Mādhva Vedānta, for while the central teachings of Mādhva Vedānta entail or suggest (I)–(V), some of those teachings (particularly, the claim that there is an actual infinite) are in logical tension with (I) and/or (II) and some of the metaphysical claims and/or presuppositions of Mādhva Vedānta are not fully compatible with (I)–(III).
- (4) Thus, there is reasonable disagreement among Plantingians about whether members of Mādhva Vedānta are the beneficiaries of intellectual and conceptual resources internal to Mādhva Vedānta which are necessary and sufficient for the articulation of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model as well as a uniquely Mādhvan extension of it. [From (2) and (3)]
- (5) Moreover, insofar as the claim that Mādhva Vedānta belief generates a contradiction (briefly, in virtue of its affirming that Viṣṇu is both a perfect being and that Viṣṇu loves people conditionally), it follows that the members of Mādhva Vedānta have a defeater for their system of

belief, and thus there is reason to think that Mādhvas can't successfully make full use of Plantinga's epistemology *unless* they either modify and/or amend their teachings so as to avoid this defeater *or* they are able to otherwise show that this defeater doesn't arise in the first place.

- (6) Thus, *unless* Mādhvas either modify and/or amend their teachings so as to avoid this defeater *or* they are able to otherwise show that this defeater doesn't arise in the first place, the members of Mādhva Vedānta can't successfully make full use of Plantingian religious epistemology. [From (1), (4), and (5)]

NOTES

1. Although we do not argue this here, we contend that the main outlines of the model will also apply, more or less so, and perhaps only with considerable modification, to other uniquely monotheistic Hindu traditions, such as *Bhakti*, *Śaiva*, and *Vaiṣṇava*.

2. For this information, we have relied on Sarma, *An Introduction to Mādhva Vedānta*, 1–7.

3. Sarma, *An Introduction to Mādhva Vedānta*, 21.

4. *Ibid.*, 21.

5. B. N. K. Sharma, *The Philosophy of Śrī Madhvācārya* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2002), 130.

6. *Ibid.*, 130. Also see Sarma, *An Introduction to Mādhva Vedānta*, 21–22.

7. *Ibid.*, 24–25.

8. *Ibid.*, 28–30. Sharma writes, “it will not do to think of the Sākṣī merely as a sense organ or item of Pratyakṣa. Its function certainly does not end merely with apprehending knowledge and its validity if it is valid and such other things. For the Sākṣī is none other than *the self*. It is also its *Caitanya-indirya* (essential sense organ partaking of the nature of consciousness).” (Sharma, *The Philosophy of Śrī Madhvācārya*, 167.)

9. For instance, J. A. B. van Buitenen, in the preface to his translation of Yāmunācārya's *Āgama Prāmāṇyam*, or *The Treatise on the Validity of Pañcarātra*, writes, “the texts of Pañcarātra Āgama have an authority equal to that of the Vedas, because they are God's direct revelation.” See Yāmunācārya, *Yāmuna's Āgama Prāmāṇyam*, or *The Treatise on the Validity of Pañcarātra*, trans. J. A. B. van Buitenen (Ramanuja Research Society: Basavangudi, Bangalore, 1971), 5.

10. Phillips, *Epistemology in Classical India*, 82.

11. *Ibid.*, 83.

12. Sharma, *The Philosophy of Śrī Madhvācārya*, 407.

13. Sarma, *An Introduction to Mādhva Vedānta*, 22

14. D. N. Shanbhag, *Śrī Madhvācārya and his Cardinal Doctrines* (Bharat Book Depot, Dharwad: 1990), 19.

15. Sarma, *An Introduction to Mādhva Vedānta*, 73–74.

16. Shanbhag, *Śrī Madhvācārya and his Cardinal Doctrines*, 37.

17. Sarma, *An Introduction to Mādhva*, 64. Although Sarma uses the term “self-caused,” it would seem that he doesn’t mean to affirm that Viṣṇu literally *generates* his own being. Perhaps, on account of his stated intention to compare Mādhva’s view of God to Aquinas’s, Sarma is rather inaccurately expressing the doctrine of the aseity of God, the view that God exists in and of Godself. On God’s aseity, Aquinas writes, “He is supremely being, inasmuch as His being is not determined by any nature to which it is adjoined; since He is being itself, subsistent, absolutely undetermined.” (Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, I, q. 44, a. 1.)

18. Sharma, *The Philosophy of Śrī Madhvācārya*, 31.

19. Shanbhag, *Śrī Madhvācārya and his Cardinal Doctrines*, 37–38.

20. Sri Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy Volume II* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1998), 746.

21. Shanbhag, *Śrī Madhvācārya and his Cardinal Doctrines*, 73.

22. Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy Volume II*, 85.

23. *Ibid.*, 745. Note that while Mādhvas maintain that there are nonhuman *jīvas*, including various deities, for our purposes we are concerned only with human *jīvas*.

24. See, for instance, Alvin Plantinga, *The Nature of Necessity* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974), 169–174 and *God, Freedom, and Evil*, 35–44.

25. Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy: Volume II*, 740.

26. *Ibid.*, 747. For more on this, see Srendranath Dasgupta, *A History of Indian Philosophy, Volume IV: Indian Pluralism* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1955), 51–203.

27. Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy, Volume II*, 747.

28. It is worth noting that various philosophers and theologians of the Hindu religious traditions are broadly sympathetic to Mādhvan views. For instance, Pandeya Vidyarthi writes, “Religion springs from the spiritual constitution of man . . . Man is not satisfied with the finite because it does not contain that which he seeks.” (Pandeya Brahmeshvar Vidyarthi, *Early Indian Religious Thought: A Study in the Sources of Indian Theism with Special Reference to Ramanuja* (Oriental Publishers & Distributors: New Delhi, 1976), 1–2.) Vidyarthi also writes, “There is such a thing as the lure of the infinite and captures the vision of God in the divine handiwork, in the worship of goodness and truth.” (*Ibid.*, 6.)

29. Swami Satprakashananda, *Methods of Knowledge According to Advaita Vedānta* (Kolkata: Advaita Ahsrama, 1965), 143.

30. *Ibid.*, 145.

31. Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy Volume II*, 739.

32. Sarma, *An Introduction to Mādhva Vedānta*, 23.

33. *Ibid.*, 23–24.

34. On the issue of insider knowledge in Mādhva Vedānta, see, for instance, Deepak Sarma, *Epistemologies and the Limitations of Philosophical Inquiry: Doctrine in Mādhva Vedānta* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2005) and “Regulating Religious Texts: Access to Texts in Madhva Vedānta,” *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 27 (1999): 583–635.

35. For a brief introduction to their views, see, for instance, Felix Klein-Franke, “Al-Kindī,” *History of Islamic Philosophy, Routledge History of World Philosophies*, eds. Oliver Leaman and Seyyed Hossein Nasr (New York: Routledge, 2001),

165–177; Deborah L. Black, “Al-Fārābī,” *History of Islamic Philosophy*, Routledge *History of World Philosophies*, eds. Oliver Leaman and Seyyed Hossein Nasr (New York: Routledge, 2001), 178–197; T. M. Rudavsky, “Medieval Jewish Neoplatonism,” *History of Jewish Philosophy*, eds. Daniel H. Frank and Oliver Leaman (New York: Routledge, 1997), 118–148; and H. Chadwick, “Origen,” *Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Medieval Philosophy*, edited by A. H. Armstrong (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 182–192.

36. McNabb and Baldwin, “Reformed Epistemology and the Pandora’s Box Objection,” 451–465.

37. *Ibid.*, 461.

38. In our example, while we speak about ewoks and unicorns, which are obviously fictitious entities, as having design plans. We do not intend to endorse a specific view about abstract objects. As for Aquinas, it is fairly well established that Aquinas is a divine conceptualist of sorts. Very briefly, a divine conceptualist thinks that abstract objects are thoughts in the divine mind. On this view, while it may seem odd or strange to say that there are design plans for ewoks and unicorns in God’s mind, it would nevertheless follow if, as classical theism maintains, God has one idea that encompasses all ideas.

39. Aquinas writes, “Now just as He knows material things immaterially, and composite things simply, so likewise He knows enunciable things not after the manner of enunciable things, as if in His intellect there were composition or division of enunciations; for He knows each thing by simple intelligence, by understanding the essence of each thing; as if we by the very fact that we understand what man is, were to understand all that can be predicated of man. This, however, does not happen in our intellect, which discourses from one thing to another, forasmuch as the intelligible species represents one thing in such a way as not to represent another. Hence when we understand what man is, we do not forthwith understand other things which belong to him, but we understand them one by one, according to a certain succession. On this account the things we understand as separated, we must reduce to one by way of composition or division, by forming an enunciation. Now the species of the divine intellect, which is God’s essence, suffices to represent all things. Hence by understanding His essence, God knows the essences of all things, and also whatever can be accidental to them.” (Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, 1, q. 14, a. 14.)

40. John Peterson, *Aquinas: A New Introduction* (New York: University Press of America, 2008), 128.

41. Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, 1 q. 46, a. 1–3.

42. For a defense of this view, see William Lane Craig, *Time and Eternity: Exploring God’s Relationship to Time* (Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2001).

43. Sarma, *An Introduction to Mādhva*, 60.

44. See Jerry Walls, *The Logic of Damnation* (Notre Dame: Notre Dame University Press, 1993).

45. Sharma, *The Philosophy of Śrī Madhvācārya*, 288–299.

46. Sarma, *An Introduction to Mādhva Vedānta*, 76–80.

47. *Ibid.*, 57–58.

48. Sharma, *The Philosophy of Śrī Madhvācārya*, 380–381.

49. Ibid., 382.
50. Ibid., 384.
51. Ibid., 385.
52. Ibid., 417.
53. Michael A. Hoonhout, “God’s Love is Conditional,” *Seat of Wisdom* 5 (2012): 77–83.
54. John Peckham, *The Love of God: A Canonical Model* (Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP Academic, 2015), 217.
55. Thomas V. Morris, *Our Idea of God: An Introduction to Philosophical Theology* (Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP Academic, 1991), 35.
56. See Sarma, *An Introduction to Mādhva Vedānta*, 57–59.
57. See Swami Tapasyananda, *Śrī Madhvācārya: His Life, Religion & Philosophy* (Mylapore: Sri Ramakrishna Math Printing Press, 2012), 176–178.

Chapter 7

Buddhism

Having considered various Hindu traditions, we will turn our attention to Buddhism, focusing on *Mahāyāna* Buddhism. More specifically, we will focus on the *Mādhyamika* (or “Middle Way”) Buddhist tradition, founded by Nāgārjuna, and consider whether the Mādhyamika Buddhist can make use of Plantingian religious epistemology. Before articulating the views of the Middle Way tradition, we provide a brief historical background and introduce the central tenets common to all traditions of Buddhism. We then consider if the Mādhyamika tradition can account for the preconditions that make Plantinga’s theory of warrant intelligible.

BUDDHISM 101

Buddhism is another one of the great world religions to originate in India. It shares many of the same background assumptions common to Indian religions, including the concepts of *karma*, *saṃsāra*, and reincarnation. The early Buddhist scriptures give us an account of the Buddha’s life and how he became enlightened. The earliest is the *Āriyapariyesana Sutta*, or the *Noble Quest*, which focuses on his early career after his enlightenment. Among the most authoritative texts is the *Buddhacarita*, or the *Acts of the Buddha*, written in Sanskrit by the first-century Indian poet Aśvaghoṣa. Also noteworthy are the *Sukhamala Sutta*, which tells us an account of his early life, and the *Bhaya-bherava Sutta*, which recounts important details about the nature of enlightenment and how he achieved it. With reference to these and other sources, we provide the following composite account of his life.

The man who would be Buddha, Siddhartha Gautama, was born around 485 CE, into a small kingdom, which nowadays would be considered Nepal.

Born a prince, Gautama grew up in very privileged circumstances. Coming from such a privileged background, his father wanted to shelter him from the true nature of the world so that his son would take over the kingdom. But in his late twenties, Gautama left his palace searching for something other than material wealth. During this time, Gautama came across a handful of sick, ageing, and dying men and became greatly disturbed. This experience furthered his desire to know the truth about reality. In particular, he wanted to know the truth about suffering. He eventually fell in with a group of like-minded individuals, who had also become renunciates (*samnyāsin*), and dedicated himself to release from suffering. He deprived himself of all his possessions and starved himself to the point where he almost died. On death's door, he recalled a day from his youth when, resting under the shade of an apple tree and withdrawn from sensual pleasures, he had achieved a measure of enlightenment and an accompanying feeling of joyous rapture. It occurred to him that that sensual pleasure had nothing to do with enlightenment, and hence that there was no point in devoting himself to extreme asceticism. No longer bound or controlled by feelings of hunger or thirst, he decided that there was nothing inherently wrong with taking food and drink, and began to once again eat sensibly, much to the chagrin of his fellow *samnyāsin*. Although having achieved a small measure of enlightenment, it seemed that his striving was ultimately going nowhere. Finally, while sitting under a Bodhi tree, he became enlightened about the nature of reality, which is why he was given the title Buddha, which means “enlightened” or “awakened” one.¹

There are many different schools of Buddhist thought but all of them accept the Four Noble Truths. The Buddha's presentation of the Four Noble Truths, taught in his very first sermon and recorded in the *Dhammacakkapavattana Sutta*, or the *Wheel of Law*, goes thus:

Now this, bhikkhus, is the noble truth of suffering: birth is suffering, aging is suffering, illness is suffering, death is suffering; union with what is displeasing is suffering; separation from what is pleasing is suffering; not to get what one wants is suffering; in brief, the five aggregates subject to clinging are suffering.

Now this, bhikkhus, is the noble truth of the origin of suffering: it is this craving that leads to renewed existence, accompanied by delight and lust, seeking delight here and there; that is, craving for sensual pleasures, craving for existence, craving for extermination.

Now this, bhikkhus, is the noble truth of the cessation of suffering: it is the remainderless fading away and cessation of that same craving, the giving up and relinquishing of it, freedom from it, nonreliance on it.

Now this, bhikkhus, is the noble truth of the way leading to the cessation of suffering: it is this noble eightfold path; that is, right view, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration.²

The Four Noble Truths may be summarized thus:

1. There is suffering (*dukkha*).
2. There is the origination of suffering: suffering comes into existence in dependence on causes.
3. There is the cessation of suffering: all future suffering can be prevented.
4. There is a path to the cessation of suffering (the Eight-Fold Path).³

Walpola Rahula sheds light on philosophical aspects of the Four Noble Truths.⁴ He points out the Sanskrit word “*dukkha*,” often translated into English as “suffering,” has three distinct shades of meaning, all of which are in play in the text. The word can be used to refer to ordinary suffering, impermanence, or to conditioned states empty of enduring being. The first sense is unproblematic. The second and third have philosophical implications that merit further attention.

To say that reality is impermanent is tantamount to denying the existence of Brahman. That is, the second noble truth denies the existence of any substantial reality, material, or mental. Rather, everything that is, is in a state of perpetual becoming. Correlative to this is the doctrine of *anatman*, the doctrine that there is no substantial self or soul that persists or endures over time that is the subject of experience. On this view, that which we call the “self” is but a convenient fiction, a construction of our experiences that is ultimately misguided.

The third sense of *dukkha* is the most difficult to understand. Its meaning is closely related to that of the second noble truth. When articulating the Second Noble Truth, Buddha says that *dukkha* is “craving that leads to renewed existence.”⁵ As Rahula notes, the Sanskrit word variously translated as “thirst,” “desire,” or “craving” is *taṇha*.⁶ In sum, *taṇha* is the cause of the attachments to conditioned states that prevent us from understanding the nature of reality and keep us trapped on the wheel of *samsāra*.

The second noble truth is closely related to another widely accepted and central Buddhist doctrine, *pratītya-samutpāda*, or the doctrine of dependent origination. Elsewhere, Buddha explains the doctrine thus:

And what, bhikkhus, is dependent origination? With ignorance as condition, volitional formations [come to be]; with volitional formations as condition, consciousness; with consciousness as condition, name-and-form; with name-and-form as condition, the six sense bases; with the six sense bases as condition, contact; with contact as condition, feeling; with feeling as condition, craving; with craving as condition, clinging; with clinging as condition, existence; with existence as condition, birth; with birth as condition, aging-and-death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, displeasure, and despair come to be. Such is the origin of this whole mass of suffering. This, bhikkhus, is called dependent origination.⁷

The aim of Buddhism isn't philosophical reflection and theorization for its own sake, although, such activities are necessary if one is to make cognitive sense of its teachings. Its goal, rather, is to discover and articulate the path that leads to the cessation of suffering, in all of its senses. According to the Buddha, the most pressing problem that human beings face is that they suffer, in the ordinary sense of the term. Human beings desire materialistic and sensual goods in order to deal with suffering. But such things are fleeting and don't do anything to deal with the source of suffering, which is attachment to things that are ultimately unreal. As long as human beings continue to pursue such things, they will continue to suffer in the wheel of *saṃsāra*, enduring a never-ending cycle of life, death, and rebirth.

Buddhism teaches that by following the Eight-Fold Path one can achieve *nirvāṇa* and escape *saṃsāra*. It is important to note that *nirvāṇa* isn't a place or thing, but a post-mortem state, and the Buddhist tradition is reluctant to say anything positive about it. We may say, however, that *nirvāṇa* is the extinction of *dukkha*, and of the three poisons of ignorance/delusion, attachment/greed, and aversion/hatred that drive the wheel of *saṃsāra*. A common literal translation of the word *nirvāṇa* is "blowing out" or "extinction."⁸ This suggests that if human existence is analogous to that of the flame of a burning candle, then *nirvāṇa* is the blowing out of that flame.

The Eight-Fold Path is summarized as follows:⁹

1. Right view (or understanding)—To perceive that the human experience is intolerable; to see and accept the four noble truths.
2. Right resolve—To develop right attitudes, including freedom from desires, friendliness, and compassion; abandoning hatred, sensual desire, and causing injury to others; to make a serious commitment to achieving enlightenment and to become free from desires, not to be lost in luxury, not to exploit others, but to love them.
3. Right speech—To avoid divisive, harsh, and frivolous speech; to hold one's tongue, to be truthful and to avoid gossip, slander, and backbiting.
4. Right action—To abstain from wrongful conduct; never to kill, steal, or fornicate, but rather to do positive things that benefit others and help them to live peaceful and honorable lives.
5. Right livelihood—To not engage in an occupation which causes harm or suffering to others (such as trading in arms or lethal weapons, intoxicating drinks, poisons, and killing animals); to be honest in one's business dealings with others; to make one's living without harming others or society.
6. Right effort—A four-part effort (i) to develop one's mind in a wholesome way; (ii) to get rid of the evil and unwholesome thoughts that lead to attachment, hatred, and delusion by practicing mindfulness and mental cultivation; (iii) to abjure all evil thoughts and focus only on good

- thoughts; (iv) to develop and maintain in one's thinking the good and wholesome states already cultivated.
7. Right mindfulness (or attentiveness)—To be diligently aware of the activities in and of one's body, one's feelings and sensations, one's moods and mental states, and one's ideas, thoughts, and conceptions of things; to eliminate negative patterns of thinking, such as the Five Hindrances, namely, (i) desire for sensual pleasure, (ii) ill-will, (iii) laziness, (iv) worry and agitation, (v) and nagging doubts and vacillation.
 8. Right meditation—To adopt the elaborate mental procedures worked out by the Buddha; to develop clarity and mental calm that leads to the four *dhyānas*, stages of deep inner calm and mental concentration. At the first stage all unwholesome thoughts are discarded, and feelings of joy and happiness are maintained. At the second stage all intellectual activities are suppressed, tranquility and “one-pointedness” of mind are developed. At the third stage feelings of joy and active sensations disappear but dispositions of happiness and equanimity remain. At the fourth stage all sensations of pain and pleasure disappear and only pure equanimity and mindful-awareness remain.

As to be expected, there is an extensive body of literature devoted to explicating the Eight-Fold Path and to giving practical advice about how best to follow it. But because our purposes are theoretical in nature, we won't discuss these things. It will suffice to say that those who diligently follow the Eight-Fold Path will be enlightened, finally set free from *samsāra* and liberated from all suffering (*dukkha*).¹⁰

DIFFERENT TRADITIONS OF BUDDHIST THOUGHT

Different traditions of Buddhism diverge with regard to what *nirvāṇa* is, who can obtain it, and the best or most expedient methods and practices one should engage in to achieve it. *Theravāda* Buddhism, also known as the way of the elders, is the oldest extant Buddhist tradition. It bases its views exclusively on the *Pāli Canon* (also known as the *Tipitaka*, or the *Three Baskets*), the first discourses of the Buddha. *Theravāda* maintains that individual enlightenment is achieved only through one's own efforts and requires its practitioners to adhere to strict moral and spiritual rules and to live a monastic life. In contrast, *Mahāyāna* Buddhism is less individualist and holds that there are various ways and means of achieving enlightenment. It accepts the *Pāli Canon* but adds to it the *Mahāyāna Sūtras*, the central and most influential of which are the *Prajñāpāramitā Sūtras*, also known as the “The Perfection of Wisdom” discourses, which includes the *Diamond*

Sūtra (*Vajracchedikā Prajñāpāramitā*) and the *Heart Sūtra* (*Prajñāpāramit āhṛdaya*). The Mahāyāna canon also includes the *Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra*, which provides the scriptural basis of the *Yogācārā* school of Buddhism, the *Lotus Sūtra* (*Saddharmapuṇḍarīka*), which was highly influential in China and Japan and provides the basis of for the *Tiantai* school, and the *Pure Land Sūtras* (*Sukhāvātīvyūha*), which forms the basis of Pure Land Buddhism. Also of importance is the *Vajraśekhara Sūtra*, which was highly influential in the formation of the *Vajrayāna* school of Tibet.¹¹

Mahāyāna places less of an emphasis on following moral and spiritual rules. It maintains that laypeople, too, can achieve enlightenment with the help of enlightened beings, *Bodhisattvas*, who have achieved enlightenment and have vowed not to enter into *nirvāṇa* until all sentient beings achieve enlightenment. Having great excesses of karmic merit, *Bodhisattvas* are able to transfer that merit to make it easier for practitioners to achieve *nirvāṇa*. There are many and various further branches of these two Buddhist traditions that diverge on a wide variety of metaphysical and epistemological views. All of these schools, however, accept the Four Noble Truths and the Eight-Fold Path.

For our purposes, we focus our attention on the Mahāyāna tradition. The Mahāyāna take Nāgārjuna to be the most important teacher after Buddha. Nāgārjuna was born into a Brahmin family toward the end of the second century CE.¹² His Brahmanical background might explain many of the similarities that exist between certain views in both Hinduism and Buddhism. As opposed to Theravāda, Mahāyāna emphasizes an elaborate system of metaphysics, which the Advaita Vedānta tradition would later adapt and follow. Though all forms of classical Mahāyāna thought are characterized by a certain metaphysic, there are tensions and distinctions between various schools, at least in regard to how one should express certain metaphysical beliefs. The two main traditions that express different metaphysics in Mahāyāna thought are Nāgārjuna's Middle Way tradition, also known as the *Mādhyamika* school, and the mind only school of *Yogācārā*. Because the former has received the greatest philosophical attention from the West, we will focus on it in this chapter.¹³

The origins of the Middle Way tradition trace back to the first or second century CE. Among its earliest collection of religious texts is the *Prajñāpāramitā*, or the *Perfection of Wisdom Sūtras*, which began to be written down around the first century CE or so, with further versions, both longer and shorter, having been written down between 300 and 700 CE.¹⁴ The main philosophical treatise attributed to Nāgārjuna is the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*, or the *Fundamental Verses on the Middle Way*, abbreviated as the *MMK* and probably written around 150 to 300 CE. Since this is widely accepted to be Nāgārjuna's most important philosophical work, in order to establish the

central philosophical commitments that this tradition adheres to, we will use this work and commentators Jay Garfield, Jan Westerhoff, and Kenneth Inada to interact with the Mādhyamika tradition.¹⁵

THE MIDDLE WAY TRADITION

According to Inada, the Madhyamaka Creed summarizes the tradition by stating the following:

I pay homage to the Fully Awakened One,
the supreme teacher who has taught

The doctrine of relational origination
The blissful cessation of all phenomenal thought constructions.
(Therein, every event is “marked” by)
Non-origination, non-extinction,
Non-destruction, non-permanence,
Non-identity, non-differentiation
Non-coming (into being), non-going (out of being).¹⁶

One of the ways Nāgārjuna reaches the last conclusion that was mentioned is by reasoning about causation in the following way:

- (1) Neither from itself,
- (2) Nor from another,
- (3) Nor from both,
- (4) Nor without a cause, does anything whatever, anywhere arise.¹⁷

Nāgārjuna was well aware of contemporary philosophical schools that endorsed each of these four options. He makes a conscious attempt to argue why each view is wrong and how this helps establish his particular metaphysic. In regard to (1), Sāṃkhya philosophers argue that in order for there to be a cause, the effect of the cause must exist potentially in the cause.¹⁸ If it didn't, then the effect wouldn't come about from the cause necessarily and thus it can be imagined to exist without that cause.¹⁹ If the effect can exist without the cause, then one might argue that the cause isn't a genuine cause. According to Garfield, this view of self-causation is supposed to be analogous to that of a seed and a sprout. In the seed there exists the potential for the sprout to come about. When this potential is actualized, we have a case of self-causation.²⁰ There seems to be two fundamental problems with this, however. First, the seed still needs to be watered in order for it to sprout, so the analogy doesn't seem to be a good one.²¹ Second, if a substance already

has the necessary and sufficient conditions within it, then wouldn't it be displaying the effect eternally?²² What would cause a change in the substance?

Option (2), causation from another, is a kind of causation that is more familiar both within Buddhism and in contemporary Western metaphysics. It is worthwhile, then, to say a bit more about why Nāgārjuna rejects it. On this view of causation, the cause and the effect are distinct phenomena related by the fact that the former has power to bring about the later. These distinct phenomena can be compared to parents who give life to their children.²³ When this happens, there are clearly new entities (the children) that didn't exist potentially in the cause (the parents). But, how could one account for a relationship between two items when one of the items doesn't even exist? This relationship can't be accounted for by human expectation or memory, as the relationship would then depend on the mind.²⁴ This, of course, would mean that the relationship didn't really exist in an objective sense. On the other hand, if we suppose that both the past and the present are real in order to account for how the past could have power to bring about things in the present, we'd end up with another problem. In effect, on this view, both the past and the present have the character of the present, namely, that of being wholly present, or existent. It would follow that the future is wholly present, too, for otherwise the past couldn't have any causal power to bring about new effects in the present and carry them over, as it were, into the future. But if the past, present, and future are all equally fully present, then eternalism, roughly, the view that all times are equally fully real, is true. Given eternalism, there are no divisions between the past, present, and future, so how could it be said that past events bring about future events? This way of understanding the relation of past causes to present effects leads to a contradiction.²⁵

Option (3) is that effects come about through both self-causation and other or outside causes. Garfield points out that one might go back to the sprout example and argue that the seed still needs to be planted, watered, and so on in order for it to actualize its potential to sprout.²⁶ In this case, there still needs to be a potential to actualize the effect within the seed, but the mere potential won't be enough to actualize the effect, as the seed will need to have some sort of outside cause that works in conjunction with the potential. Though this might initially seem like a plausible option, Nāgārjuna seems to take it that this view isn't worth considering, given the fact that both views were already refuted separately.²⁷

Lastly, Nāgārjuna considers option (4), the view of no-cause. That is the view that effects can simply and spontaneously arise from nothing. Garfield suggests that arguments similar to those proposed by Sextus Empiricus, Hume, and Wittgenstein against the three previous views might motivate one to accept the view that things simply arise without any causes as the last possible option.²⁸ Nāgārjuna, however, argues that all four of these options are

implausible. He rejects both causal realism, the view that events bring about things in virtue of some inherent casual power, and causal nihilism, essentially (4) above, opting instead for a view Garfield describes as conventionalist regularism. That is, Nāgārjuna accepts the conventional reality of four conditions (efficient, supporting, immediately preceding, and dominant), for they serve as dimensions of explanation for regularly occurring patterns of phenomena in our experience, and maintains that these conditions are empty of own being (*śūnyatā*) at the ultimate level.²⁹ Nāgārjuna's philosophy can be summarized of *śūnyatā*. Harrison clarifies that by a philosophy of emptiness, Nāgārjuna doesn't mean that those things that we experience either exist or that they do not exist.³⁰ Nāgārjuna wouldn't adhere to such a strictly binary conclusion. He rather argues for a Middle Way for this and all other philosophical problems.

NĀGĀRJUNA

At the beginning of the previous chapter, we noted that the Advaita Vedānta tradition could be better understood by Westerners if it was interpreted through the lenses of Kantian philosophy. According to Garfield, something very similar could be said about the Middle Way tradition.³¹ Using a Tibetan translation and incorporating a particular Tibetan commentarial tradition, Garfield argues that in saying that reality is empty (*śūnyatā*), Nāgārjuna has in mind a level of reality that is independent of human experience, in other words, reality at the noumenal level.³² Moreover, using the language of Śāṅkara, one could also say that for Nāgārjuna the first layer of reality is ultimately empty and void (*śūnyatā*). Again, similar to Śāṅkara, this doesn't mean that the phenomena that we experience do not exist on any level, as there is a conventional or phenomenal level where the phenomena that we experience do exist. Thus, reality is neither totally empty nor is it not totally empty. Rather, it is empty in the noumenal sense but not in the phenomenal sense. Garfield summarizes his thought:

So from the standpoint of Mādhyamika philosophy, when we ask of a phenomenon, Does it exist?, we must always pay careful attention to the sense of the word "exist" that is at work. We might mean *exist inherently*, that is, in virtue of being a substance independent of attributes, in virtue of having an essence, and so forth, or we might mean *exist conventionally*, that is to exist dependently, to be the conventional referent of a term, but not to have any independent existence. No phenomenon, Nāgārjuna will argue, exists in the first sense. But that does *not* entail that all phenomena are nonexistent tout court. Rather, to the degree that anything exists, it exists in the latter sense, that is, nominally, or conventionally.³³

It is important to also point out that though we will be following Garfield in interpreting Nāgārjuna in a Kantian fashion, there are other approaches to interpreting Nāgārjuna. According to Mark Siderits's reading, Nāgārjuna is a proponent of semantic non-dualism. In defense of this view, Siderits reminds us that Nāgārjuna affirms that emptiness is empty. In *MMK* 24.18, Nāgārjuna writes: "Dependent origination we declare to be emptiness. That [emptiness] is a dependent concept, just that is the middle path."³⁴ If something is dependent, it lacks intrinsic nature, and no statement about that which lacks intrinsic nature can ultimately be true, from which it follows that nothing we say about emptiness can be ultimately true. Siderits notes that Nāgārjuna goes on to reject all four options of the aforementioned tetralemma in the *MMK*. With no options left, Siderits maintains that the upshot is that the acceptance of a false assumption has been causing us trouble. In order to solve the apparent contradiction in saying that the ultimate truth is that there is no ultimate truth, Siderits proposes that Nāgārjuna uses "ultimate truth" in two very different senses:

*Ultimate truth*₁: a fact that must be grasped in order to attain full enlightenment.
*Ultimate truth*₂: a statement that corresponds to the ultimate nature of mind-independent reality.³⁵

Distinction in play, Nāgārjuna's view is that the fact that must be grasped in order to attain full enlightenment is that there is no statement that corresponds to the ultimate nature of mind-independent reality. That is, the ultimate truth₁ is that there is no ultimate truth₂.³⁶

Another approach to understanding Nāgārjuna makes use of a post-Wittgensteinian framework to make Nāgārjuna's critiques of his opponents more explicable and accessible to us. This can be done, as Nāgārjuna's critiques and opponents are analogous to Wittgenstein's critiques and his analytic opponents. Westerhoff points out that, for the Wittgensteinian approach, the chief concern in comparing the two traditions is that of understanding "dependent origination." He states, "This was regarded primarily as reflecting the underlying idea of a Wittgensteinian philosophy of language according to which language, and in particular the language of philosophical statements, could not be regarded as independent of the interrelated nature of conceptual thought and conventional language."³⁷ There is also an approach that attempts to clarify Nāgārjuna's argument by explicating his work using the tools of contemporary analytic philosophy, including new logical systems and notation that go along with dialethic, multi-valiant, and paraconsistent logics.³⁸ Westerhoff himself seems most sympathetic to the view that we should not Westernize Nāgārjuna at all but rather try to read him in his own context.³⁹ He thinks that this can be done due to the recent maturity that has taken place in Nāgārjuna studies, but he doesn't go into much detail as to why the other interpretations or

frameworks aren't good besides expressing their limitations. He does appear, however, to be open to using such interpretations or frameworks for introducing Westerners to Nāgārjuna's philosophical thought.⁴⁰

If any of these non-Kantian-*esque* readings of Nāgārjuna are correct, then perhaps some of our specific criticisms of Nāgārjuna's views won't be applicable. But it remains controversial whether these readings are correct representations of Nāgārjuna's views. For our purposes, in the rest of this chapter, we assume that Garfield's reading is correct. Our main reason for doing so is that it seems to us that his reading of Nāgārjuna is most consistent with the *Prāsaṅgika-Madhyamaka* tradition's reading of Nāgārjuna, which is, according to Westerhoff, the official philosophical position of Tibetan Buddhism and is regarded by that tradition as the pinnacle of philosophical sophistication.⁴¹ Secondly, while we are being careful to interpret all of the philosophers and the philosophical traditions they belong to in their own context, we are trying to make these views accessible to an audience that is very likely to be more familiar with the Western philosophical traditions than Eastern ones.

Nāgārjuna on Enlightenment

According to Westerhoff, for Nāgārjuna, human cognitive faculties are defaulted to produce erroneous beliefs. Humans believe that different substances exist and these beliefs govern our representation of the world. Our native cognitive equipment, together with our interests and concerns, leads us to superimpose onto objects of phenomenal experience (objects that lack any mind-independent reality) a kind of substantial unity or enduring and persisting nature.⁴² Human faculties produce belief in substances which aid in creating illusions that humans desire. These desires cause suffering and pain. The only way for humans to rid themselves of this suffering is to come to the right realization that all phenomena that we encounter (including the self) are actually impermanent and empty (*śūnyatā*) and that desires for phenomena are baseless on the noumenal level. This would include coming to the realization that there is no ultimate difference between *nirvāṇa* and the phenomenal level of reality.⁴³ This will then end the process of *saṃsāra* (rebirth). Garfield makes this point clear by stating, "To distinguish between *saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa* would be to suppose that each had a nature and that they were different natures. But each is empty, and so there can be no inherent difference."⁴⁴ Harrison states, "Escaping *saṃsāra* (rebirth) simply requires that we stop regarding it as separate from *nirvāṇa*. This realization would in fact be enlightenment as it would free the enlightened one from further rebirth."⁴⁵ In summary, since the noumenal level of reality is empty, both *saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa* are empty and coming to realize this will free the person from the conventional level of reality, and as a result, end suffering.

Nāgārjuna's Epistemology

As previously mentioned, Nāgārjuna argues that all that we experience exists in the conventional realm but not in the noumenal realm and that all of these things are empty. His main tool for discerning this truth is an extensive use of the *reductio ad absurdum*.⁴⁶ Throughout the *MMK*, he relies on this argumentative technique in order to establish his metaphysic. It thus appears that Nāgārjuna relies on a brand of rationalism in order to reach his conclusions. However, following Westerhoff, Nāgārjuna denies a realist way of accounting for a means and objects of knowledge.⁴⁷ Nāgārjuna denies that ideas, the means and the objects of knowledge, have intrinsic characteristics and denies knowledge invariantism and rather maintains that all cognitive procedures are means of knowledge are conventional. Given Nāgārjuna's ontological commitment that ultimate reality is empty, it couldn't be that humans ultimately have certain cognitive procedures that are an invariant or sure means to knowledge, for then reality would no longer be empty. Nāgārjuna affirms a kind of epistemic pragmatism, maintaining that these cognitive procedures enable us to examine phenomena and argue that they are empty of being (*śūnyatā*). If these procedures are followed properly and within the right context, they reliably bring about the awareness that all is empty. Knowledge of emptiness is therefore not established, as the Rationalist would have it, but rather achieved or realized.⁴⁸ Moreover, if Nāgārjuna did endorse necessary and sufficient conditions for warrant, one could raise the following objections: Given that ultimate reality is empty, there are no conditions for warrant. But if there are no conditions for warrant, then one could never be warranted in actually believing that reality was empty. Thus, even if true, one could never actually be warranted in accepting the Middle Way tradition.⁴⁹ To avoid this consequence, Nāgārjuna takes a similar though not identical approach to Śāṅkara. Again, he argues that conventional level actions can lead to the right awareness or access. As Westerhoff puts the point, Nāgārjuna maintains that there are "cognitive procedures which function as means of knowledge in the specific context in which they are employed, regimented by certain background constraints and other pragmatic features."⁵⁰

CONCLUSION

We have now established Nāgārjuna's epistemology and provided a better presentation of his worldview, in brief, that reality is empty. However, one may now ask if there are any reasons to believe that the Middle Way tradition could account for the preconditions that make Plantinga's theory of warrant intelligible. As we have shown in this chapter, the Middle Way tradition

shares many of the same central tenets as the Advaita Vedānta tradition. One reason to think that the Middle Way tradition can't account for the proper-function or truth-aimed condition is that it maintains, along with the Advaita Vedānta tradition, that there aren't any design plans or cognitive faculties that are aimed at producing true beliefs on the noumenal level there. These things, in reality, are empty and void. If reality is ultimately void and empty, there is no personal God on the noumenal level to account for the proper-function condition. Thus, the Middle Way tradition can't account for proper function any better than either naturalism or Advaita Vedānta Hinduism can.

Like the advocate of the Advaita Vedānta tradition, the defender of the Middle Way tradition might respond to these objections by attempting to formulate a proper-function account that only pertains to the phenomenal realm. Consider, for example the following proposal:

Middle Way Proper Function: For something to be properly functioning in the phenomenal realm, that something must be fulfilling an intention given to it by an intentional agent that exists outside of the agent.

This account, however, is subject to the same problems as Śaṅkara's account, as was demonstrated in chapter 4. An account like this would (1) ultimately change Plantinga's theory of warrant, which is intended to be a theory that applies to ultimate reality, (2) lack motivation, and (3) fail to allow for things to be warranted via Plantinga's theory of warrant on the noumenal or ultimate level of reality. In addition, Nāgārjuna openly rejects any realist account of warrant. A realist account of warrant is one that endorses that there are particular jointly necessary and sufficient conditions for warrant that need to be satisfied in all contexts. Nāgārjuna develops his epistemology based in part on the fact that his view is self-defeating given a realist epistemology. If there aren't any other ways around the self-defeating problem other than rejecting a realist view, then Nāgārjuna's ontology necessitates his epistemology. That is, in order to avoid logical inconsistency, anyone who endorses Nāgārjuna's ontology must also endorse his epistemology. And since Plantinga's theory of warrant is a realist view of warrant, Nāgārjuna must reject Plantinga's epistemology.

Regarding the truth-aimed condition, it seems that Nāgārjuna might, like Śaṅkara, argue that conventional beliefs can indirectly lead one to knowledge. This would allow for the Middle Way advocate to claim that their epistemology satisfies a general reliabilist requirement as well. While this strategy seems open to the Middle Way advocate, we fail to see how Nāgārjuna's approach would fare any better than Śaṅkara's approach, given that Plantinga's truth-aimed condition is tied to the proper-function condition.

In other words, if Nāgārjuna can't account for the proper-function condition, the truth-aimed condition couldn't be accounted for either. Moreover, even if one grants that Nāgārjuna doesn't need to account for Plantinga's rendition of the truth-aimed condition, but rather something similar enough to it (such as the condition that one's faculties have to reliably produce true beliefs at the phenomenal level), such an account would still be insufficient to secure a tight connection to truth which is needed for warrant. Here, then, in brief, is our argument for thinking that the Middle Way tradition cannot account for Plantinga's theory of warrant:

- (1) If the Advaita Vedānta tradition cannot make use of Plantinga's theory of, then the Middle Way tradition cannot use Plantinga's theory of warrant.
- (2) The Advaita Vedānta tradition cannot make use of Plantinga's theory of warrant.
- (3) Therefore, the Middle Way tradition cannot use Plantinga's theory of warrant.

We think the work in this chapter has established enough similarities between Śaṅkara's Hinduism and Nāgārjuna's Buddhism. As such, (1) should be recognized as plausible. Regarding (2), if our critiques given in the previous chapter (together with those that are summarized in this chapter) are good, then the Middle Way tradition cannot account for the preconditions that make Plantinga's epistemology intelligible, and thus it cannot make use of Plantinga's religious epistemology. The inference to (3) is clearly valid. We conclude that the members of Mādhyamika Buddhism can't make full use of Plantingian religious epistemology.

In the next chapter we engage Daoism and Confucianism in the next chapter. First, however, we finish things off by filling in the details of our argument schema for Mādhyamika Buddhism:

- (1) The members of Mādhyamika Buddhism can make full use of Plantingian religious epistemology *if and only if* they are the beneficiaries of intellectual and conceptual resources internal to Mādhyamika Buddhism which are necessary and sufficient for the articulation of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model as well as a uniquely Mādhyamika Buddhist extension of it.
- (2) The members of Mādhyamika Buddhism are beneficiaries of conceptual resources necessary for the articulation of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model and a uniquely Mādhyamika Buddhist extension of it *if and only if* (a) the central and formative doctrinal teachings of Mādhyamika Buddhism entail or suggest (I) the Dependency Thesis, (II) the Design Thesis, and (III) the Immediacy Thesis, and unique analogues of (IV) the Internal Inspiration of the Holy Spirit Thesis and (V) the Scriptural

- Revelation Thesis, and (b) the metaphysical claims and/or presuppositions of Mādhyamika Buddhism are fully compatible with (I)–(III) and in no way preclude theses relevantly analogous to (IV) and (V).
- (3) It's not true that (a) and (b) of (2) hold for Mādhyamika Buddhism, for the central teachings of Mādhyamika Buddhism are logically inconsistent with (I)–(III) and Mādhyamika Buddhism cannot account for the preconditions that make Plantinga's theory of warrant intelligible.
- (4) Thus, the members of Mādhyamika Buddhism are not the beneficiaries of intellectual and conceptual resources internal to Mādhyamika Buddhism which are necessary and sufficient for the articulation of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model as well as a uniquely Mādhyamika Buddhist extension of it. [From (2) and (3)]
- (5) Thus, the members of Mādhyamika Buddhism can't make full use of Plantingian religious epistemology. [From (1) and (4)]

NOTES

1. See *The Maha-Saccaka Sutta: The Longer Discourse to Saccaka* (MN 36) and *Sukhamala Sutta: Refinement* (AN 3.38).
2. Geshe Tashi Tsering, *The Four Noble Truths: The Foundation of Buddhist Thought: Volume 1* (Somerville, MA: Wisdom Publications, 2005), 3–4.
3. Mark Siderits, *Buddhism as Philosophy: An Introduction* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2007), 18.
4. The impetus for much this paragraph is inspired by Walpola Rahula, *What the Buddha Taught* (New York: Grove Press, 1959), Chapter Two.
5. *Maha-Saccaka Sutta: The Longer Discourse to Saccaka* (MN 36).
6. Rahula, *What the Buddha Taught*, 35.
7. *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha: A New Translation of the Saṃyutta Nalāya*, trans. Bhikkhu Bodhi (Somerville, MA: Wisdom Publications, 2000), 533.
8. See Rahula, *What the Buddha Taught*, 36–37.
9. We have compiled our summary, with some modifications and amendments, from the following sources: Christopher W. Gowans, *Philosophy of the Buddha* (London and New York: Routledge, 2003), 161–175; Charles S. Prebish and Damien Keown, *Introducing Buddhism* (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), 52–54; Walpola Rahula, *What the Buddha Taught*, 45–50; and Rodney Stark, *Discovering God: The Origins of the Great Religions and the Evolution of Belief* (New York: HarperOne, 2007), 240.
10. For those who would like to know more about *The Eightfold Path*, it'd be good to start with Walpola Rahula's *What the Buddha Taught* Chapter 5 and Geshe Tashi Tsering's *The Four Noble Truths* Chapters 4 and 5.
11. For more about general information about *Theravāda* and *Mahāyāna* Buddhism and the various schools and sūtras associated with these schools, see Prebish and Keown, *Introducing Buddhism* and Donald W. Mitchell, *Buddhism: Introducing*

The Buddhist Experience (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002). For more complete studies of the various schools of Buddhist philosophy and their history, see, for instance, David J. Kalupahana, *A History of Buddhist Philosophy: Continuities and Discontinuities* (Honolulu: The University of Hawaii Press, 1992) and Junjirō Takakusu, *The Essentials of Buddhist Philosophy*, eds. Wing-tsit Chan and Charles A. Moore (Delhi, India: Motilal Banarsidass, 1978).

12. Allie Frazier, *Readings in Eastern Religious Thought* (PA: Westminster Press, 1969), 207.

13. Nāgārjuna and Kenneth K. Inada, *Nāgārjuna: A Translation of His Mūlamadhyamakakārikā with an Introductory Essay of Kenneth K. Inada* (Tokyo: Hokuseido Press, 1970), 3.

14. See, for instance, Mitchell, *Buddhism*, 99. For a more in-depth history of the composition of these works, see Edward Conze, “Text Sources, and Bibliography of the Prajñāpāramitā-hṛdaya,” *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 80, no. 1–2 (1948): 33–51. For an anthology of Buddhist texts, see Donald Lopez, *Buddhist Scriptures* (London: Penguin, 2004).

15. Though *The Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* is the only work that is universally recognized as being written by Nāgārjuna, there are other works that he could be responsible for. These works would include *Sixty Stanzas on Reasoning*, *Seventy Stanzas on Emptiness*, *Dispeller of Objections*, *Treatise on Pulverization*, and “*Precious Garland*.” See Jan Westerhoff, *Nāgārjuna’s Madhyamaka: A Philosophical Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 5–6.

16. Nāgārjuna and Inada, *Nāgārjuna*, 39.

17. Note that we have added the numbering here to facilitate our discussion. The text comes from Rje Tsong Khapa, *Ocean of Reasoning: A Great Commentary on Nāgārjuna’s Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*, trans. Geshe Ngawang Samten and Jay L. Garfield (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 61.

18. Presumably, the Sāṃkhya didn’t have in mind the possibility of a hybrid cause/effect view like the one that will be mentioned in regard to (3).

19. Jay L. Garfield, *The Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way: Nāgārjuna’s Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 105–106.

20. *Ibid.*, 106.

21. *Ibid.*

22. We take this to be what Westerhoff is getting at when he states, “First of all this would mean that the effect would not have to be produced, since it is already present within the causal field.” See Westerhoff, *Nāgārjuna’s Madhyamaka*, 102.

23. Nāgārjuna and Garfield, *Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way*, 106.

24. Westerhoff, *Nāgārjuna’s Madhyamaka*, 201.

25. The makings of these arguments are in Chapter 19 of *Nāgārjuna’s Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*.

26. Garfield, *Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way*, 106.

27. Though Westerhoff seems to see Nāgārjuna’s argument against this view in a slightly different light, he acknowledges that this view is commonly dismissed for this reason within the Madhyamaka literature. Westerhoff states, “What he [Nāgārjuna] wants to show in this context is that if we have disproved each of a set of two

propositions, we do not need a *further* argument to disprove their conjunction, since this is entailed by the individual refutations.” (Westerhoff, *Nāgārjuna’s Madhyamaka*, 109.) Though we are not sure whether there is a significant difference between these two views, for the purposes of our project, it isn’t important to demonstrate which view is right.

28. Garfield, *Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way*, 107. Also see Jay L. Garfield, “Epochē and Śūnyatā: Scepticism East and West,” in *Empty Word: Buddhist Philosophy and Cross-Cultural Interpretation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 3–23.

29. Jay L. Garfield, “Nāgārjuna’s Theory of Causality: Implications Sacred and Profane,” *Philosophy East and West* 51, no. 4 (2001): 509, 510.

30. Victoria Harrison, *Eastern Philosophy: The Basics* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2013), 98.

31. Garfield, *Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way*, 88–89.

32. Garfield’s interpretation is based on an Indo-Tibetan Buddhist hermeneutic and could itself be considered closely in line with the *Nyingma-pa* reading. See *ibid.*, 98.

33. *Ibid.*, 90.

34. Mark Siderits, *Buddhism as Philosophy: An Introduction* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2007), 204.

35. *Ibid.*, 202.

36. *Ibid.*, 204.

37. Westerhoff, *Nāgārjuna’s Madhyamaka*, 11. For more on this point, see Frederick J. Streng, *Emptiness: A Study in Religious Meaning* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1967) and Chris Gudmundsen, *Wittgenstein and Buddhism* (New York: Barnes & Noble Books, 1977).

38. Westerhoff notes that the recent interest in Nāgārjuna in analytic philosophy circles began shortly after the publication of Richard H. Robinson’s “Some Logical Aspects of Nāgārjuna’s System,” *Philosophy East and West* 6, no. 4 (1957): 291–308. For recent papers that exemplify this trend, see, for instance, Jay L. Garfield and Graham Priest, “Nāgārjuna and the Limits of Thought,” in *Empty Word: Buddhist Philosophy and Cross-Cultural Interpretation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 86–105; Jay L. Garfield and Graham Priest, “Mountains Are Just Mountains,” in *Pointing at the Moon: Buddhism, Logic, Analytic Philosophy*, eds. Mario D’Amato, Jay L. Garfield, and Tom J. F. Tillemans (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 71–82; and Graham Priest, “The Logic of the *Catuskoti*,” *Comparative Philosophy* 1, no. 2 (2010): 24–54.

39. Westerhoff, *Nāgārjuna’s Madhyamaka*, 11–12.

40. *Ibid.*, 12.

41. Jan Christoph Westerhoff, “Nāgārjuna,” *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2017 Edition), ed. Edward N. Zalta, accessed July 25, 2018, <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2017/entries/nagarjuna>.

42. Westerhoff, *Nāgārjuna’s Madhyamaka*, 50–51.

43. See Nāgārjuna and Garfield, *Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way*, 331–335.

44. Ibid., 331.

45. Harrison, *Eastern Philosophy*, 98.

46. Here we follow Richard King, who writes, “The Prāsaṅgika Madhyamaka (exemplified by Candrakīrti, seventh century CE) argued that the truth of emptiness could be established only through the use of *reductio ad absurdum* (*prasaṅga*) arguments. On this view the Madhyamaka does not put forward independent arguments of its own but instead establishes internal inconsistencies in the presuppositions of others, thereby undermining their position from within.” Richard King, *Indian Philosophy: An Introduction to Hindu and Buddhist Thought* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999), 139.

47. Westerhoff, *Nāgārjuna’s Madhyamaka*, 181.

48. Ibid., 181.

49. Ibid., 181.

50. Ibid., 181.

Chapter 8

Neo-Confucianism and Daoism

We now turn our attention toward the question of whether there are Chinese philosophical traditions the members of which may make full use of Plantingian religious epistemology. We focus on the Daoist and Neo-Confucian traditions. First, we provide an overview of the earliest stages of philosophical reflection in China, focusing on metaphysical and epistemological themes that form the basis of the Chinese religious and philosophical traditions. We explain how these metaphysical and epistemological views were developed in Confucian and Daoist traditions, broadly construed. We then consider Wang Yangming's Neo-Confucian tradition in more detail, the school from which David Tien draws on to argue that Neo-Confucian beliefs can be properly basic and warranted for the Confucian in much the same way that Christian belief can be for the Christian. *Contra* Tien, we argue that Neo-Confucianism can't do this because, due to denying that there is an intentional, personal creator, Neo-Confucians fall into the same trapings that metaphysical naturalists do: namely, they have no reason to think that their cognitive faculties are functioning properly. We argue that Neo-Confucians who are attracted to Tien's Plantingian insights have no problem taking these ideas on board, however, if it is possible for them to return the theistic roots of the Confucian tradition, a move suggested to us by Kelly James Clark. If Clark's arguments that the Confucian tradition has theistic roots are sound, then it seems that it would be epistemically possible for the members of at least one branch of Confucianism to make full use of Plantingian religious epistemology. We then consider Zhuangzi's conception of the *Dao* as it relates to Plantingian religious epistemology. After developing the main metaphysical and epistemological points of this tradition, we conclude that, as was the case for Confucianism, due to their affirmation of naturalistic metaphysical views, traditional Daoists can't make use of Plantingian

religious epistemology either. We then focus our attention on a recent essay by Kelly James Clark and Lui Zongku which argues in favor of thinking that Zhuangzi's conception of the Dao is consistent with certain elements of Plantingian reformed epistemology. We conclude that their case isn't very convincing. However, looking to recent work by Sarah Allan, if, as she argues, recently discovered Daoist texts can reasonably be interpreted by at least some members of contemporary Daoist religious traditions as teaching the view that the Dao is identical to a personal creator God, then perhaps at least some Daoists may be in an epistemic position to make full use of Plantingian religious epistemology after all.

CHINESE PHILOSOPHY: METAPHYSICS AND EPISTEMOLOGY

The history of philosophical thought in China is long, stretching at least as far back as the Shang (1766–1150 CE) and the Zhou dynasties (c. 1122–256 CE), the roots of which probably extend to about 2,000 CE.¹ While philosophy in Ancient Greece has its origins in reflection on and critical response to the works of Homer and Hesiod and their mythological attempts to explain reality in terms of the behavior of gods, philosophy in China began with the systematic reflection on divination practices and the attempt to predict and prepare for impending natural disasters, such as famines, floods, and droughts, or whether to enact a new social policy or go to war. Ancient Chinese divination practices involved writing on tortoise shells or ox bones which were then exposed to intense fire, causing cracks to appear, the meanings of which were discerned by studying how words were separated by the appearing cracks. Ancient Chinese thought is marked by the view that there is “a correspondence between the world of Nature and the world of men.”² The term “Heaven” was used to refer to the “totality of heavenly bodies and phenomena” and “Earth” referred to the “ground on which everything exists.”³ The underlying assumption, that by being carefully attentive to and becoming attuned to the workings of Heaven and Earth we can learn how to be in harmony with both ourselves and with Nature and in so doing achieve happiness, remains characteristic of Chinese thinking.

Two texts, the *I Ching*, or the *Book of Changes*, and the *Dazhuan*, or the *Great Commentary*, an early commentary on the *I Ching*, are particularly influential when it comes to the foundations of Chinese philosophy. Although the *I Ching* predates the *Great Commentary*, for sake of clarity, we consider the teachings of the *Great Commentary* first.

The *Great Commentary* sketches the foundations of the Chinese world view and introduces fundamental philosophical vocabulary. According to this

text, the ultimate substance of reality, *qi*, is a kind of pure energy, which is always in a process of change, the patterns (*tian wen*) and principles (*li*) of which are guided by the Dao, or “way.” The path of Dao is evident to those who reflect on these patterns and principles. Ronnie Littlejohn writes, “Reality (heaven and earth) is *qi* (氣) substance in constant process . . . The *Dao* of *qi* gives rise of itself to forces that move it: it is self-moving, according to its internal dynamics of *yin* and *yang*.”⁴ It is crucial to point out that *qi*, or fundamental reality, is not a thing but rather a process of change. In particular, it is not an eternal, unmoved mover or an unchanging Platonic reality. As Littlejohn explains, ancient Chinese metaphysics is a correlative, non-essentialist ontology. He writes,

In Chinese thought the formless *qi* has been eternally *daoing*. Taken as a whole, *qi* as moved by *yin* and *yang* is the explanation for the emergence of what we call material objects . . . in early Chinese ontology, there is change as well as continuity and endurance. The characteristic configuration of *qi* that something is *daoing* (i.e., actualizing) sets it apart from other things. The distinctive correlation of *yin* and *yang* is an explanation that does the philosophical work of the Western concept of *essence*. Accordingly, Chinese philosophers were able to identify kinds and categories of things without recourse to an ontology in which there is a pluralism of substances or essences.⁵

Although the *I Ching* originated as an ancient divination text, it captures the spirit of Chinese process ontology. Recall that divination in China involved writing on ox bones or turtle shells that were subjected to great heat. The future could be told, so they supposed, based on where the cracks in the bones or shells appeared. The *I Ching* offers a more sophisticated system of divination: an elaborate system of sixty-four hexagrams was used to express how it is that organized *qi* patterns arise due to the ordering of opposing forces of *yin* and *yang*. The development of this system reflects the elaboration of a more sophisticated metaphysics. The lower three lines of the hexagrams represent inner aspects of change, such as subjective inner feelings, whereas the top three represent objective outer changes and events.⁶ Unbroken lines represent *yang* forces and broken lines represent *yin* forces.

In Chinese philosophy, thinking in terms of *yin* and *yang* models or characterizes structures in which things exist and analyzes their functions. In other words, *yinyang* thinking is a way of accounting for and explaining the origin, structure, and patterns of change in the universe. It also provides a basic cosmology: from a state of undifferentiated oneness, through the dynamic interplay of *yin* and *yang*, Dao spontaneously generates and unifies the myriad things and is as such considered to be the “way of heaven” (*tiandao*) and the “way of human beings” (*rendao*).⁷ This way of thinking provides what Robin Wang calls a *yinyang* matrix, “a logical structure and method [that]

classifies all things and reveals yinyang as . . . an unfolding continuum, a net of relationships.”⁸ On this model, *lei* (which, when used as a noun, means category or kind, and when used as verb means to place into categories or kinds) accounts for the underlying structure of the *yinyang* matrix. According to Wang, heaven and human are integrated through the connection of *lei* and through *lei* all things under heaven are unified or differentiated. The notion of *lei* plays an important explanatory role in Chinese logic, for the structures and relationships provide the basis of logical categorization and organization in Chinese thought, not the individual characteristics of things in isolation from one another. In sum, thinking in terms of the *yinyang* matrix enables us to understand the underlying patterns of the dynamic interplay between *yin* and *yang* that produce *lei*, which provides a logically descriptive and ethically normative conceptual framework for making sense of Chinese thought and culture.⁹

Naturally, Chinese epistemology must be understood in the context of Chinese metaphysics. Particularly, we need to keep in mind that while philosophers in ancient China asked many of the same epistemological questions as their counterparts in other world traditions did, the way they framed and answered them is unique. For one thing, in contrast to ancient Greek and ancient Indian philosophy, the ancient Chinese approach is broader and more holistic. As Jana Rošker puts it, rather than focusing primarily on observation and reasoning, in keeping with their basic metaphysical assumptions, Chinese epistemological thinking, being inherently relational and holistic in nature, “stems from moral contents and which cannot be separated from (social) practice” and is “directed towards a comprehension which could be achieved through education and learning.”¹⁰ Moreover, in contrast to the Greek and Indian philosophical traditions, which developed a robust conception of propositional truth that draws a clear distinction between first-order propositional claims, such as those pertaining to facts about logical, historical, and literary issues, and second-order claims that compare those propositions to states of affairs or facts, ancient Chinese philosophy isn’t concerned with asking these second-order factual questions. Accordingly, while they raise important epistemological questions, rather than framing their concerns in the language of propositional truth, ancient Chinese philosophers formulated answers to their questions in terms of the Dao.¹¹ For instance, Chris Fraser argues that ancient Chinese philosophers understood knowledge primarily in terms of competence or ability. He writes that according to Mohists, cognitive error “is not explained as a failure of the agent’s mental states to correspond to or represent the world accurately” but rather as disorder or confusion “in discriminating things, in effect a failure to perform a skill correctly.”¹² To simplify somewhat, Fraser concludes that according to early Chinese philosophers, cognitive error, including perceptual error, isn’t

construed in broadly representational terms and propositional beliefs that fail to correspond to external-to-mind realities, but rather is a matter of an agent being in contact with the world who, due to various psychological and environmental factors, makes some sort of mistake or otherwise fails to properly discriminate and respond to things on account of having an unrepresentative or insufficient grasp of the whole situation.¹³

In her systematic overview of Chinese epistemology, Rošker articulates three basic categories and three specific features of Chinese epistemology. Included in the first basic category are the notions of heart-mind and things-events. The Chinese word for heart, *xin*, refers to a physical heart, the heart as not only the center of the emotions, as in in the West, but also the center of cognitive thought. Because there is no strong contrast between affective and cognitive states, *xin* is usually translated as “heart-mind.” In accord with the relational ontology of Chinese metaphysics, self-awareness, the basis of any kind of comprehension, is a matter of heart-mind being in tune or in harmony with heaven and earth. Rošker writes,

The human heart-mind was not only posited as the seat of the concept of mind or consciousness and thus the source of both emotions and reasoning, but was also perceived as a kind of sense organ by the ancient Chinese. Indeed, Mengzi (372–289 BC) sometimes even views it as the principal sense organ, responsible for selecting and interpreting the sensations transmitted to it by other sense organs . . . while the latter enabled perception, the heart-mind enabled the comprehension of external reality or that part of reality transmitted by the sense organs . . . the heart-mind as the inherent organ of perception was seen as continuously integrated with the phenomena of the external world that manifested themselves in the notion things-events (*wu* 物). Hence, instead of establishing a clear demarcation line between the subject and the object of comprehension, human perception and recognition of reality were mostly seen as a product of a coherent, structurally ordered and complementary interaction between the heart-mind and the things-events.¹⁴

The second basic category is that of names and actualities. A theme in ancient Chinese thought is the view that knowledge is possible only if words accurately describe or depict realities, including political institutions and social positions. Moreover, names and actualities must correspond to one another or social chaos will ensue. According to the Confucian tradition, in a distant utopian past, language perfectly expressed realities and all things were properly named. Discord arose when people forgot the proper meanings of words and behaved in ways that are out of accord with their realities. Harmony may be restored if proper understanding of realities is regained, which enables people to act properly in accord with their social positions. Confucius called this process of correcting names so that they correspond to actualities

“the rectification of names.” For example, when Confucius was asked what he would do first if he were given a position of authority in government, he responded that he would rectify names.¹⁵ He writes:

If names are not rectified, speech will not accord with reality; when speech does not accord with reality, things will not be successfully accomplished. When things are not successfully accomplished, ritual practices and music will fail to flourish; when ritual and music fail to flourish, punishments and penalties will miss the mark. And when punishments and penalties miss the mark, the common people will be at a loss as to what to do with themselves. This is why the gentleman [i.e., the wise person, or sage] only applies names that can be properly spoken and assures that what he says can be properly put into action. The gentleman simply guards against arbitrariness in his speech. That is all there is to it.¹⁶

Daoists and Confucians agree that social unrest is due to the people not acting in accord with their natures, but they disagree about whether the rectification of names is the correct solution to the problem. Briefly, Daoists maintain that each thing has its own nature or principle and that each thing is what it is only if it is in harmony with Dao. When action is natural and spontaneous, things act perfectly in accord with their natures. Social disorder arises when rulers try to impose order on the world. The rectification of names is simply another way to try to impose order on the world, which only serves to cause people to forget how to act spontaneously and in accord with their own natures. The Daoist solution is to stop striving and to allow oneself to be brought into harmonious relation with oneself and others by acting naturally. Zhuangzi writes,

Only when we decimate the sagely laws throughout the world will the people be able to listen to reason . . . When everyone keeps their vision to themselves, the world will no longer be distorted. When everyone keeps their keen hearing to themselves, the world will no longer be fettered. When everyone keeps their wisdom to themselves, the world will no longer be confused. When everyone keeps their Virtuosity to themselves, the world will no longer be awry.¹⁷

The third basic category in Chinese epistemology pertains to the binary pairing of knowledge and action. While disputes arose as to which of these pairs has priority of the other, there was agreement that success in practical matters, such as achieving the goods inherent to social, political, and moral aspects of human life, required a right recognition of reality. To generalize, we may say that Confucians prioritized knowledge over action whereas Daoists prioritized action over knowledge. Nevertheless, even for Confucians, theoretical knowledge was linked to the implementation of right social

practice. They, too, maintained the unity of knowledge and practice. Rošker writes,

The close proximity between knowledge and action was seen as the close proximity between an individual and the world, because action was a means for his/her self-transformation and the transformation of the world in the world. Hence, the unity or non-unity of knowledge and action was always a measure of the unity or non-unity of humanity and the world.¹⁸

Now that we've covered the fundamentals of ancient Chinese metaphysics and epistemology, we can now fill in details and go on to discuss specific religious-philosophical traditions of China.

CONFUCIANISM 101

Confucianism's origin lies with Kongzi, who lived around 551–479 CE.¹⁹ Little is known about his life besides the fact that he was a very educated individual who came from poverty.²⁰ Kongzi's philosophy grew out of his view of the society that he had grown up in, one that appeared degenerate to him. At the heart of his philosophy was the belief that wisdom or philosophy was the remedy for society's needs.²¹ Kongzi focused largely on what we now regard as ethical and political philosophy. He focused on teaching Dao, or the Way.²² The Way is in regard to how societies, and members within them, should act. He taught that cultivating virtue (*de*) and acting appropriately in social and ritual contexts is the only way for people to live good lives in a flourishing society.²³ A person who would reach the highest virtuous state (*ren*) would be considered a well-rounded cultivated individual or what is also called a gentleman (*junzi*).²⁴ The ultimate goal is for society to be governed by gentlemen.

Toward the end of the first millennium CE, Han Yu (768–824 CE) wrote an essay that cemented orthodoxy for those who continued in the thought of Kongzi, entitled *An Inquiry into the Way*. This acted as a polemic against rival contemporary philosophies, including Daoism, in addition to arguing for the need for a sage-king.²⁵ There have since been several successors and traditions that have grown from this work. These traditions are categorized together under the label Neo-Confucianism. T'ang Chün-i defines Neo-Confucianism as a “revival of the Confucian faith in man” and as an “acceptance of the need to face all the negative factors [in man's nature] and to find a way of . . . realizing the positive ideal.”²⁶ One important tradition within this larger Neo-Confucian tradition is Wang Yangming's learning of the Way tradition (*Daoxue*).

NEO-CONFUCIANISM: WANG YANGMING AND THE LEARNING OF THE WAY TRADITION

Carsun Chang calls Wang Yangming (1472–1529 CE) the most powerful and influential person in the history of China.²⁷ Chang’s support for this claim includes Wang’s “commanding personality,” his possessing a great number of followers that existed in different geographical regions of China, and the boldness he displayed when he challenged the philosophical orthodoxy of his day.²⁸ Perhaps, above all of these reasons for being so influential was his unique philosophical tradition. We will now give Chang’s summary of Wang’s metaphysical commitments and follow it up by using Chang’s work to elaborate on these points. Chang summarizes Wang’s philosophy thus:

- (1) Mind is reason. While mind is free from selfishness, it is intelligence *per se*, and embodies right principles, or categorical imperatives.
- (2) The external world, which, according to common sense, consists of things of hard fact, is the object of consciousness. Berkeley’s principle, *esse est percipi*, was also discovered by Wang.
- (3) While according to common sense willing and knowing are separate functions of mind, they are correlated in Wang’s system. Mind’s working with a directive effort is called willing. Its working in sheer distinctness or clarity is called knowing. For Wang, volition is a part of cognition.
- (4) Knowing is the core of reality, that is to say, reality is comprised of consciousness.
- (5) The universe is an integration of which man is the mind or center. All men constitute a brotherhood. Physical objects have spiritual affinity with mind.
- (6) If there were no mind or intuitive knowledge, the universe would not function.
- (7) Matter or the world of nature is the material with which mind functions.²⁹

According to Chang, Wang sees the world as intelligible.³⁰ Knowing isn’t just for humans, but all animate beings and even physical objects.³¹ However, for Wang, the intelligible nature of the universe is dependent on the human mind. Chang writes that “without intelligibility or mind, [the universe] would be a darkness, or the world be nonsense to us.”³² Moreover, the human mind needs the universe in order to be capable of having knowledge. Here there is a harmonious circular relationship that exists that is said to be like an ear or an eye that has no substantiality without there being noises to hear or colors and shapes to see.³³ In order to understand why Wang thinks the world as we experience it isn’t the way it should be, and in order to articulate Wang’s solution to this fundamental problem, we must understand his epistemology.

In addition to providing us with a better understanding of Wang's overall metaphysical views, carefully considering his epistemology will allow for a more critical interaction with his tradition.

Wang Yangming's Epistemology

Perhaps Wang's greatest contribution to Chinese epistemology is his doctrine of "pure knowledge," or *liangzhi*, a particular kind of knowledge that includes both "knowing that" and "knowing how." According to Littlejohn, for Wang, one component of *liangzhi* is "the direct and immediate apprehension of the Principles (*li*) of Heaven by which all things are ordered (space, time, cause and the like)."³⁴ Having experienced the direct enlightenment of pure knowledge, Wang taught the doctrine of the unity of knowledge and action (*zhixing heyi*), according to which "there is no difference between knowing *what* one should do and *spontaneously willing to do it*."³⁵ Pure knowledge is not the result of study, nor is it inferred or arrived at by means of argument; it is direct and immediate.³⁶

According to David Tien, Wang's learning of the mind tradition can endorse Plantinga's epistemology.³⁷ Tien focuses on interpreting Wang's concepts of *li* (理) and *liangzhi* (良知).³⁸ For Wang, *li* is a normative notion of the way things ought to be. According to Tien, when things are working according to *li*, things are working naturally and are not working in a deviant way.³⁹ We take it that Tien thinks that the phrase "working naturally" could be interchangeable with "properly functioning" and the word "deviant" could be used interchangeably with something like "malfunction." According to Tien, we may regard Wang's views about *liangzhi*, or pure knowledge, as involving the operation an innate, fully formed cognitive faculty that enables one to know *li*, or principles.⁴⁰ For Wang, the mind is the conscious aspect of *li*.⁴¹ From birth everyone has the original mind. That is, everything is working in accordance with *li*. However, from this point, dispositions still emerge.⁴² One of those dispositions is pure knowledge. This is the aspect of the cognitive faculty that produces moral knowledge of what is right and wrong. However, as the Neo-Confucian story goes, there also exists *qi* (氣), the lively matter that the world is all made up of. Because *qi* exists in the mind, the mind becomes distorted and produces wrong moral judgments. In this way, *qi* acts like sin in the Christian story in that it damages human faculties (which would include human moral and religious faculties). For the Neo-Confucian, this distortion can most clearly be seen in self-centered thoughts and desires. Salvation, or unimpeded knowledge, can only happen when we rid ourselves of such selfishness. We must reverse the distortion that has taken place as a result of the *qi* and regain optimal effectiveness by ending our selfish desires. We take it that Confucian philosophy can then aid in helping this need.

Having now briefly used Tien's work to outline Wang's epistemology and Wang's metaphysical views more generally, we explain Tien's argument that Wang can endorse Plantinga's epistemology.

WARRANTED NEO-CONFUCIANISM? A FIRST ATTEMPT

Tien argues that Plantinga and Wang share the proper-function model for warrant.⁴³ He argues that given that *liangzhi* is utilized, one has a properly functioning faculty.⁴⁴ Since the mind is the conscious aspect of *li* (the principle of how things should be), Tien thinks that *liangzhi* (the faculty of the mind) is aimed toward producing true beliefs.⁴⁵ Given that *qi* is suppressed, there must also be a favorable epistemic environment that emerges. Tien takes all of this as providing a good reason to affirm that core Neo-Confucian belief could be warranted in the same sort of way that core Christian belief can be warranted. This being said, we think Tien is mistaken. Though he does a great job at comparing and showing the similarities between Wang's epistemology and Plantinga's, he apparently fails to see the Plantingian requirement that there must be a conscious, intentional, and intelligent designer in order to account for the proper function of human cognitive faculties. As we argued in chapter 3, in order for any religion to make full use of Plantinga's epistemology, it must account for the five theses that we have laid out. But Neo-Confucianism can't account for the Dependency Thesis, namely, that humans are ontologically and epistemologically dependent on and created by God. The reason for this is that there is no personal God in Neo-Confucianism, which obviously entails that there is no distinction between God and His creatures. Even if the Neo-Confucian rejects the Dependency Thesis in favor of another thesis that isn't far off from it, there doesn't seem to be a plausible way to account for how *liangzhi* should function, namely, that it should function in accordance with *li*. We don't have an answer from Tien as to what ultimately makes it the case that *liangzhi* should function in a particular way rather than some other way. The Christian theist can say that that human cognitive faculties should function in a particular way and that is determined by the human design plan. However, in order to make sense of having a design plan, ultimately, it would be necessary to invoke the existence and creative activity of God. The question that Tien fails to answer, then, is what other than this makes *li* intelligible? While we recognize that *li* is not just descriptive but also has a normative component, we may still ask where the design plans that are associated with *li* get their normative force. It doesn't seem that an impersonal principle could be invoked to explain a design plan, nor does it seem that one could merely appeal to the nature of things to explain it.⁴⁶ Perhaps, being

idealists, the followers of Wang would insist on grounding *li* (and those things entailed by it) in one's own mind or in a collective mind. In fact, according to Tien, for humans, in some sense *li* just is the human mind.⁴⁷ This wouldn't answer the question, of course, for one can't explain the design plan of one's own mind by appealing to *li* which is identical to one's mind. In summary, it isn't enough to point out that a faculty has a way in which it should function, for one must also have an intelligible account of what ultimately made it the case that the faculty ought to operate in the appropriate manner.

The argument that has been developed throughout this project is that design plans, which specify a thing's proper function, are extrinsic to a thing and must originate in a conscious, intentional, and intelligent designer. And though we have left room for the possibility of additional non-naturalistic religious doctrines aiding a non-personal theistic tradition in accounting for proper function, given the bare facts of Neo-Confucianism that have been given, an intelligible Neo-Confucianism account of proper function seems unlikely.

If the Neo-Confucian is willing to acknowledge Plantinga's argument that a design plan requires a conscious and intentional agent but then fails to acknowledge this with respect to what ultimately gives *liangzhi* its design plan, the Neo-Confucian needs to be wary of thereby committing the taxicab fallacy. This is the informal fallacy that is committed whenever one wants to advocate for a general principle that is binding on all relevant things except for an area of one's arbitrary choice. This is comparable to an individual who rides a taxicab but gets out whenever it is convenient. Whereas there's nothing wrong with taking a drive in a taxicab and getting out whenever you want, there is a serious problem of rational inconsistency if one accepts a general principle and then just decides not to so on some occasion just because one doesn't feel like it. Similarly, the Neo-Confucian can't advocate for the principle that there always needs to be a conscious, intentional, and intelligent designer in the context of accounting for proper function but then make an arbitrary or ad hoc exception when it comes to accounting for what gives *liangzhi* its design plan.

Perhaps the Neo-Confucian might argue that the Christian and the Neo-Confucian accounts stand or fall together. Christians maintain that God has cognitive faculties, and nobody designed those cognitive faculties, for no one designed God. Specifically, no conscious and intentional agent gave God his design plan. Nevertheless, God is the sort of being that can confer onto other things their design plans. In principle, then, one may argue that even though no conscious and intentional agent gave *liangzhi* its design plan, it, like God, can nevertheless have one. And if Christians make an exception for God, why can't Neo-Confucians make an exception for *liangzhi*? If this argument is successful, it would at least put the Neo-Confucian in the same epistemic position as the Christian, leading to a sort of stalemate, if you will. The problem with this response, however, is that it is based on a misunderstanding of classical

Christian theism. As mentioned in a chapter 5, for classical Christian theists, strictly speaking, God doesn't possess faculties, but rather God has something analogous or approximate to cognitive faculties. More precisely, we can say that God's nature is such that the proposition "God has cognitive faculties" is analogically true. On this view, it follows that while we can say that God has a mind, that he can know things, and the like, it doesn't follow that God has a mind and knows things in that same manner that creatures do. This view is defended by Thomists, and it is worthwhile to consider one line of argument in favor of it.

For Aquinas, there is no difference between the existence of God and the nature of God, for God's nature is absolutely simple, having no components or parts of any kind.⁴⁸ If God is absolutely simple, the meaning of statements affirming that God has a mind, knows things, or has cognitive faculties or a design plan, and the like, must be interpreted analogically.⁴⁹ Aquinas writes, "God, however, as considered in Himself, is altogether one and simple, yet our intellect knows Him by different conceptions because it cannot see Him as He is in Himself. Nevertheless, although it understands Him under different conceptions, it knows that one and the same simple object corresponds to its conceptions. Therefore, the plurality of predicate and subject represents the plurality of idea; and the intellect represents the unity by composition."⁵⁰ On how all this pertains to the manner in which God knows things, Gerard Hughes writes, "the mind of God is identical with the essence of God, and the formal assimilation of mind to object—what Aquinas call *species intelligibilis*—is identical to the mind of God. The act of knowing is identically the same act by which God exists ([*Summa Theologica*] 1, 14, a.4). God's knowledge in no way involves being affected by something else . . . God knows all things in himself, in that he knows all the ways in which things can resemble him participating in his perfections."⁵¹ And James Brent O. P. writes, "divine simplicity requires that there be no difference between what God is and what God understands himself to be. For Aquinas argues from the divine simplicity that God, his intellect, its activity, and its object, like all divine perfections, are all the one simple *esse* that is God ([*Summa Theologica* I q.14] a.4)."⁵²

If this Thomistic view (or a view similar enough to it) holds up, then Christians may affirm that God's nature is such that he has something like cognitive faculties in order to have a better understanding of what God is like, but they can deny that the way in which humans and God have cognitive faculties is univocal, deny that God's faculties need to be functioning properly, and deny that God has a design plan.⁵³ But the Neo-Confucian can't appeal to analogy and make these same sorts of moves. In their case, for the *liangzhi* faculty to operate properly, it must have a design plan in a non-analogical sense. And it must be non-analogically true that humans have a properly functioning *liangzhi* faculty. Given these commitments, it would be logically contradictory for the Neo-Confucian to maintain that humans have a *liangzhi*

faculty only analogically. Neo-Confucians can't, as it were, have their cake and eat it, too. Given that this is so, and since that there don't seem to be any additional doctrines within this tradition that might deal with the problem, we fail to see how it's possible to make sense of *liangzhi's* design plan without a conscious, intentional, and intelligent designer. While Tien has made some interesting points, it seems that he has merely moved the debate from discussing accounts of proper function to making sense of *li*. He hasn't made sense of *li*. Thus, Tien's Neo-Confucian account of warrant misses the mark.

If Neo-Confucians were to accept that there is a conscious, intentional, and intelligent designer, however, they could (non-analogically) affirm that *liangzhi* functions properly in accord with a design plan. But this move seems a dead end, for theism is obviously radically and completely out of step with both classical and contemporary Chinese philosophy. On the other hand, Kelly James Clark has argued that the deep roots of Confucianism are theistic. If Clark is correct about that, perhaps contemporary Confucians who take on board Tien's insights could make a break with naturalism and a step toward theism. Perhaps there are reasons internal to their tradition for Neo-Confucians to grant the possibility that there is a conscious, intentional, and intelligent designer. If all these claims can be adequately supported, then it would be possible, at least in principle, for Neo-Confucians to be able to accept the core elements of Plantingian religious epistemology, his proper functionalism and the standard Aquinas/Calvin model along with a uniquely, Neo-Confucian extension of it. We consider the merits of this line of thinking in the next section.

WARRANTED CONFUCIANISM? ANOTHER ATTEMPT

In "The Gods of Abraham, Isaiah, and Confucius," Kelly James Clark argues that there are important similarities between the historical narratives that chronicle the development of Hebrew monotheism in the ancient Near East and the development of the theologies of the Shang and Zhou dynasties in ancient China. Specifically, the historical narratives of both traditions show a people working out various conceptions of deity, sorting out whether their divinity is one among many, and then settling on a monotheistic notion of God.⁵⁴ In earlier Israelite narratives, Yahweh is clearly their god, he is presented as one god among many. One word for God in early Hebrew scriptures, El, derives from older Semitic notions of God. But El, the creator of the world and perhaps its ruler, is also referenced in the Bible, as is Baal, an important Canaanite deity. When Abraham was called out of Mesopotamia by Yahweh, he did not explicitly affirm monotheism. Moreover, it wouldn't make any sense, Clark argues, for God to command the Israelites not to have any Gods before him if they didn't already believe in the existence of other

gods and were at times tempted to follow them.⁵⁵ Other passages in the Bible support the claim that the early Hebrews affirmed polytheism. Following the traditional Masoretic Text, Deut. 32: 8-9 reads, “the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance . . . he fixed the boundaries of the people *according to the number of divine beings* . . . For Yahweh’s portion is his people, Jacob’s allotted heritage.”⁵⁶ According to the Septuagint and the Dead Sea Scrolls, the italicized portion of the aforementioned text is translated as “according to the number of the divine sons,” which suggests that Yahweh is a son of El. Either way, what we have here is a divine council, with El, the most high God, as its presider and Yahweh as his subordinate. Psalm 82 more explicitly acknowledges the existence of other divinities:

God (*elohim*) stands in the divine assembly of El (*adat el*),
 Among the divinities (*elohim*) He pronounces judgment.
 I myself presumed that You are gods,
 Sons of the most High (*Elyon*),
 Yet like humans you will die,
 And fall like any prince.
 Arise, oh God, judge the world;
 For you inherit all the nations.

Clark notes that readings according to which “the divinities” or “gods” are understood to be angelic beings or earthly rulers aren’t plausible because they are out of step with the meanings of the Hebrew terms. He argues that these texts show that early on the Hebrews affirmed both polytheism, the view that many gods exist, and henotheism, the view that many gods exist but only one should be worshiped.⁵⁷

Later, around 700–800 CE, in Isa. 44: 6-8, we find evidence of the unequivocal affirmation of monotheism:

This is what Yahweh says –
 Israel’s King and Redeemer, Yahweh Almighty:
 I am the first and I am the last;
 apart from me there is no God
 You are my witnesses. Is there any God besides me?
 No, there is no other; I know not one.⁵⁸

This passage clearly identifies Yahweh with El. In other passages of Isaiah, Yahweh is shown to engage in providential activity on behalf of the Jewish people in three ways. In Isa. 31:8, Yahweh says he use the armies of other nations as well as natural disasters, such as floods, earthquakes, and famines, as instruments of divine wrath, and in Isa. 9:6 he says that he will send a messianic leader to restore peace and justice.⁵⁹

As in the case of the Hebrews, there is historical-textual evidence in ancient Chinese texts of developments and changes in the Chinese understanding of deities and gods. With regard to the ancient Chinese, prior to the advent of Confucianism, and prior to the development of the naturalist tendencies of Chinese philosophy in general, Clark argues that the historical record (consisting of bronze inscriptions, oracle bones, and texts reliably dated to the Zhou period) supports the claim that the ancient Chinese first accepted polytheism and then later on the existence of a personal, monotheistic deity.⁶⁰ He argues that the Shang affirmed the existence of a high God, Di or Shangdi, who ruled over a host of lesser gods. At the top of the divine hierarchy is Shangdi. In descending order, we find nature powers (such as earth, river, and sun powers), former lords, pre-dynastic ancestors, dynastic ancestors, and dynastic ancestresses. He writes, “The adjective Shang (highest, above, or supreme), indicates that Di is a Celestial Supreme Ruler” who sends disasters or approval to humans.⁶¹

While some argue that Shangdi is a deified human ruler, Clark holds that this is sheer speculation. He argues,

If Shangdi were a deified ancestor, we would expect to find the heavenly realm marked by the kinship relations of the earthly realm. In fact, we find the opposite. The oracle bones show that it was widely believed that the hierarchy of divine beings mediated human access to Shangdi. Because they were denied direct access to Shangdi, people’s intercessions could only be made to Shangdi through the intermediaries of lesser beings, deceased ancestors, and nature deities. Deceased ancestors and nature deities were subjects of the supreme deity and bowed under his authority. The lesser deities were granted some power but that power was delegated by Shangdi, not passed on genetically (as one might expect if the deities were related by kinship). The model of the relationship of Shangdi to the heavenly beings and the *Shang* is more suggestive of bureaucracy and hierarchy than blood kinship. Furthermore, various “creation” myths suggest that Shangdi is the creator of the world, thus preceding, not proceeding from, human beings.⁶²

In a footnote, Clark cites a passage from James Legge’s translation of the *Shijing* (also known as the *Classic of Poetry* or the *Book of Songs*) that pertains to the annual Border sacrifice as it was practiced in the Ming Dynasty, the origins of which traces as far back as 2000 CE. The passage reads:

Of old in the beginning, there was the great chaos, without form and dark. The five elements [planets] had not begun to revolve, nor the sun and moon to shine. You, O Spiritual Sovereign, first divided the grossest parts from the purer. You made heaven. You made earth. You made man. All things with their reproducing power got their being.⁶³

In light of the historical evidence, Clark concludes that we cannot hold that Shangdi was understood by the Shang as merely a deified ancestor. Rather, “Shangdi is a title that depicts the unrivaled, uttermost supremacy of the Highest Spiritual being in the whole universe, both natural and supernatural.”⁶⁴

After the Shang dynasty, we have the Zhou dynasty. For the Zhou, Clark argues, the word “Tian” is used most often to refer to the divine. Clark informs us that the fashionable claim that Tian is an impersonal, natural force is no longer tenable.⁶⁵ He notes that a close study of the relevant texts, namely the *Shijing* and the *Shangshu* (also known as the *Esteemed Documents* or the *Classic of History*) goes to show that this is the case. Clark writes,

In the *Shangshu*, references to Shangdi and Di repeatedly appear, often in the same context as Tian and, moreover, Tian is often a synonym for Shangdi and Di. The *Shangshu* treats Tian as a transcendent, anthropomorphic, providential deity who cares about human welfare as did Shangdi.⁶⁶

Clark argues that “The Great Announcement” text records the activity of a providential God. Briefly, in this text Tian, or Heaven, sends calamities on the people so that the ruler, King Cheng, might restore peace and tranquility to the kingdom. Tian is providentially concerned about and acting on behalf of the people. The language of the text suggests that Tian is another name for Shangdi.⁶⁷

Clark argues that further evidence of Shangdi’s providential concern for the people is found in “The Announcement of the Duke of Shao,” or the *Shao Gao*. He quotes the following passage:

Examining the men of antiquity, there was the founder of the Xia Dynasty. Heaven guided his mind, allowed his descendants to succeed him, and protected them. He acquainted himself with Heaven and was obedient—But in process of time the decree in his favour fell to the ground. So also when we examine the case of Yin. Heaven guided its founder, so that he corrected the errors of Shang, and it protected his descendants. He also acquainted Himself with Heaven and was obedient—But not the decree in favour of him has fallen to the ground. Our king has not come to the throne in his youth—let him not slight the aged or experienced, for it may be said of them that they have studied the virtuous conduct of our ancient worthies, and still more, that they have matured their plans in light of Heaven.⁶⁸

Lastly, in “The Numerous Officers” passage, we read:

The king speaks to this effect—Ye numerous officers who remain from the dynasty of Yin, great ruin came down on Yin from the want of pity in compassionate heaven, and we, the princes of Zhou, received its favoring decree. We

accordingly felt charged with its bright terrors; carried out the punishments which the kings inflict; rightly disposed of the appointment of Yin; and finished the work of God.⁶⁹

According to Clark, we find two models of divine sovereignty in “The Numerous Officers.” On the first model, one according to which humans and God cooperate in order to bring the order of heaven to earth, heaven establishes and preserves human rulers who remain obedient to its laws. Support for this model, Clark argues, is found in the following text:

While Heaven exerted a great establishing influence, preserving and regulating the house of Yin, its sovereigns on their part were humbly careful not to lose the favour of God, and strove to manifest a goodness corresponding to that of Heaven.⁷⁰

According to the second model, “ultimately every providential activity is the manifestation of the hand of God.”⁷¹ One passage in support of this model from “The Numerous Officers” reads thus:

I have heard the saying, “God leads men to tranquil security,” but the sovereign of Xia would not move to such security, whereupon God sent down corrections, indicating his mind to him. (Jie), however, would not be warned by God, but proceeded to greater dissoluteness and sloth and excuses for himself. Then Heaven no longer regarded nor heard him, but disallowed his great appointment, and inflicted extreme punishment.⁷²

In this text, while “God leads men to tranquil security,” he removes that peace and security and sends “extreme punishment” because of Jie’s “dissoluteness and sloth.” Later in the text, the Zhou, having achieved military victory over the Shang and left with nothing more to do, the non-employment of the army is said to be due to “the decree of Heaven.”⁷³

Elsewhere, in his “The Conception of Divinity in Early Confucianism,” assuming the soundness of the argument we just looked at, Clark goes on to argue that we have reason to think that Confucius himself affirmed that “Tian is an anthropomorphic Heavenly Supreme Emperor and an independent, authoritative moral source.”⁷⁴ Since Confucius strove to make his thought align with the great rulers of the Shang and Zhou dynasties, and since the Zhou affirmed the existence of transcendent reality to which humans are morally culpable, it stands to reason that Confucius did, too. Clark argues,

Given the Zhou background and Confucius’ self-confession as a transmitter, we have *prima facie* reason to believe that Confucius, in the fourteen or so times he uses the term “Tian” in a non-idiomatic fashion, aligns his beliefs with those

of the Zhou—holding that Tian is an anthropomorphic Heavenly Supreme Emperor and an independent, authoritative moral source.⁷⁵

For instance, Clark cites *Analects* 7.23. In this text, after a failed assassination attempt on his life, Confucius attributes his virtue to Heaven: “The Master said: ‘It is Heaven itself that has endowed me with virtue. What have I to fear from the likes of Huan Tui?’”⁷⁶ Clark argues that interpreting Tian as an extension of the human community or a natural force makes little sense. Rather, he argues, we should take it that in the text, Confucius’s appeal to Tian “is a confession of his dependence on divine assistance for his moral improvement and to persevere through life’s tribulations.”⁷⁷ Confucius also held that people could incur Tian’s disapproval, too, a view which is supported, Clark argues, by *Analects* 6.28: “The Master had an audience with Nanzi, and Zilu was not pleased. The Master swore an oath, saying, ‘If I have done anything wrong, may Heaven punish me! May Heaven punish me!’” Lastly, Clark maintains that *Analects* 8.19 supports the view that “Confucius endorses the cosmogonic grounding of goodness in Heaven.”⁷⁸ The text reads:

The Master said: “How great was Yao as a ruler! So majestic! It is Heaven that is great, and it was Yao who modeled himself upon it. So vast! Among the common people there were none who were able to find words to describe him. How majestic in his accomplishments, and glorious in cultural splendor!”

Clark points out that Yao is a role model whose goodness derives from Heaven, which alone is great. He concludes, “It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that Tian is god-like in a way that invites comparison to the Western sense.”⁷⁹

Clark goes on to argue against modern scholars, who, despite the textual evidence, deny that Confucius was a theist. The main justification for thinking that he was not a theist, so the argument goes, is that Confucius remained silent when he was asked about his own views on Heaven. *Analects* 5.13: “Zigong said: ‘The Master’s cultural brilliance is something that is readily heard about, whereas one does not get to hear the Master expounding upon the subjects of human nature or the Way of Heaven.’” But, as we have seen in the texts quoted above, Confucius sometimes speaks about Heaven, so we can’t take his silence about the Way of Heaven in this passage to somehow support the view that Confucius denied its existence or was agnostic about its nature. Clark suggests that the reason Confucius didn’t speak about the Way of Heaven in this instance was that Zigong wasn’t “morally or spiritually ready for the higher sort of knowledge of which Heaven and human nature” and “not yet ready to learn of the higher things.”⁸⁰ In short, Confucius didn’t talk to Zigong about Heaven because Zigong lacked wisdom and

“The wise person does not let people go to waste, but he does not waste his words” (*Analects* 14.13).⁸¹ Finally, Clark maintains that Confucius’s decision to remain silent when others ask him questions provides a clue to much of his thinking: namely, that that of which we can’t speak can be seen or shown. Clark writes:

In *Analects* 17.19, we read that Confucius aspired to not speaking, like Heaven:

The Master sighed: “Would that I did not have to speak!”

Zigong said, “If the Master did not speak, then how would we little ones receive guidance from you?”

The Master replied, “What does Heaven ever say? Yet the four seasons are put in motion by it, and the myriad creatures receive their life from it. What does ever Heaven say?”

Heaven does not speak, but through Heaven the entire cosmos is created and ordered. Heaven is silent, but is the moral order of the universe. The way of Heaven may be discovered not by listening to a revelation but only by looking. One can see the heavenly order and the way of heaven: heaven which does not speak but which orders the world. We can learn of Heaven’s principle by seeing not by hearing. By studying all under Heaven, we can discern Heaven’s ways; and Confucius sought to model himself on silent Heaven.⁸²

Here Clark proposes that Confucius’s way of going about talking about matters of importance in religion and ethics is not unlike the early Wittgenstein, who maintained that some facts cannot be put into words but rather make themselves manifest.⁸³

Clark closes with several post-Confucian passages from the *Doctrine of the Mean* suggest that Confucius was a theist. One passage is as follows:

The Master said, “The efficacy (德 *de*) of the gods and spirits is profound. Looking, we do not see them; listening, we do not hear them. And yet they inform events (物 *wu*) to the extent that nothing can be without them. Because of them, the people of the world fast, purify themselves, and put on their finest clothes in carrying out the sacrifices to them. It is as though the air above our heads is suffused with them, and as though they are all around.” *The Book of Songs* says:

The descent of the gods

cannot be fathomed—

How much less can it be ignored.

Such is the way that the inchoate becomes manifest and creativity is irrepressible.⁸⁴

Clark notes that Hall and Ames reject the authenticity of this and other like passages on grounds that the overt appeal to gods and spirits is contrary to Confucius’s views in the *Analects*. Basically, their objection assumes that Confucius didn’t believe in the existence of such things.⁸⁵ But Clark has

argued that the non-theistic reading of the relevant texts is flawed, and apparently based “more on ideology than on the textual evidence.”⁸⁶ Following Hall and Ames at this juncture would be question begging. Clark concludes that we should accept that post-Confucius texts support the view that Confucius, as well as at least one prominent school of Chinese thought, believed “in a transcendent, personal deity.”⁸⁷

Clark’s views about the theistic roots of Confucianism are very much at odds with the majority view and as such his arguments are controversial. Assuming that Clark’s arguments may be found sufficiently convincing by at least some people, however, we may draw some speculative conclusions. Note that we do not make the strong claim that there are any contemporary Confucians who will actually draw these conclusions. We rather make the considerably weaker claim that it might be epistemically possible for some of them to do so. First, Confucians who accept Tien’s Neo-Confucian account of *liangzhi* and who are convinced by our argument that it is not possible to account for how *liangzhi* functions properly in accord with a design plan without a conscious, intentional, and intelligent designer, need not be forced to draw the conclusion that their core Confucian beliefs are unwarranted. Rather they may opt to “return to their roots,” so to speak, and affirm an explicitly theistic version of Confucianism. Making this move, they could readily maintain that *li* is ultimately grounded in God and that God created them in accord with a design plan. Neo-Confucian’s convinced that there is a theistic Confucian tradition could make full use of Plantinga’s religious epistemology. That is, they may affirm Plantinga’s proper functionalism and both the standard Aquinas/Calvin model and a uniquely Confucian extension of it. Again, we don’t claim that any actual Confucians will follow this line of thinking. Whether or not actual Confucians will in fact be moved toward the acceptance of theism by this sort of argument remains, we think, an open question. Nevertheless, if making these sorts of moves is an epistemic possibility for at least some people within the Confucian and Neo-Confucian traditions, then they, too, could make full use of Plantingian religious epistemology. For these reasons, we conclude that, at least in principle, there is a viable Confucian/Neo-Confucian extension of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model.

DAOISM 101

The main text of Daoism, the *Daodejing*, is short, dense, and difficult to interpret. It contains eighty-one short chapters divided into two parts. Attributed to Laozi (who probably wasn’t a real person, but rather a sort of archetype of the Daoist sage), the earliest sections of this composite text may have been written as far back as the sixth century CE. Although earlier versions of the text have been found, modern translations tend to rely on the edition compiled

and edited by Wang Bi (226–249 CE), a highly influential commentator on the *Daodejing*.⁸⁸

Whereas Confucians propose that whenever we recognize a lack of virtue we should formulate and act in accord with rules to cultivate virtue, or *de*, in contrast, Daoists maintain that rule following serves only to hinder and even prevent us from realizing that goal. In their view, social disorder arises when rulers try to impose order on the world, which in turn causes people to forget how to act spontaneously in accord with their own natures rather than allowing order to arise naturally and spontaneously. In Chapter 39 of the *Daodejing*, we read, “when righteousness is lost, there were the [Confucian] rites. The rites are the wearing thin of loyalty and trust, and the beginning of chaos.”⁸⁹ Daoists maintain that when action is natural and spontaneous, things act perfectly in accord with their natures. The Daoist solution to social disorder, then, is that we should dispense with false conceptions of the Dao and allow ourselves to be brought into harmonious relation with others by the operation of the Dao.

Daoists maintain that the Dao is ineffable.⁹⁰ In Chapter 1 of the *Daodejing*, Laozi writes:

The Tao (Way) that can be told of is not the eternal Tao;
The name that can be named is not the eternal name.
The Nameless is the origin of Heaven and Earth.⁹¹

Although ineffable in itself, Dao reveals or manifests itself to us in terms of being and nonbeing and in the forces of *yin* and *yang*. According to Wei-Hsun Fu, the Dao appears to us in guises that genuinely represent the Dao in its various functions. Experiencing the Dao in its various guises makes it possible for us to formulate conceptions of the Dao as absolute, as the Dao ontological ground or origin of all things, and as the Dao transcendent, and the like.⁹²

Daoists maintain that the world is entirely conditioned by the Dao. Laozi, in Chapter 42 of the *Daodejing*, writes:

Tao produced the One.
The One produced the two.
The two produced the three.
And the three produced the ten thousand things.

It is important to read the passage in its original context, for otherwise we may end up terribly misunderstanding its meaning. Wing-Tsit Chan writes that the Chinese commentarial tradition often understands the one to be the original material force, the two to be *yin* and *yang*, the three to be the blending of the original material force with *yin* and *yang*, and the ten thousand things to be “things carrying *yin* and embracing *yang*.”⁹³ This process of production

is “the natural evolution of the simple from the complex without any act of creation.”⁹⁴ By and large, Philipp Ivanhoe agrees with Chan but adds that he takes the Way to be “the most inclusive term designating the hidden, underlying structure of things” and take the one to be an image of the Way, “the closest thing we can have to a picture or representation of the Way.”⁹⁵ He, too, points out that this process was understood naturalistically. According to the tradition, he writes, “There was no creator and the ‘nothing’ out of which things arose is a primal state of undifferentiated vital energy, the state of no things but not absolute nothingness.”⁹⁶

According to Guo Xiang (252–312 CE), a Neo-Daoist scholar and highly influential commentator on the *Daodejing*, Chapter 42 implies that each thing has its own *dao*, its own “what it is to be the sort of thing that it is.” On his view, things are self-produced and self-transformative; each thing carries within it the capacity to realize its own *de*, its “power” or “virtue,” understood in both a moral and non-moral sense. When a thing expresses its *de*, it expresses what it most truly is—that is, it acts in accord with its proprietary *dao*. For example, to speak of the *dao* of the horse is simply to refer to features that are common to horses as such. The *de* of a horse is just its natural characteristic activity, its “energy,” or “spirit,” as it were. The *de* of a horse is manifested when it returns to its original nature, becoming like “uncut wood” (*pu*). According to Zhuangzi, horses thrive when there is no one around to take care of them and suffer ill when people who think they know what’s best for horses try to promote their well-being. Along these lines, in classic passage from Chapter Nine of the *Zhuangzi*, we read:

Here are the horses, with their hooves to tramp over frost and snow and their coats to keep out the wind and cold. Chomping on the grass and drinking the waters, prancing and jumping over the terrain—this is the inborn nature of horses. Even if given fancy terraces and great halls, they would have no use for them. Then along comes Bo Le saying, “I am good at managing horses!” He proceeds to band them, shave them, clip them, bridle them, fetter them with crupper and martingale, pen them in stable and stall—until about a quarter of the horses have dropped dead. Then he starves them, parches them, trots them, gallops them, lines them up neck to neck or nose to tail, tormented by bit and rein in front and whip and spur behind. By then over *half* the horses have dropped dead . . . And this is the same error made by those [rulers] who “govern,” who “manage” the world.⁹⁷

Dao and the *de* are not fundamentally distinct; rather, the *de* of the Dao is its energizing principle, that by which Dao is ultimately harmony and unity itself. On this view, because things are self-transforming, they do not require any supernatural creator or sustainer. A lengthy quote from Brook Ziporyn on this helpfully makes the point clear:

In Guo Xiang's view, there is no creator of the world, no source of the world, no goal of the world, no underlying substance of the world, no metaphysical absolute, no single truth about things, no ultimate value everywhere applicable, no single pattern or principle to things, no one Way that all things follow. The Dao spoken of by Laozi and Zhuangzi is not a word for a putative creator, source, goal, substance, absolute, truth or value, pattern, principle or Way of the World. It is a word for precisely their definitive absence. It is not that there is a Dao about which nothing can be said. Rather, the fact that necessitates the *rejection* of all possible statements about a Dao—of saying anything about a unifying ultimate creator, source, goal, substance, absolute, truth, value, pattern, principle, Way—is the Dao. It is the fact that none of these things exist that actually does what all proposed ways are supposed to do: it lets all things come into being, brings life to things, and gives things their value . . . There is, strictly speaking, not even a creator or source of any individual thing. No one thing produces another. The whole idea of creation of one thing by another is based on a profound mistake, a mistake that is at once both epistemological and moral. The type of cognition that posits “one thing” as opposed to “another” is an outgrowth of a mentality premised on human purpose, which contrasts the way a situation is to the way it ought to be and contrasts the goal of an action to its means. All explanation of why anything is or is not do depends on this kind of cognition. An “explanation” is the positing of an “other”—a cause, purpose, situation, pattern, correlation, fact—that makes “this” do what it does. It is a way of indicating what other thing makes this thing the way it is. But, according to Guo Xiang, whatever goes on ultimately happens for no reason. It is “self-so.” This is not an explanation of why it is as it is. It is rather a rejection of the possibility of offering an explanation of why it is as it is. It is a way of saying simply that it is just as it is, and there is nothing more to say about it.⁹⁸

In effect, Ziporyn's summary of Guo Xiang's views here reads as though it were a commentary on the *Daodejing*, Chapter 37:

The Way does nothing but leaves nothing undone. Should barons and kings be unable to preserve it, the myriad creatures will transform themselves.⁹⁹

Most things manifest their characteristic virtues and in so doing display their propriety *dao* naturally and effortlessly. For example, horses and bamboo do what is natural to them unless prevented from doing so by some force. Led astray by claims to know things that we in fact don't, we magnify our ignorance, misconceive our original nature and our proprietary *dao*, which leads us to fail to express our *de* correctly. Chapter 71 of the *Daodejing* reads,

To know that you do not know is the best. To pretend to know when you do not know is a disease. Only when one recognizes this disease as a disease can one be free from the disease. The sage is free from disease. Because he recognizes this disease as a disease, he is free from it.¹⁰⁰

In keeping with the Daoist prioritization of action over knowledge, following Dao is something one can only know how to do, and this knowledge cannot be put into words. This know-how is not acquired through striving or effort. As Edward Slingerhand puts it, those who follow Dao do so spontaneously in accord with the principle of *wu-wei*, which, literally translated, means “in the absence of/without doing” and is often translated as “doing nothing” or “non-action.”¹⁰¹ That action could somehow be non-action seems paradoxical at best, if not blatantly contradictory. Slingerhand maintains that *wu-wei* action is rendered intelligible if we take it to pertain not to what is being done but rather to the phenomenal state of the actor. Thus understood, the principle of *wu-wei*,

describes a state of personal harmony in which actions flow freely and instantly from one’s spontaneous inclinations—without the need for extended deliberation or inner struggle—and yet nonetheless perfectly in accord with the dictates of the situation at hand.¹⁰²

Following Guo Xiang’s understanding, *wu-wei* action is defined as spontaneous activity that accords with one’s original nature, which is a matter of acting correctly or properly in accord with one’s proprietary *dao*. He writes, “One’s unconscious and spontaneous activity is what is most thoroughly incorporated into him, what is most himself.”¹⁰³ All good things in life, success, happiness, and contentment, are not the result of effort and calculative reasoning, nor are they result of literally doing nothing. Guo Xiang writes, “*Wu wei* does not mean doing nothing and keeping silent. Let everything be allowed to do what it naturally does, so that nature will be satisfied.”¹⁰⁴ Correct action conforms to the natural grain of things, which involves returning to the naturalness of one’s original nature. The key to the solution of the paradox of *wu-wei* is the identification of deliberate and nondeliberate actions: “He who deliberately tries to make himself act deliberately is unable to act deliberately [*weiweizhe buneng wei*]; rather, his deliberate activity is simply spontaneously deliberate activity . . . spontaneous activity is nonactivity; thus activity comes from nonactivity.”¹⁰⁵ Once again, this process of self-transformation is completely naturalistic: Guo Xiang goes to great lengths to deny the existence of any governing transcendent or supernatural reality. He writes, “all forms materialize by themselves . . . everything creates itself without the direction of any Creator. Since things create themselves, they are unconditioned. This is the norm of the universe.”¹⁰⁶ Guo Xiang’s main idea, according to Wing-Tsit Chan, is that “Things exist and transform themselves spontaneously, but each thing has its own principle. Everything is therefore self-sufficient and there is no need for an overall- original reality to combine or govern them.”¹⁰⁷

Daoism is often taken to advocate irrationalism or involve anti-intellectualism. This impression seems to be conveyed in various passages of the *Daodejing*, including the following:

- Chapter 3: In the government of the sage, He keeps their hearts vacuous . . . he always causes his people to be without knowledge (cunning) or desire.
- Chapter 19: Abandon sageliness and discard wisdom; Then the people will benefit a hundredfold.
- Chapter 20: Abandon learning and there will be no sorrow . . . Mine is indeed the mind of an ignorant man, Indiscriminate and dull!
- Chapter 56: He who knows does not speak. He who speaks does not know.
- Chapter 65: He who rules the state through knowledge is a robber of the state; He who rules a state through not knowledge is a blessing to the state.
- Chapter 81: A wise man has no extensive knowledge; He who has extensive knowledge is not a wise man.

According to Littlejohn, these sorts of passages aren't meant to be taken literally but are rather instances of the literary technique of exaggerating to make a point. Interpreted in context, these statements, Littlejohn writes, are intended to get us to realize that "distinctions and concepts by which reason works are of human design and may *mislead* people about the nature of reality."¹⁰⁸ On this view, rather than full-blooded irrationalism, these and other "anti-reason" passages in the *Daodejing* don't show that we should be irrational, but rather make the much weaker claim that overreliance on reason clouds and inhibits correct thinking and action.

Littlejohn goes on to discuss another fundamental Daoist text, the *Zhuangzi*, named after its author, Zhuang Zhou (369–286 CE), also known as Zhuangzi, or Master Zhou. Not much is known about him. All that we know is that he was a native of Meng in the state of Song (present-day Henan Province), born during the Warring States period (403–221 CE), and was a minor official in an undisclosed locale.¹⁰⁹ Littlejohn calls to our attention many passages in the *Zhuangzi* that have epistemological importance. Some illustrate that what people think they know is relative to context; others emphasize that dialectical skill and "winning" at arguments isn't the same thing as getting at truth, that there is no human point of view is totally impartial, and that truth cannot be revealed in language.¹¹⁰ In Book 13, Zhuangzi writes that the learned people of the world think that the Dao can be expressed in words. While he acknowledges that words are valuable for the ideas they convey, Zhuangzi maintains that we can't formulate adequate ideas of the Dao in language. We might say that Zhuangzi would have us avoid the mistake of valuing words themselves and forgetting that which words point us toward.

Critiquing this mindset of the learned, and extending it to sense perception, Zhuangzi writes,

Thus what we look at and can see is (only) the outward form and colour, and we listen to and can hear is (only) names and sounds. Alas! that men of the world should think that form and colour, the name and sound, should be sufficient to give them the real nature of the *Tào*. The form and colour, the name and sound are certainly not sufficient to convey its real nature; and so it is that “the wise do not speak and those who do speak are not wise.” How should the world know that real nature?¹¹¹

Another illustration of the limitations of human knowledge is Zhuangzi’s well-known “dream of being a butterfly” passage.

Once Zhuang Zhou dreamt he was a butterfly, fluttering about joyfully just as a butterfly would. He followed his whims exactly as he liked and knew nothing about Zhuang Zhou. Suddenly he awoke, and there he was, the solid Zhuang Zhou in the flesh. He did not know if Zhou had been dreaming he was a butterfly, or if a butterfly was now dreaming it was Zhou. Surely, Zhou and a butterfly count as two distinct identities! Such is what we call the transformation of one thing into another.¹¹²

Given his views on the limits of language and knowledge, we’d expect Zhuangzi to be an epistemological skeptic or a relativist about truth. For our part, while we do not have space here to discuss the arguments here, we follow Lisa Raphals in thinking that while Zhuangzi makes use of skeptical arguments he does so in a methodological manner, motivated by his concern to get people to be in contact with the *Dao*, and doesn’t affirm epistemological skepticism as a doctrine or way of life, as does Sextus Empiricus.¹¹³ Following Philip J. Ivanhoe, we contend that Zhuangzi “is neither a strong skeptic nor a strong relativist.”¹¹⁴ Ivanhoe argues that Zhuangzi does not deny that there are objective facts about the world, but rather affirms that, very often, we go wrong when we try to acquire intellectual knowledge about it. The source and cause of intellectual error lies neither in the world itself nor our senses, but rather in the state of our minds.¹¹⁵ Furthermore, Ivanhoe argues that because Zhuangzi accepts that we can have intuitive knowledge of things he recognizes something very much like Gilbert Ryle’s distinction between “knowing that” and “knowing how.”¹¹⁶ Along with Ivanhoe, we think that Zhuangzi may also be read as a moderate linguistic skeptic: he is doubtful of linguistic claims about things and our ability to express truths in words, but does not endorse the view that our words in no way track truth, for we are able to use words skillfully in order to come into direct contact with the reality of *Dao* and in so doing act correctly.¹¹⁷ Note that Raphals’s and Ivanhoe’s interpretations of

the nature of Zhuangzi's skepticism are consistent: that is, Zhuangzi could be advancing arguments in line with moderate linguistic skepticism motivated by his concern to get people to be in contact with the Dao.

Even if Daoism doesn't endorse epistemological skepticism or relativism, given its stance that there is no creator and that everything is "self-so," it's hard to see how it could be consistent with Plantingian religious epistemology, let alone how it might be that Daoists could make full use of Plantingian religious epistemology. On the other hand, for the most part, particularly regarding the metaphysical view that the self-transformation of each thing proceeds in accord with its own propriety *dao*, our discussion of Daoism is, perhaps, slanted toward Guo Xiang's naturalistic understanding of things. Perhaps, if we set aside Guo Xiang's staunch naturalistic understanding of the Dao and stick more closely to Zhuangzi's thinking, we will find a form of Daoism that is more compatible with Plantingian religious epistemology. We explore this possibility in the next section.

DAOISM AND PLANTINGIAN RELIGIOUS EPISTEMOLOGY

We now turn to a discussion and evaluation of a paper by Kelly James Clark and Liu Zongkun, namely, "The Polished Mirror: Reflections on Natural Knowledge of the Way in Zhuangzi and Alvin Plantinga." One aim of their paper is to show that Zhuangzi affirms that human cognitive faculties, once they are returned to their original, natural state, enable people to follow things as they are, in accord with the Dao, which involves, the authors argue, a kind immediate natural knowledge of Dao. This manner by which Dao can be known is similar to how Plantinga thinks that belief in God can be properly basic and warranted. To support their claim, the authors introduce and draw some conclusions from a famous passage in Chapter Three of the *Zhuangzi* regarding Cook Ting's skills. In the text, we read that Lord Wen-hui marvels at Cook Ting's ability to cut up oxen so well that his blade hasn't needed to be sharpened in nineteen years. The centrally important part of the passage reads thus:

Cook Ting laid down his knife and replied, "What I care about is the Way, which goes beyond skill. When I first began cutting up oxen, all I could see was the ox itself. After three years I no longer saw the whole ox. And now—now I go at it by spirit and don't look with my eyes. *Perception and understanding have come to a stop and spirit moves where it wants. I go along with the natural makeup, strike in the big hollows, guide the knife through the big openings, and follow things as they are.* So I never touch the smallest ligament or tendon, much less a main joint."¹¹⁸

The authors note that this passage indicates that Zhuangzi maintained that knowledge of reality may be “attained naturally, by intuition or mystical awareness” and that “the proper way of knowing the Dao is the natural way . . . when one’s heart/mind has been returned to its original, natural state.”¹¹⁹ They write:

The Universe and human beings were both born out of the Dao, and the generations and regeneration of the Dao is a natural process. Accordingly, the belief in the Dao is a kind of natural knowledge, based on the natural state of the human mind under the restorative effects of the Dao. When *I go along with the natural makeup* I can *follow things as they are*. This natural state, wherein in one grasp of reality, precinds from the state of cognition that is distorted by the merely human conventions and categories. When my heart/mind is returned to its natural state through the fasting of the mind, I can know (and live in accord with) the Dao.¹²⁰

The authors conclude that, for Zhuangzi, “our knowledge of ultimate reality is produced by a natural impulse or disposition.”¹²¹ Note that the authors don’t consider or argue for anything like the view that Zhuangzi can make full use of Plantingian religious epistemology. They focus on whether belief in the Dao is properly basic. At most, what they say could be extended or elaborated on to defend the view that Zhuangzi affirmed something similar to Plantinga’s proper functionalism.

Given what we’ve argued above, Zhuangzi won’t be able to make use of proper functionalism if his metaphysics is such that it can’t make room for proper function, which requires that human cognitive faculties have design plans that are the products of an intentional creator God. Looking for “deep similarities between God and the Dao”¹²², the authors quote section twelve of the *Zhuangzi*:

In the Great Beginning, there was nonbeing; there was no being, no name. Out of it arose One; there was one, but it had no form. Things got hold of it and came to life, and it was called Virtue. Before things had forms, they had their allotments; these were of many kinds, but not cut off from one another, and they were called fates. Out of the flow and flux, things were born, and as they grew they developed distinctive shapes; these were called forms. The forms and bodies held within them spirits, each with its own characteristics and limitations, and this was called the inborn nature.¹²³

They note that while in this passage the Dao is construed as having “created” and “designed” the world, Zhuangzi didn’t think of the Dao as personal or as having created the universe intentionally. The authors write:

Although the Dao is the primary principle that pervades Heaven (i.e., the sky) and Earth, it is more like nature unpersonified than a divine person. Dao generates and regenerates spontaneously in a natural way and does not rely on motives or sources.¹²⁴

Clearly, this view entails that human cognitive faculties don't have a design plan that is the product of an intentional creator God. Given what Zhuangzi says, we may say speak as though the Dao created and designed us and our cognitive faculties, but these claims are at best highly metaphorical and surely literally false. But we can't account for the proper function of our cognitive faculties unless these claims are literally true. Thus, we conclude that since Zhuangzi can't account for how it is that our cognitive faculties function properly, Zhuangzi can't sustain that claim our knowledge of ultimate reality is produced by a natural impulse or disposition.

At this juncture, it may occur to one that, perhaps, Daoism, too, has theistic roots and that as such it may be possible, at least in principle, that some Daoists may make a movement toward theism in order to account for the proper function of their cognitive faculties. Again, it is purely speculative whether any actual Daoists will find this line of thinking at all plausible or compelling. But it is worth considering whether there is reason to think that there are resources internal to Daoist traditions for endorsing theism, or something like it. If there are, then it would seem in principle possible for some Daoists to account for how human cognitive faculties have genuine design plans that are produced by an intentional creator God. Those who are familiar only with the "philosophical" Daoism of Laozi and Zhuangzi may be surprised to find out that there are "religious" branches of Daoism that accept the existence of gods, some of which accept the existence of Taiyi, the Supreme Lord or Great One, who is understood as both personal and creator.

According to Julia Ching, the roots of religious Daoism stretch back the founding of the Heavenly Masters Sect during the second-century Han Dynasty.¹²⁵ According to this sect, Laozi appeared in 142 CE to correct people's disrespect for the world, and ordained Chang Lin as founder and leader of the new movement. This sect established many rituals and services, and also introduced a formal priesthood. Hymns were written, visions received, and eschatological hopes were offered to those who followed Chang Lin and his hereditary priestly lineage. The Heavenly Masters Sect maintained that Laozi's new advent would "establish a reign of peace and equity for the elect, the very 'pure.'"¹²⁶ Ching discusses various branches of Daoism looked to elixirs and alchemy and to various kinds of meditative practices, in hopes of achieving immortality. According to Ching, this quest for immortality "hides within itself a quest for transcendence."¹²⁷ This search lead them to a Daoist conception of salvation, namely, that of striving to

become like God, to become whole and to overcome human weakness and sickness, which came to be associated with committing sin against a deity. This branch of Daoism, Ching writes, “is a salvation religion which seeks to guide its believers beyond this transitory life to a happy eternity. There is a belief in an original state of bliss, followed by a fallen state. And there is reliance on supernatural powers for help and protection.”¹²⁸ Regarding their belief in the supernatural, Ching writes:

Taoists [belonging to this sect] believe in the supernatural, not only as *powers* but also as *beings*. I refer to their belief in a hierarchy of gods—including mythical figures, and many divinized human beings, under the supremacy of the highest deity . . . called T'ai-yi / Taiyi (Great One).¹²⁹

On this way of thinking, the Dao is not merely an abstract productive force, but a personal being. In effect, this branch of Daoism identifies the Dao with T'ai-yi / Taiyi, taking it to be a personal, creator being.

There is further evidence in favor of there being a theistic branch of Daoism. In 1993, several bamboo-slip manuscripts dating back to around 300 CE were found in China's Hubei Province, among them, the *Taiyi Sheng Shui / Da Yi Sheng Shui*, or “The Great One Gives Birth to the Waters.” These texts are important because they shed important light on Daoist cosmologies. Translated by Sarah Allan, slips 1–8 read:

The Great One produced water (*Da Yi sheng shui* 大一生水). The water, on return, assisted (*fu*) the Great One, thus forming (*cheng* 成) the sky (*tian* 天). The sky, returning, assisted the Great One, thus forming the earth (*di* 地). The sky and earth again assisted one another (1), thus forming the numinous and the luminous (*shen ming* 神明). The numinous and the luminous again assisted one another, thus forming *yin* and *yang* (陰陽). *Yin* and *yang* again assisted one another, thus forming the four seasons (*si shi* 四). The four seasons (2) again assisted one another, thus forming cold and heat (*cang ran* 倉然). Cold and heat again assisted one another, thus forming moisture and aridity (*shi zao* 濕燥). Moisture and aridity again assisted one another, formed a year (3) and that was all.

Therefore, a year is that which moisture and aridity produced. Moisture and aridity are that which cold and heat produced. Cold and heat are that which the four seasons produced. The four seasons (4) are that which *yin* and *yang* produced. *Yin* and *yang* are that which the numinous and the luminous produced. The numinous and the luminous are that which the sky and earth produced. Sky and earth (5) are that which the Great One produced. For this reason, the Great One hides in (*cang* 藏) water and moves with the seasons. Circling and [beginning again, it takes itself as] (6) the mother of the myriad living things. Waning and waxing, it takes itself as the guideline of the myriad living things. It is what the sky cannot exterminate, what the earth (7) cannot bury, that which *yin* and *yang* cannot form. The gentleman who knows this is called [a sage]. (8)¹³⁰

While we can't get into the details of the here, Allan argues that archeological and intertextual evidence supports that claim that these bamboo slips, found bundled with the passages from the *Daodejing*, should be regarded as a single work, evidence which supports the contention that bamboo-slip texts "were compiled from a common source of material shared with the *Daodejing* before it reached its current form."¹³¹ If she is right, we have reason for thinking that, "whereas modern scholarship makes a strict distinction between 'religious' and 'philosophical' Daoism, it is clear that such a distinction was not made in traditional China."¹³² Allan goes on to argue that "The Great One" is a personal creator. She writes,

The cosmogony begins with the statement that "The Great One produced water." The first character, transcribed as *tai* 太 in the *Guodian Chu mu zhujian*, is actually written as *da* 大 on the bamboo slips, as noted above. *Tai* (*Da*) means "ancestral" as well as "great," and the epithet designates the first ancestor of a lineage, as in *taizu* 太祖, or *taiwang* 太王—the founding king's father. Thus, *Tai* (*Da*) *Yi* is the "Ancestral" or "Grand" One—the ultimate ancestor who was the progenitor of the sky and earth.¹³³

After arguing that the Great One was identified not only with the Dao but also with the Pole Star,¹³⁴ Allan writes:

The Great One was the Pole Star—the source of the celestial river from which the sky, earth, and all else was produced—and its spirit. This spirit, at least in some traditions, was female, and she was the source of the celestial river from which everything formed.¹³⁵

We realize that Allan's claims are highly controversial, and that there are various naturalistic interpretations of the bamboo-slip texts. Very briefly, Wen Xing appears to acknowledge Allan's reading of slips 1–8, in that he recognizes that a slip contains an instance of the term "*sheng*" which is used to indicate one thing giving birth to another.¹³⁶ But he goes on to argue that other of the bamboo slips use "*sheng*" to indicate "the self-generating-and-self-arising-*sheng* of Qi."¹³⁷ In these other texts, there are passages that seem to indicate a kind of cyclical operation of "*sheng*" such that "returning" is closely associated with "giving birth," operations which seem to have naturalistic connotations.¹³⁸ Apparently, the interpretation of these other texts should temper our reading of slips 1–8. Thomas Michael appears to favor the view that we should read the relevant passages in the *Taiyi Sheng Shui* metaphorically.¹³⁹ While Yong-yun Lee agrees with some of Allan's insights, he disagrees with her conclusions. He writes:

while many of the *Taiyi sheng shui*'s terms and expressions may have been derived from contemporary cults and customs, the author(s) of the *Taiyi sheng*

shui did not necessarily intend to carry over any of these possible religious and spiritual associations into the text. Rather, the author(s) seem to have deliberately and consistently removed religious and spiritual facets from the text. This can be shown by examining the text's historical context alongside several trends among thinkers of the Warring States period.¹⁴⁰

In light of these criticisms, we don't endorse the accuracy of Allan's reading of the *Taiyi Sheng Shui*, and we reserve judgment about whether early Daoism really was theistic. Nevertheless, the arguments in this section do show, we contend, that some people who are members of a "religious" branch Daoism may deem that is plausible to understand the Dao as being identified in some way with the personal creator deity T'ai-yi / Taiyi. Those for whom this is an epistemic possibility may in principle agree with Clark's and Zong-kun's claim that if Daoism is true, then "our knowledge of ultimate reality is produced by a natural impulse or disposition"¹⁴¹ and come the conclusion that Daoist belief can be properly basic and warranted for Daoists. They may also be in the position to provide a metaphysical account of how it is that their cognitive faculties function properly in accord with a design plan given to them by a personal creator God. Moreover, provided that there is nothing preventing them from doing so, they may (at least in principle) go on to accept the standard Aquinas/Calvin model as well as some uniquely Daoist extension of it. To be clear, this argument is hypothetical in nature; we don't make the strong claim that there are any actual Daoists who are or would be inclined to make these various moves. Nevertheless, for all we know, there could be. In any case, it is a very interesting conclusion that making these moves just might be epistemically possible for some members of at least some branches of Daoism.

CONCLUSION

After a summary of Chinese metaphysics and epistemology, and a closer look at Confucianism, we interacted with Tien's claim that Wang's Neo-Confucianism can both be glossed in proper functionalist terms and can use Plantinga's epistemology to be warranted. We argued that Tien failed to recognize the problem with Neo-Confucianism in accounting for Plantinga's design plan requirements. However, we showed that if Clark's arguments are sound, then there is a viable theistic branch of Confucian thinking. That this is so, we argued, shows how it could be epistemically possible for Confucians who find Tien's case for warranted Neo-Confucian belief convincing and recognize its inability to account for how it could be that the *liangzhi* has a design plan to go on to accept the existence of a creator God who is

responsible for the proper functioning of our cognitive faculties, including the *liangzhi*. After a close look at Daoism, we considered Clark's and Zongkun's case for thinking that Zhuangzi can account for a kind of natural knowledge of the Dao. This was doubtful, we argued, given the naturalistic metaphysics of Guo Xiang and Zhuangzi. But, taking another look at other religious branches of Daoism, we argued that if Allan's understanding of the *Taiyi Sheng Shui* is correct, then similar moves may be open to some Daoists, too. While we acknowledge that our argument is somewhat tenuous, it nevertheless seems right to conclude that, in principle, there are (or at least there could be) viable extensions of the Aquinas/Calvin model for at least some theistic branches of Confucianism and Daoism that cover Confucian and Daoist belief, respectively.

In closing, we fill in our argument schema introduced for Neo-Confucianism and Daoism.

- (1) The members of Neo-Confucianism and Daoism can make full use of Plantingian religious epistemology *if and only if* they are the beneficiaries of intellectual and conceptual resources internal to Neo-Confucianism and Daoism which are necessary and sufficient for the articulation of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model as well as uniquely Neo-Confucian and Daoist extensions of it.
- (2) The members of Neo-Confucianism and Daoism are beneficiaries of conceptual resources necessary for the articulation of standard Aquinas/Calvin and uniquely Neo-Confucian or Daoist extensions of it *if and only if* (a) the central and formative doctrinal teachings of Neo-Confucianism and Daoism entail or suggest (I) the Dependency Thesis, (II) The Design Thesis, and (III) the Immediacy Thesis, and unique analogues of (IV) the Internal Inspiration of the Holy Spirit Thesis and (V) the Scriptural Revelation Thesis, and (b) the metaphysical claims and/or presuppositions of Neo-Confucianism and Daoism are fully compatible with (I)-(III) and in no way preclude theses relevantly analogous to (IV) and (V).
- (3) It's not true that both (a) nor (b) of (2) hold for classical Neo-Confucianism and Daoism, for the central teachings of Neo-Confucianism and Daoism are logically inconsistent with (I)-(III) and Neo-Confucianism and Daoism cannot account for the preconditions that make Plantinga's theory of warrant intelligible.
- (4) However, if there are (or were or could be) theistic branches of Neo-Confucianism and Daoism, then the problems in (3) would not arise and both (a) and (b) of (2) would hold for the members of these theistic traditions.
- (5) But it is doubtful that there are (or were or could be) theistic branches of Neo-Confucianism and Daoism, for while there is some reason to think

that there are (or were or could be) theistic branches of Neo-Confucianism and Daoism, that claim highly controversial and, in any case, it's doubtful that (very many) contemporary Neo-Confucians or Daoists would be motivated to return to their purportedly theistic roots at the present time.

- (6) Thus, in all likelihood, the members of Neo-Confucian and Daoist traditions are not the beneficiaries of intellectual and conceptual resources internal to Neo-Confucianism and Daoism which are necessary and sufficient for the articulation of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model as well as uniquely Neo-Confucian and Daoist extensions of it. [From (2) to (5)]
- (7) Thus, in all likelihood, the members of Neo-Confucian and Daoist traditions can't make full use of Plantingian religious epistemology. [From (1) and (6)]

NOTES

1. JeeLoo Liu, *An Introduction to Chinese Philosophy: From Ancient Philosophy to Chinese Buddhism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006), 3.

2. *Ibid.*, 2.

3. *Ibid.*, 2.

4. Ronnie Littlejohn, *Chinese Philosophy: An Introduction* (London and New York: I. B. Tauris, 2016), 10.

5. *Ibid.*, 13.

6. See Lao Tzu, *Daodejing* Chapters 19 and 63. Unless otherwise noted, we reference *The Daodejing of Laozi*, translation and commentary by Philip J. Ivanhoe (New York: Seven Bridges Press, 2002).

7. See *Daodejing* Chapter 67.

8. Robin R. Wang, *Yinyang: The Way of Heaven and Earth in Chinese Thought and Culture*, (New York: Wiley-Blackwell, 2004), 84.

9. *Ibid.*, 86–89, 96–119.

10. Rošker, Jana, "Epistemology in Chinese Philosophy," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2017 Edition), ed. Edward N. Zalta, accessed July 25, 2018, <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2017/entries/chinese-epistemology>.

11. David Hall, "The Way and Truth," *A Companion to World Philosophy*, eds. Elliot Deutsch and Ron Bontekoe (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Company, 1999), 215.

12. Chris Fraser, "Knowledge and Error in Early Chinese Thought," *Dao: A Journal of Comparative Philosophy* 10, no. 2 (2011): 132.

13. *Ibid.*, 146–147.

14. Rošker, "Epistemology in Chinese Philosophy."

15. Confucius, *Analects* 11.3.

16. *Ibid.*, 13.3. This translation is from Confucius, *Analects: With Selections from Traditional Commentaries*, trans. Edward Slingerland (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2003), 139. All selections from the *Analects* are from this translation unless otherwise noted.

17. See *Zhuangzi: The Essential Writings, with Selections from the Traditional Commentaries*, trans. Brook Ziporyn (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2009), 64, 65.
18. Rošker, "Epistemology in Chinese Philosophy."
19. Harrison, *Eastern Philosophy*, 101.
20. *Ibid.*, 103.
21. *Ibid.*, 102.
22. *Ibid.*, 105.
23. *Ibid.*, 107.
24. P. J. Ivanhoe and B. Van Norden, *Readings in Classical Chinese Philosophy* (New York: Seven Bridges Press, 2001), 2.
25. William De Bary, *Neo-Confucian Orthodoxy and the Learning of the Mind-and-Heart* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981), 2.
26. Quoted in *ibid.*, 9.
27. Carsun Chang, "Wang Yang-Ming's Philosophy," *Philosophy East and West* 5, no. 1 (1955): 3.
28. *Ibid.*
29. *Ibid.*, 3–4.
30. *Ibid.*, 4.
31. *Ibid.*
32. *Ibid.*, 6.
33. *Ibid.*
34. Littlejohn, *Chinese Philosophy: An Introduction*, 101.
35. *Ibid.*
36. *Ibid.*, 102.
37. David W. Tien, "Warranted Neo-Confucian Belief: Religious Pluralism and the Affections in the Epistemologies of Wang Yangming (1472–1529) and Alvin Plantinga," *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 55, no. 4 (2004): 35.
38. *Ibid.*, 31.
39. *Ibid.*, 32.
40. *Ibid.*, 35.
41. *Ibid.* 35, 36.
42. *Ibid.*, 33.
43. *Ibid.*, 35.
44. *Ibid.*, 35–36.
45. *Ibid.*
46. We engaged with an Aristotelian or Thomistic approach of using natures to ground proper function in chapter 2. Our argument there could be used to support our claim here.
47. Quoting Wang, Tien writes, "Knowing . . . is the conscious aspect . . . of *li*. If one speaks of it as master [of the body], one calls it mind." (Tien, "Warranted Neo-Confucian Belief, 32.)
48. Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, 1, q.3, a.4; 1, q.3, a.7.
49. *Ibid.*, 1, q.13, a.5.
50. *Ibid.*, 1, 13, a.12.

51. Hughes Gerard, *The Nature of God: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 66.
52. O. P. James Brent, "God's Knowledge and Will," *The Oxford Handbook of Aquinas* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 160.
53. Plantinga defends something like this view, minus the view that God is absolutely simple. See Plantinga, "Divine Knowledge," 40–65.
54. Kelly James Clark, "The Gods of Abraham, Isaiah, and Confucius," *Dao: A Journal of Comparative Philosophy* 5, no. 1 (2005): 109–110.
55. *Ibid.*, 114.
56. *Ibid.*, 114.
57. *Ibid.*, 116.
58. *Ibid.*
59. *Ibid.*, 118–119.
60. *Ibid.*, 120.
61. *Ibid.*
62. *Ibid.*, 121.
63. *Ibid.*, 120 fn. 20.
64. *Ibid.*, 121–122.
65. *Ibid.*, 122.
66. *Ibid.*, 123.
67. *Ibid.*, 124–125.
68. *Ibid.*, 128. The quoted text is from James Legge, *The Chinese Classics, Vol. III: The Shoo King* (London: Triibner Co., 1865), XII. 11–12.
69. *Ibid.*, 128. The quoted text is from Legge, *The Chinese Classics*, XIV. 2.
70. See *ibid.*, XIV.8.
71. Clark, "The Gods of Abraham, Isaiah, and Confucius," 128.
72. *Ibid.*, 129. The quote is from Legge, *The Chinese Classics*, xiv. 5.
73. See Legge, *The Chinese Classics*, xiv. 5.
74. Kelly James Clark, "The Conception of Divinity in Early Confucianism," in *Dialogue of Philosophes, Religions, and Civilizations in the Era of Globalization*, ed. Zhao Dunhua, volume 25, *Chinese Philosophical Studies* (Washington, DC: The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 2007), 48.
75. *Ibid.*, 49.
76. All quotes are from Confucius, *Analects*.
77. Clark, "The Conception of Divinity in Early Confucianism," 49.
78. *Ibid.*
79. *Ibid.*
80. *Ibid.*, 51, 52.
81. *Ibid.*, 52.
82. *Ibid.*, 53
83. *Ibid.*
84. *Ibid.*, 56.
85. See David Hall and Roger Ames, *Thinking Through Confucius* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1978), 42–43, 144.
86. *Ibid.*, 56.

87. *Ibid.*, 58.
88. See *The Daodejing of Laozi*, translation and commentary by Philip J. Ivanhoe (New York: Seven Bridges Press, 2002), xv–xvii and JeeLoo Liu, *An Introduction to Chinese Philosophy: From Ancient Philosophy to Chinese Buddhism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006), 131–132.
89. *The Daodejing of Laozi*, 41.
90. Some of the substantive content in the next few paragraphs derive from, with considerable adaptation, Erik Hanson and Erik Baldwin, “Grounding a Transcendental Ethic of Love: Kierkegaard and Daoism,” *Kinesis* 35, no. 2 (2008): 7–20.
91. Unless otherwise noted, translations of the *Daodejing* are from Wing-Tsit Chan, *A Sourcebook in Chinese Philosophy* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1963).
92. Wei-Hsun Fu, “Lao Tzu’s Conception of the Dao,” *Inquiry: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Philosophy* 16, no. 1–4 (1973): 384.
93. Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, 161.
94. *Ibid.*
95. *The Daodejing of Laozi*, 91.
96. *Ibid.*, 92.
97. Zhuangzi, *Zhuangzi: The Essential Writings*, 60–61.
98. Brook Ziporyn, “Guo Xiang: The Self-So and the Repudiation-Cum-Reaffirmation of Deliberate Action and Knowledge,” in *Dao Companion to Daoist Philosophy*, ed. Xiaogan Liu, Dao Companions to Chinese Philosophy (New York and London: Springer, 2015), 420–421.
99. *The Daodejing of Laozi*, translation and commentary by Philip J. Ivanhoe (New York: Seven Bridges Press, 2002).
100. Wing-Tsit Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, 172.
101. Edward Slingerland, “Effortless Action: The Chinese Spiritual Ideal of Wu-Wei,” *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 68, no. 2 (2000): 295.
102. *Ibid.*, 300.
103. Brook Ziporyn, *The Penumbra Unbound: The Neo-Taoist Philosophy of Guo Xiang* (New York: State University of New York Press, 2003), 78.
104. In Barry Allen, *Vanishing Into Things* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2015), 117.
105. Ziporyn, *The Penumbra Unbound*, 40.
106. In Wing-Tsit Chan, *Chinese Philosophy: A Source Book*, 330–331.
107. *Ibid.*, 317.
108. Littlejohn, *Chinese Philosophy: An Introduction*, 76.
109. Ziporyn, *Zhuangzi*, vii.
110. Littlejohn, *Chinese Philosophy: An Introduction*, 77–78.
111. James Legge, *The Texts of Taoism: Part I*, trans. James Legge (New York: Dover, 1962), 343.
112. Ziporyn, *Zhuangzi*, 21.
113. Lisa Raphals, “Skeptical Strategies in the *Zhuangzi* and *Theaetetus*,” *Philosophy East and West* 44, no. 3 (1994): 501–526.

114. Philip J. Ivanhoe, "Zhuangzi on Skepticism, Skill, and the Ineffable Dao," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 61, no. 4 (1992): 640.
115. *Ibid.*, 642.
116. *Ibid.*, 648. See also Gilbert Ryle, "Knowing How and Knowing That: The Presidential Address," *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 46, no. 1 (1945–1946): 1–16.
117. Ivanhoe, "Zhuangzi on Skepticism, Skill, and the Ineffable Dao," 650–652.
118. Ziporyn, *Zhuangzi*, 22. Emphasis added by the authors Clark and Zongkun.
119. Kelly James Clark and Liu Zongkun, "The Polished Mirror: Reflections on Natural Knowledge of the Way in Zhuangzi and Alvin Plantinga," in *Chinese Philosophy in an Era of Globalization*, ed. R. Robin Wang (Albany: SUNY Press, 2004), 174.
120. *Ibid.*, 174–175.
121. *Ibid.*, 180.
122. *Ibid.*, 165.
123. This passage is from Watson Burton, translator, *The Complete Works of Chuang Tzu* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1968), 131.
124. Clark and Zongkun, "The Polished Mirror," 165.
125. Julia Ching, *Chinese Religions* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis, 1993), 103.
126. *Ibid.*, 104.
127. *Ibid.*, 113.
128. *Ibid.*
129. *Ibid.*
130. Sarah Allan, "The Great One, Water, and the Laozi: New Light from Guodian," *T'oung Pao*, Second Series 89, no. 4/5 (2003): 261.
131. *Ibid.*, 253.
132. *Ibid.*, 285.
133. *Ibid.*, 262.
134. *Ibid.*, 251–252.
135. *Ibid.*, 283.
136. Wen Xing, "Early Daoist Thought in Excavated Bamboo Slips," in *Dao Companion to Daoist Philosophy*, ed. Xiaogan Liu, *Dao Companions to Chinese Philosophy* (New York and London: Springer, 2015), 115.
137. *Ibid.*
138. *Ibid.*, 115–119.
139. Thomas Michael, *The Pristine Dao: Metaphysics in Early Daoist Discourse* (New York: State University of New York Press, 2005), 23–25.
140. Yong-yun Lee, "A Naturalistic Understanding of Taiyi Sheng Shui's 太一生水 Cosmology," 2010 Creel-Luce Paleography Workshop, The University of Chicago, Sunday, April 25, 2010.
141. Clark and Zongkun, "The Polished Mirror," 180.

Part III

**THE PROSPECTS FOR
PLANTINGIAN RELIGIOUS
EPISTEMOLOGY IN NON-
CHRISTIAN RELIGIONS II: THE
ABRAHAMIC RELIGIONS**

Chapter 9

Judaism

Having surveyed a host of Eastern traditions, we begin the next phase of our book. In these next couple of chapters, we survey two of the three mainline traditions which find their origin in Abraham, the patriarch of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. While excluding Christianity from our engagement, we interact with both Judaism and Islam in order to determine whether these traditions can provide the resources that are necessary to make full use of Plantinga's religious epistemology. The prior probability of these traditions being able to utilize Plantinga's epistemology is high. The reasons for this are obvious. Christianity shares much in common with both Judaism and Islam. At least at first glance, there doesn't seem to be any reason to maintain that any of the central theses articulated in the first part of our project fail to hold for these religious traditions. However, as we have seen in chapter 6 with the theistic Hindu traditions, there may be doctrines essential to Judaism or Islam which might unexpectedly prevent them from being able to make full use of Plantingian religious epistemology.

We begin by giving a brief overview of Judaism. We then explain the nature of belief within contemporary orthodox Judaism. Third, we discuss some of the traditions and doctrines within Judaism that most closely resemble the idea of a *sensus divinitatis*. Fourth, we develop a specifically Jewish extension of the extended Aquinas/Calvin model. Finally, we articulate and then engage an objection to the extended Jewish model which we will propose.

JUDAISM 101

At the heart of Judaism is the Torah, the first five books of the Tanakh, also called the Pentateuch. Christians know these books as Genesis, Exodus,

Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. What lies at the heart of the Torah is the Shema: “HEAR, O ISRAEL: THE LORD OUR GOD, THE LORD IS ONE.”¹ The Torah both depicts the history of God’s relationship with the Jewish people and the laws that even present-day Jews must follow. The Torah starts with the first man and woman in paradise. This of course shows that God has been with humanity from the very beginning and that He intended only good for them. But, as we read on, we see that humanity didn’t obey God, and that, as a result, humanity was kicked out of the garden which God had called him to tend. The beginning of Genesis leaves the reader wondering what God will do to make everything right.

The Torah eventually moves past the picture of the original state to God’s calling Abram and Sarai out of the land of Ur. God makes this infertile couple a promise. We are told that Abram will become the father of many nations. Eventually, Abraham and Sarah (formerly known as Abram and Sarai) beget Isaac who then begets Jacob. Jacob, who is later called Israel, has twelve sons whose progeny become the twelve tribes of Israel. As the story goes, Jacob’s progeny ends up enslaved in the land of Egypt and it looks like God’s promise to Abraham has been forgotten. However, God raises up Moses, a member of the Israelite clan, who fortuitously, was raised as a son of Pharaoh. After several warnings accompanied by seven plagues, Moses finally leads the Israelites out of the land of Egypt. Upon leaving Egypt, however, due to their unbelief, the Israelites become lost in the wilderness for forty years. Moses eventually dies and is succeeded by Joshua, who then leads the Israelites into the promise land.

Traditionally, the Torah was thought to have been written by Moses, however, the contemporary view of scholarship suggests that it is the product of several different sources, each source representing a different community. The Torah contains 613 commandments and it is by following these commandments that one can be considered as a truly observant Jew. Of course, even the most observant Jews cannot follow all of the 613 commandments, since these commandments assume a functioning temple, Levitical priesthood, and sacrificial system. Currently, none of these exist. The Rabbinic tradition has instead relied on the Talmud, a Rabbinic tradition which consists of an oral law [*Mishneh*] and commentary on the oral law [*Gemara*] to inform how observant Jews can remain faithful without a functioning temple and priesthood.

Given that, historically, Christianity came from a Jewish sect, the depiction of God in Judaism is similar to the depiction that is given in Christianity. God is omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, and omnibenevolent. He is a God who is concerned with even the smallest actions of humanity. He is interested in performing miracles and in communicating with humanity by

way of prophets. While Rabbinic Judaism recognizes that God hasn't spoken to His people, at least in the same way that He spoke to His people in the Tanakh, faithful Jews await the coming of the Messiah, a descendant of Abraham, who will bring everlasting peace to the world, once and for all. The great Jewish theologian Moses Maimonides summarizes the fundamentals of Judaism best, by articulating the following thirteen tenets:

1. I believe with perfect faith that the Creator, blessed be his name, is the Author and Guide of everything that has been created, and that he alone has made, does make, and will make all things.
2. I believe with perfect faith that the Creator, blessed be his name, is a Unity, and that there is no unity in any manner like unto his, and that he alone is our God, who was, is, and will be.
3. I believe with perfect faith that the Creator, blessed be his name, is not a body, and that he is free from all the accidents of matter, and that he has not any form whatsoever.
4. I believe with perfect faith that the Creator, blessed be his name, is the first and the last.
5. I believe with perfect faith that to the Creator, blessed be his name, and to him alone, it is right to pray, and that it is not right to pray to any being besides him.
6. I believe with perfect faith that all the words of the prophets are true.
7. I believe with perfect faith that the prophecy of Moses our teacher, peace be unto him, was true, and that he was the chief of the prophets, both of those that preceded and of those that followed him.
8. I believe with perfect faith that the whole Law, now in our possession, is the same that was given to Moses our teacher, peace be unto him.
9. I believe with perfect faith that this Law will not be changed, and that there will never be any other law from the Creator, blessed be his name.
10. I believe with perfect faith that the Creator, blessed be his name, knows every good deed of the children of men, and all their thoughts, as it is said, It is he that fashioneth the hearts of them all, that giveth to all their deeds.
11. I believe with perfect faith that the Creator, blessed be his name, rewards those that keep his commandments, and punished those that transgress them.
12. I believe with perfect faith in the coming Messiah, and, though he may tarry, I will wait daily for his coming.
13. I believe with perfect faith that there will be a resurrection of the dead at the time when it shall please the Creator, blessed be his name, and exalted be the remembrance of him for ever and ever!²

JUDAISM AND THE NATURE OF BELIEF

Before we can thoroughly discuss whether Jewish belief can be properly basic or warranted apart from argumentation, we must first tackle the nature of belief within Judaism. Orthodox analytic philosopher, Samuel Lebens, asserts that the following theses about belief as it pertains to Judaism:

- (1) Even when the religious Jew believes in a proposition, belief is not enough to characterize the situation. The religious Jew doesn't just believe; he/she also tries to make-believe.
- (2) Belief is an impoverished notion; much of our most important religious knowledge isn't mediated by belief.
- (3) There are many situations in which the religious Jew doesn't have to believe at all, but he/she still has to make-believe.³

In reference to (1), while recognizing that belief is essential to Judaism, Lebens argues that it isn't enough. A faithful Jew must also participate in make-belief. Make-belief doesn't necessarily entail that a belief is false, for example, you can try to experience the world moving around the sun at 100,000 km/h.⁴ It isn't false that the earth is moving around the sun at this speed, but there is something that is experiential in nature, which goes beyond belief when you try to do this. How would one participate in make-belief as it pertains to Scripture? Consider an example from Exod. 20:2-3: "I am the LORD thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before me."⁵ When reading this passage, the individual reader of the Torah not only needs to believe that God told the people of Israel to make Him their God but needs to make God her God as well. She needs to make-believe that God is telling her to do this very thing. That is, she must not only hold to the belief that God is God, she must try to experience the content of that belief herself.⁶

Moving on to (2), Lebens argues that belief is an impoverished notion for religious knowledge. This has to do with Leben's view that there is both propositional knowledge and nonpropositional knowledge.⁷ Given a standard account of belief, namely, that to have a belief is to affirm a proposition, belief wouldn't be necessary for religious knowledge that is nonpropositional in nature. And this is important for Lebens, given that he thinks that some of the most important knowledge a Jew can have is nonpropositional in nature.

Lastly, in reference to (3), Lebens argues that a Jew need not just participate in make-belief for true propositions but also false ones, as this can lead to a more holistic and righteous view of the world.⁸ For example, on Cedar night, Jewish parents tell their children (as Deut. 6:21 commands them to do),

“We were slaves in Egypt. And the Lord our God took us out from there with a strong hand and an outstretched arm.” Lebens states:

Do contemporary Jews really believe that however many thousands of years after the fact, they would still have been slaves to Pharaoh? There is no Pharaoh, there’s not even a Mubarak, anymore. So, do they really believe that they’d still be slaves to Pharaoh? Do they really believe that had they stayed enslaved, the only political institutions in the history of man to have lasted for that many millennia would have been the Pharaonic ones, which would still be going strong? This all seems highly unlikely. But, then, later on in the *Haggada*, we read that “In every generation, a person is obliged to regard himself as if he had come out of Egypt.” *As if*. The task isn’t to believe; the task is to make-believe.⁹

So, as one can see, Judaism has a unique perspective on belief and its role in religious knowledge. While having a belief that Judaism is true is not a sufficient condition for being a faithful Jew, and while mere belief should be considered an impoverished notion for being a faithful Jew, nonetheless, it is still a necessary condition. And because of this, a faithful Jew should be concerned with how her belief can be warranted. The question remains to be explored on whether Judaism can account for the preconditions that make Plantinga’s epistemology intelligible. It is to this that we now turn.

TRUTH-AIMED BELIEF DOXASTIC PRACTICES AND PROPER FUNCTION IN JUDAISM

Cass Fisher has written a great deal arguing against the view that Jewish thinking is inherently anti-theological. In his “Jewish Philosophy: Living Language and Its Limits,” he tells us of his Jewish upbringing and identity, and of some of the fundamental difficulties and problems that Jewish philosophers must address. Among them is the view that Jewish thinking is primarily liturgical and anti-theological. While he accepts the critique of philosophers who fail to respect the limits of human understanding, he rejects the recent trend of anti-theology in Judaism, contending that Jewish thinkers have gone too far in modifying their views about theology to fit with modern conceptions. He maintains that this anti-theology bent isn’t inherent to the Jewish tradition, and argues that, given that they are concerned with truth and with acquiring an understanding of all of the facets of their faith, Jews cannot ignore the cognitive components of their tradition.¹⁰

Toward this end, in *Contemplative Nation: A Philosophical Account of Jewish Theological Language*, Fisher provides a model of Jewish theological language to account for and shed light on the importance of theological

reflection and theology as it pertains to the religious practices of Jewish people. In doing so, he provides an outline of a Jewish epistemology that is adequate for the articulation of his model. His immediate goal is to provide for a hermeneutical orientation that shows how speaking about God is both meaningful and gets at truth.¹¹ Fisher looks to the works of Pierre Hadot and Paul Ricour to construct some aspects of his account of Jewish theological language and looks to William Alston to formulate the final stages of his model.¹² Where Hadot focuses on important relations between discourse and practice, Alston's work focuses on how practices are related to true belief and knowledge. On the relevance of Alston's work to his own project, Fisher writes:

Alston's approach to religious epistemology suggests a model for understanding Jewish Theology in which the different forms of theological discourse arise from distinct belief-forming mechanisms. For instance, forming beliefs on the basis of exegesis is distinct from rational reflection on God, which is in turn distinct from beliefs based on religious experience. What emerges from this is an account of Jewish theological reflection as a doxastic practice comprised of multiple belief-forming mechanisms.¹³

As might be expected, Fisher endorses Alston's externalist account of knowledge and his rejection of strong (or classical) foundationalism, defined by Plantinga as the view according to which "a proposition *p* is properly basic for a person *S* if and only if *p* is either self-evident or incorrigible for *S* (modern foundationalism) or either self-evident or 'evident to the senses' for *S* (ancient and medieval foundationalism)."¹⁴ Fisher accepts Alston's argument that sense perception is epistemically circular, for we have to assume the reliability of sense perception in order for any argument for its reliability to get started. He endorses Alston's view that it is fully reasonable to nevertheless assume the reliability of sense perception on account of its being a socially established doxastic practice.¹⁵ Now, while Fisher doesn't engage with Plantinga here, but only with Alston, what he says about the connection between doxastic practices and truth goes toward showing how a uniquely Jewish epistemology can account for the truth-aimed condition of Plantingian epistemology. He maintains that there are four distinct doxastic practices, each of which can provide Jews with uniquely Jewish theological beliefs that are epistemically basic: exegesis, hermeneutics, reflection on divine perfection, and religious experience.¹⁶

Insofar as Fisher approvingly makes use of Alston's views about doxastic practices, he takes on board Alston's epistemic externalism as well. Alston's externalist epistemological views, according to Fisher are as follows: we can't but rely on our standard ways of forming beliefs, the internalist requirement

that we should have cognitive access to the grounds of our beliefs is too demanding and cannot be non-circularly justified, and it is practically rational for us to engage in and assume that our belief-forming practices, such as memory, sense perception, and introspection, are generally reliable.¹⁷ Furthermore, Fisher calls attention to Alston's view that belief-forming practices assume there are cognitive faculties or mechanisms associated with those practices. He writes,

For Alston, belief-forming practices, which he calls "doxastic practices," are typically comprised of multiple belief-forming mechanisms. He distinguishes belief-forming mechanisms by their inputs, that is, the constituents out of which beliefs are formed, and by the function that produces a belief (an output) from a given input. Sense perception, for instance, is a doxastic practice consisting of visual, auditory, olfactory, gustatory, and tactile belief-forming mechanisms. Alston argues that our doxastic practices do not function independently; on the contrary, they work together to form a "system or constellation" of belief formation.¹⁸

Clearly, what Fisher says here depicts Alston as accepting views that are relevantly similar to those accepted by proper functionalism. But since Alston didn't accept Plantinga's theory of warrant as proper function, we shouldn't make too much of this. Alston defends the view that there is no univocal concept of justification, and hence no one property of a belief that is both necessary and sufficient for its being justified. But he does think that a belief being formed by the proper functioning of one's cognitive faculties is an epistemic desiderata, a feature of a belief that commends itself "as desirable from the epistemic point of view."¹⁹ Moreover, Alston notes that while he accepts a functional account of belief-forming processes, Plantinga's account works with much larger units than his own. He writes,

The cognitive faculties distinguished by Plantinga are such as perception (or perhaps separate perceptual modalities) memory, introspection, rational intuition, and reasoning of various sorts. Whereas the input-function-output units involved in [my] account of belief-forming processes cuts things up much more finely. . . . This is not to deny that proper functioning of cognitive faculties, with faculties individuated as Plantinga does, is a directly truth-conducive epistemic desideratum but only to mark one important respect in which this desideratum differs from reliability of belief-forming processes as I have explained that.²⁰

Bringing this all together, recall that Fisher takes it that the doxastic practices of exegesis, hermeneutics, reflection on divine perfection, and religious experience provide basic grounds for specific Jewish belief. Recall, too, that he takes it that these practices are analogous to the belief-forming practices

of memory, sense perception, and introspection. Note that Fisher doesn't provide a more finely cut-up analysis of these processes, as Alston does. This is entirely appropriate given that the aim of his overall project isn't to provide a robust epistemology for its own sake, but rather to provide an overall epistemological framework that is suitable for his broader project of providing a philosophical account of Jewish theological language. In any case, the fact that Fisher's discussion of doxastic practices works with broad units, as Plantinga's account of warrant does, suggests that, when it comes to proper function and its roll in human knowledge, perhaps Fisher leans further in Plantinga's direction than Alston's. Jewish philosophers sympathetic to Fisher's project might take the details that underlie his epistemological views in a more explicitly Plantingian direction. At any rate, those in the Jewish religious and philosophical tradition who accept Fisher's views are in a good position to accept other elements of Plantingian religious epistemology, perhaps even his account warrant as proper function.

More recently, in a paper in which he discusses how the thought of Franz Rosenzweig (1886–1929) relates to the “common sense” philosophy of Thomas Reid (1710–1796), William Alston, Alvin Plantinga, and Nicholas Wolterstorff, Fisher aims to show that there are conceptual resources internal to the Jewish philosophical and religious tradition that adumbrate key points of Plantinga's philosophy. What he says here may be extended to show that these same resources may be put to use in the formulation of a uniquely Jewish extension of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model.

According to Fisher, in his book, *Understanding the Sick and the Healthy*, “Rosenzweig perceives Judaism as a form of common sense in that it distinguishes between God, World, and the Human Person but also because Judaism seeks to draw these three realms together.”²¹ The book is a critique of contemporary philosophy's tendency to disparage common sense thinking. Rosenzweig goes so far as to maintain that the belief-forming practices of a philosopher who has been “drawn away from the factuality of the world” suffers from “Apolexia Philosophica,” a deficiency of common sense so severe that he needs to be institutionalized in order to “recover common sense commitments about God, World, and the Human Person.”²² As Fisher explains it, recovering common sense involves a turning away from thinking or philosophizing about essences and turning (or perhaps returning) toward trust in names. This return to common sense, according to Rosenzweig, “accepts the immutability of terms, be they words or personal names; it does not question the freedom of actions or.”²³ He writes, “We are certain names are the names of things and that the name we bestow on them will be confirmed by God.”²⁴ Fisher notes that while Rosenzweig is concerned with common sense, his aim is to use the notion to explicate his earlier work, *The Star of Redemption*, a notoriously difficult text.²⁵ As such, Fisher notes

that although Rosenzweig's account of common sense is underdeveloped, there may well be important connections between his thinking and Reid's. Fisher concludes:

Rosenzweig's efforts to link both common sense and reason to the creation story of Gen 1 reveals a shared concern with the "reformed epistemology" inspired by Reid. Rosenzweig claims in the *Star* that the light that is the product of God's first creative act is an affirmation of reason, regarding which he says: "It is a darkness in which all qualities show the one gray color of the-waste-and-the-void until God intones his 'let there be light' into it. Light is no more a thing than darkness. It is itself a quality. It is to cognition what the 'good!' is to volition, the utterly affirming valuation." Going beyond Reid's defense of our standard belief forming practices, Rosenzweig argues that our reason is a divinely bestowed faculty that lies at the origins of reality. Like his comments in *Understanding the Sick and the Healthy*, Rosenzweig is genuinely concerned with restoring our "normal functions," and to this extent, I would suggest, he does share the goals of Reid and his contemporary defenders.²⁶

From what Fisher has to say about Rosenzweig's *Understanding the Sick and the Healthy*, it's easy to see how it could be used by those in the Jewish philosophical and religious traditions to develop a uniquely Jewish extension of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model.

JUDAISM AND KNOWLEDGE OF GOD

Judaism has a robust relationship with the project of natural theology. This can be especially seen in the work of the medieval philosophers, Saadya Gaon²⁷ (882–942) and Moses Maimonides²⁸ (1135–1204). But is it Jewish to think that the thesis of reformed epistemology is true? There is at least a somewhat recent history of major Jewish thinkers affirming the thesis. For example, Abraham Heschel (1907–1972) thinks that the existence of God is self-evident.²⁹ When one reads Heschel, one is left with the impression that he would be open to Calvin's doctrine of the *Sensus Divinitatis*, as he states, "The awareness which opens our minds to the existence of a supreme being is an awareness of reality, an awareness of divine presence. Long before we attain any knowledge about His essence, we possess an intuition of a divine presence."³⁰ Heschel develops this view in detail in *God in Search of Man: A Philosophy of Judaism*, to which we now turn.

In *God in Search of Man*, Heschel notes that Judaism is not merely an object to be studied, but a subject. That is, Judaism is "a reality, a drama within history, a fact, not merely a feeling or an experience" that "claims that certain extraordinary events occurred."³¹ He maintains that to say that God is

real is to assert that God's existence is objective, something that is not just a feature of our subjective awareness. But a problem arises: If all we have to work with are subjective awareness, and to speak of God's reality is "to transcend awareness, to surpass the limits of thinking," then how we could be justified in thinking that God is? How can we go about "inferring from our awareness a reality that lies beyond it?"³² He denies that any sort of leap of reason is required to deal with this problem. Rather, the solution, he thinks, is to acknowledge that "to say that 'God is' means less than what our immediate awareness contains. *The statement 'God is' is an understatement.*"³³ Elaborating on what he means by this, and drawing out the epistemological ramifications of it, Heschel writes:

Thus, the certainty of the realness of God does not come about as a corollary of logical premises, as a leap from the realm of logic to the realm of ontology, from an assumption to a fact. It is, on the contrary, a transition from an immediate apprehension to a thought, from a preconceptual awareness to a definite assurance, from being overwhelmed by the presence of God to an awareness of his existence . . . In sensing the spiritual dimension of all being, we become aware of the absolute reality of the divine. In formulating a creed, in asserting: God is, we merely bring down overpowering reality to the level of thought. Our thought is but an after-belief.³⁴

He continues:

our belief in His reality is not a leap over a missing link in a syllogism but rather *a regaining*, giving up a view rather than adding one, going behind self-consciousness and questions the self and all of its cognitive pretensions. *It is an ontological presupposition.*³⁵

While some of the details of Heschel's account and some of the terms he used to articulate it are markedly different than those that Plantingians may be used to, it's clear that Heschel maintains that human cognitive faculties are such that we are capable of experiencing God and in so doing it is appropriate to come to believe in His existence immediately and that such beliefs are epistemically basic.

Along similar lines, Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik (1903–1993) seems to affirm the thesis of reformed epistemology as he states, "the consciousness of transcendent being is not a logical deduction but a wondrous striving upward with strength and courage, a conquest of the relative, contingent world by all explosive transcendental experience."³⁶ In fact, Soloveitchik is extremely critical of philosophical attempts which attempt to show that God exists. In reference to this, he states, "Just as it is impossible to prove that the world exists because the demonstrator is an inseparable part of it, so it is impossible

to deduce indirectly that God exists, because He is ‘the place in which the world has its being’ (Gen. Rabbah 68:9).³⁷ While we will not take a strong stance on whether Moses Maimonides endorsed the thesis of reformed epistemology (namely, that belief in God can be properly basic), what Soloveitchik says in his explication of Maimonides’s commentary on Mishneh Torah 1.1 suggests that Maimonides was at least sympathetic to it.

Mishneh Torah 1.1 states, “The first of the positive commandments is the mitzvah to know that there is a God, as [Exodus 20:2] states: ‘I am the Lord your God’).”³⁸ In his commentary on this passage, Maimonides maintains that knowledge of God, the first existent, is foundational to all other knowledge. He maintains that if God didn’t exist, nothing whatsoever would exist and that all existent things depend on God to exist. From this it follows that God’s “true reality is unlike the true reality” of any other existent thing. This, Maimonides maintains, is the teaching of Jer. 10:10: “But the LORD God is the true God,” and Deut. 4:35: “there is none else beside Him”—“there is no true existent other than He that is like Him.”³⁹ Commenting on Maimonides’s view of the way that our knowledge of God as first existent is grounded, Soloveitchik writes:

This knowledge [of God] is not based on logical inference, but is, rather immediate: the knowledge of reality as divine reality, the awareness of the creation as something separated from the bosom of the Infinite. Even though Maimonides did not desist from presenting indirect demonstrations of the existence of God, and even though he believes that proofs of this sort exhaust our knowledge of the First Existent, the essence of his view is nevertheless that this knowledge is based on the immediate ontological cognition that there is no reality but God.⁴⁰

Throughout his writings, Maimonides in effect endorses the notion that some beliefs are appropriate to accept without proof. Ralph Lerner writes that in his *Letter on Astrology*, Maimonides affirms that there are three bases for belief, namely, reasoning (“which provides [one] with a clear proof”), sense perception (“the evidence of the senses”), and “a tradition received from the prophets or the righteous.”⁴¹ In his *Treatise on Logic*, Maimonides notes that there are four kinds of propositions or judgments that do not need proof or arguments, sense perceptions, primary ineligibles (necessary truths such as “the whole is greater than its part”), conventions, and traditions. And in the *Guide for the Perplexed*, he writes, “There are many things in existence that are clear and manifest: primary ineligibles and things perceived by the senses and, in addition, the things that come near to these in respect to their clarity.”⁴² We note that Maimonides’s views on the sources of knowledge are similar to those enumerated by Saadya Gaon (882–942) in the *Book of Doctrines and Beliefs*. Here Saadya affirms that there are three non-derived

sources, or roots, of knowledge, sense perception (the five senses), reason (“that which is derived purely from the mind”), and inferential knowledge (that which follows of logical necessity from a truth known by either sense perception or reason), and one derived root, the truth of reliable tradition, based on sense perception and reason which “comprises the written and oral traditions of Judaism.”⁴³ Although Maimonides’s and Saadya’s lists of properly basic belief sources are not the same, and while Maimonides’s listing differ in significant respects over the course of his writings, both thinkers affirmed that we have properly basic beliefs and both were in general agreement about which sorts of beliefs are properly basic for us. Hence, to that extent, there is some overlap between the epistemological approaches of these Jewish thinkers and that of Alvin Plantinga.

Additional reasons for thinking that Maimonides was at least friendly to certain themes of Plantingian religious epistemology are found in his view about the nature and function of the intellect. In *Shemonah Perakim* (or the *Eight Chapters of Maimonides on Ethics*) Chapter One, Maimonides writes that the human soul has several activities, which are called “faculties” or “parts,” of which there are five: “the nutritive [also known as the “growing” faculty], the sensitive, the imaginative, the appetitive, and the rational.”⁴⁴ The faculty of sensation, he continues, “consists of the five well-known senses of seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling, and feeling.”⁴⁵ Interpreting Maimonides on these points, Israel Drazin points out that in this text Maimonides uses the term translated as “soul,” *nefesh*, in the “biblical and scientific sense,” and notes that the faculty of imagination pertains to “memory and the power to conceive of impossible and unknown things” and conceptualization pertains to the power of thinking.⁴⁶ Reason, Maimonides writes, is “that faculty peculiar to man, enables him to understand, reflect, acquire knowledge of the sciences, and to discriminate between proper and improper actions.”⁴⁷

The above texts suggest that Maimonides accepted the notion that there are cognitive faculties the proper function of which is to get us to true belief. What Maimonides says elsewhere in the *Guide for the Perplexed* about our ability to get at truth helps to support this view. In the *Guide for the Perplexed* 1.2, Maimonides maintains that while the human intellect had the ability to understand necessary truths and to discern truth from falsehood, this ability functioned much better and more accurately when God first created humans, prior to their having sinned. After having rebelled against God, man was punished, which resulted in a diminished ability to determine necessary truths. He writes,

Through the faculty of the intellect man distinguishes between the true and the false. This faculty Adam possessed perfectly and completely. . . . When Adam

was yet in a state of innocence, and was guided solely by reflection and reason . . . he was not at all able to follow to understand the principles of apparent truths . . . After man's disobedience, however, when he began to give way to desires which had their source in his imagination and to the gratification of his bodily appetites . . . he was punished by the loss of part of that intellectual faculty which he had previously possessed.⁴⁸

Clearly, in this passage, Maimonides maintains that the proper function of the human intellect, to get at truth, was marred by the effects of sin. Due to our having sinned, our ability to intellectually see what is good and bad and right and wrong is now clouded over and obscured. Now subject to the moral law, we require an ability to be conscious of its demands, or else we will be unable to overcome the negative influence that desire has on our thoughts and actions. Obviously, this is very much in keeping with Plantinga's view that the proper function of our cognitive faculties has been damaged due to the negative effects of sin on the human noetic structure.⁴⁹ We may even go so far as to say that Maimonides view suggests that after humanity was punished for having sinned against God, they were given a new design plan, one according to which the intellect's ability to discern necessary truths was seriously diminished and we were given a new faculty or cognitive process the function of which is to acquire knowledge of apparent truths.

More important than examining the views of particular Jewish thinkers as they relate to the theses laid out in chapter 3 is examining the epistemological sources of Judaism themselves. Specifically, is there anything with the Tanakh or Talmud, for instance, which would prevent a faithful Jew from being a reformed epistemologist? The theses, again, are as follows:

- (I) The Dependency Thesis: Humans are ontologically and epistemologically dependent on and created by God.
- (II) The Design Thesis: Humans are created in accord with a design plan one aim of which is the production of true belief.
- (III) The Immediacy Thesis: God endows humans with special cognitive faculties or belief-forming processes through which theistic belief can be known in an epistemically immediate and basic manner.

Clearly, Judaism explicitly advocates that God is distinct from His creation and that He is responsible for our cognitive design plan. And is there any reason for thinking that Judaism is at odds with the immediacy thesis, that is the thesis that theistic belief can be produced in an immediate manner? It would seem not, at least from our survey of the Jewish thinkers we've looked in this chapter. Therefore, apparently, Jews may endorse the immediacy thesis, or at least maintain that it is *prima facie* epistemically possible.

KNOWLEDGE OF JUDAISM

But what about the theses of the extended model? Even if Judaism contains the resources to make it possible for a Jew to believe in God in a basic way, is Judaism compatible with a Jew believing the credal statements of Judaism in a basic way? Let's again, look at the remaining theses:

- (IV) The Internal Inspiration of the Holy Spirit Thesis: There is a special belief-forming process the purpose of which is to produce specifically Christian beliefs about the nature of God, salvation, forgiveness of sins, eternal life, and the like.
- (V) The Scriptural Revelation Thesis: By means of scripture, which is identified with the Christian Bible, God propositionally reveals to humans important divine teachings and doctrines.

Can specifically Jewish analogues of (IV) and (V) be formulated? We think that the makings of a Jewish glossing of Plantinga's extended Aquinas/Calvin model can be found the writings of Levi ben Gerson, also known as Gersonides. Gersonides produced a model of divine foreknowledge that might be able to aid the Jewish reformed epistemologist in her quest for a uniquely Jewish extension. For Gersonides, God immutably emanates His knowledge of future contingents. And it is through His *providentia generalis*, general providence, that God hard wires humanity with an intellect such that a human subject can tap into His own intellect (the Active Intellect).⁵⁰ The more perfect the subject's intellect is, the better the subject will be able to clearly know the future.⁵¹ Menachem Marc Kellner summarizes Gersonides's view brilliantly:

The Active Intellect may be likened to a powerful radio transmitter that broadcasts constantly without knowing who, if anyone, is tuned in to its broadcasts. Some people have excellent radio receivers with very high antennae; they pick up the broadcasts very clearly. These are the prophets who are "tuned in" to the Active Intellect. The Active Intellect, however, is not the only broadcasting station and the prophets are not the only people with "radios." Everyone is equipped with a radio and there are many smaller broadcasting stations the transmissions of which often compete with and interfere with those of the Active Intellect. These are the senses. There are different ways in which people lacking prophetic radios can pick up the emanations ("broadcasts") of the Active Intellect. Some of them live in areas where there are few competing stations. These are the blind, among whom there are many diviners. Some people pick up the broadcasts at night when the smaller stations are off the air. These are the people who receive the emanations of the Active Intellect in dreams. Some people have excellent "tuning equipment" which helps them to block out the "static" caused by the smaller broadcasting facilities. These are the people who can separate their imaginations from their other faculties. Everyone who lacks

the superior equipment of the prophet, however, will receive inferior broadcasts: they will be garbled and hard to make out.⁵²

Coming back to Plantingian religious epistemology, inspired by Gersonides, why couldn't one affirm that God has designed humans in such a way that, for at least some of them, when their cognitive faculties are functioning properly, they are able to tap into the knowledge that God emanates? And why couldn't God set things up such that upon tapping into such knowledge, they can see what will happen in the future and thus see that the prophecies of the Tanakh are true? Seeing that the predictions of the Tanakh are true, the subject might just find herself believing that the general message of the Tanakh, as understood by Judaism (from now on, by Judaism, we just mean, the general message of the Tanakh as understood by Rabbinic Judaism) is true. This can be glossed in proper functionalist terms succinctly as follows:

The Extended Jewish Model: S's belief that Judaism is true can be warranted if (1) S's faculties are designed to tap into God's foreknowledge such that S can now see that the prophecies of the Tanakh are true, (2) S's faculties come into contact with God's foreknowledge in an environment for which S's faculties were designed, (3) S's faculties are aimed at the production of true belief when S produces belief about the future F, (4) there is a high objective probability that S's belief F will be true, and (5) upon seeing that the prophecies of the Tanakh will come true, S immediately finds herself with the belief that the Tanakh is true, which, in part, is due to her design plan.

But, even if this is epistemically possible, isn't this really unsatisfying? Not many faithful Jews have experienced such foreknowledge. We suppose however, that if what is sought after is a clearly Jewish extension that is epistemically possible, then the proposed model does seem to satisfy the said desire. Nonetheless, we do see the concern.

In response to this concern, we want to reiterate that there is nothing stopping a Jew from taking Plantinga's Christian framework and then slightly tweaking it to say something like the following:

The Extended Jewish Model II: S's belief that Judaism is true can be warranted if (1) S's faculties are designed to accept testimonial beliefs, (2) S is testified to about the truthfulness of Judaism (whether by God through the Tanakh, or by tradition, or by S's Jewish community [e.g., S's Rabbi or S's parents], or all of the above), and (3) when S forms the belief that Judaism is true, S's belief is the result of the proper functionalist constraints being in place.

Notice, this version of the Jewish extended model can be robustly Jewish. The subject's Jewish environment, such as coming into contact with the Jewish scriptures, her Jewish tradition, and/or her Jewish community, is

an essential doxastic component to her faith. Nothing in this has to assume substantive claims of Christianity or the Triune nature of God, as Plantinga's model does. With this said, might there be some doctrine or tradition within Judaism that we are overlooking, some doctrine or tradition that can strip away the plausibility of a Jewish extension? We now turn to discussing one possible objection.

OBSERVANT JEWS AND THE OBEDIENCE REQUIREMENT

The Torah demands that the faithful diligently teach it to their children, and to talk of it when they sit in their house, when they walk by the way, when they lie down, and when they raise. They are even to bind God's word as a sign on their hand and put it between their eyes. They are to write God's word on the doorposts of their house and on their gates.⁵³ Judaism calls the believer to reflect on the Torah day and night. Moreover, there is a strong tradition within Judaism that calls for the faithful to not only possess knowledge that Judaism is true, but also to be able to demonstrate that Judaism is true. Depending on one's cognitive equipment and opportunity, if one fails to cultivate and exercise the capacity to do this, one falls short of being a faithful Jew. We will call this requirement the obedience requirement. Rabbi Bahya ibn Paquda zt'l, also known as Bahya Ibn Pakuda (c. eleventh century CE), in *Duties of the Heart* describes the requirement as follows:

Regarding whether or not it is our duty to rationally investigate on the unity of G-d, I will answer this as follows: For anyone who is capable of investigating on this and other similar matters through rational inquiry—it is his duty to do so according to his intelligence and perception. I have already written in the introduction to this book sufficient arguments which demonstrate the obligation of this matter. Anyone who neglects to investigate into it is blameworthy and is considered as belonging to the class of men who fall short in wisdom and conduct. He is like a sick man (a doctor) who is an expert on the nature of his disease and the correct healing method, but instead relies on another doctor to heal him who applies various healing methods, while he is lazy to inquire using his own wisdom and reasoning into the methods employed by the doctor, to see whether or not the doctor is dealing with him correctly or not, when he was easily able to do this without anything preventing him. The Torah has already obligated us on this, as written: “know therefore today, and lay it to your heart [that the Lord is G-d in heaven above and on the earth beneath; there is no other].” (Deut. 4:39)⁵⁴

Why interpret “know” here as propositional knowledge? Well, “know that the Lord is God” is intertextually connected, at least according to Rabbi Bahya,

with other verses, including Psa. 100:3, 1 Chron. 28:9, and Isa. 44:19, in such a way that renders this interpretation plausible.

Psa. 100:3 Know ye that the LORD He is God; It is He that hath made us, and we are His, His people, and the flock of His pasture.

1 Chro. 28:9 And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve Him with a whole heart and with a willing mind; for the LORD searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts; if thou seek Him, He will be found of thee; but if thou forsake Him, He will cast thee off for ever.

Isa. 44:1 And none considereth in his heart, Neither is there knowledge nor understanding to say: "I have burned the half of it in the fire; Yea, also I have baked bread upon the coals thereof; I have roasted flesh and eaten it; And shall I make the residue thereof an abomination? Shall I fall down to the stock of a tree?"

Rabbi Moshe Becker summarizes Rabbi Bachya's view nicely:

Bachya points out that mere belief is neither sufficient nor desirable in and of itself. Only rational conclusion can indeed be considered "acceptance of God's unity". He then describes four categories of people who affirm God's oneness: 1) The young and illiterate, who merely say God is one without any in depth understanding. 2) Those who say God is one based on a tradition they received. They are like a row of blind men following someone with sight; if the first stumbles they all fall, likewise these people are susceptible to arguments against their faith 3) Individuals who have actually come to a rational conclusion regarding His existence, but do not understand the different kinds of oneness 4) Those who say God is one after knowing and feeling based on rational proofs they have established and a thorough understanding of the concept of oneness.

R' Bachya insists that as a prerequisite for serving God and setting out on the path of fulfilling religious obligations, we must not only believe in God, but actually engage in rational investigation and come to an understanding of His existence and unity.⁵⁵

The idea, in summary, is that even if one could know that God exists or that Judaism is true apart from argument, one couldn't be a faithful or observant Jew unless they possessed propositional evidence of God's existence as well. In order to be a faithful or observant Jew, one must meet an obedience requirement, which consists of a subject partaking in the process of rational investigation to the point where S achieves the positive cognitive status of understanding. If S culpably falls short of partaking in such rational investigation, S falls short of serving God and fulfilling his religious obligation. So perhaps an objector might argue that there is a disanalogy between Plantinga's Christian extension and a Jewish extension. Namely, the

Jewish extension isn't sufficiently analogous because it endorses an obedience requirement that the Christian extension does not.

There are a few different responses to this objection. First, given that the Christian follows the Tanakh as well, if Rabbi Bahya is right about interpreting Deuteronomy 4 in the aforementioned way then, for exegetical reasons alone, the Christian is committed to this interpretation as well. And if the Christian is committed to this interpretation, then there will be an exact parallel between the Jewish and Christian extensions. Second, the faithful Jew can just deny that the Tanakh endorses an obedience requirement. This requirement doesn't seem essential to Judaism, especially if there are other interpretations to passages like Deuteronomy 4 which haven't been considered. And finally, even if the faithful Jew is committed to an obedience requirement and the Christian is not, some will be persuaded that the Christian and Jewish extensions are nevertheless sufficiently close. Because Islam, too, maintains that faithful believers must have propositional evidence that God exists, we will discuss this issue in more detail in the next chapter. For now, we tentatively conclude that the addition of such a requirement doesn't clearly preclude the possibility that Jews can make full use of Plantingian religious epistemology and that we fail to see why the Jewish religious tradition couldn't lay claim to both the standard Aquinas/Calvin model and a uniquely Jewish extension of it.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter, we provided a survey of Judaism, paying special attention to the importance of the Torah and the Tanakh. Second, we discussed the nature of belief within Judaism. We argued that even if belief is an impoverished notion, belief in Judaism is still necessary for an observant Jew. This set the stage for considering whether Plantinga's religious epistemology is at home in a Jewish worldview and whether Judaism might be able to sustain the standard Aquinas/Calvin model and a uniquely Jewish extension of it. We made use of the work of Lebens, Fisher, Rosenzweig, Heschel, Soloveitchik, Saadya, and Maimonides, along with some of his contemporary interpreters, to argue that various aspects of Judaism are compatible with Plantinga's proper functionalism and the Aquinas/Calvin model. We then used Gersonides's work on prophecy to help us argue that not only is Judaism compatible with the extended Aquinas/Calvin model, but also that a uniquely Jewish extension of it can be formulated. Finally, we looked at an objection which aimed to show that there was a disanalogy between the Jewish and Christian extensions, but then, concluded that the objection wasn't successful. Consider, then, how Judaism fits into our argument schema:

- (1) The members of Judaism can make full use of Plantinga's religious epistemology *if and only if* they are the beneficiaries of intellectual and conceptual resources internal to Judaism which are necessary and sufficient for the articulation of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model as well as a uniquely Jewish extension of it.
- (2) The members of Judaism are beneficiaries of conceptual resources necessary for the articulation of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model and a unique non-Christian extension of it *if and only if* (a) the central and formative doctrinal teachings of Judaism entail or suggest (I) the Dependency Thesis, (II) the Design Thesis, and (III) the Immediacy Thesis and unique analogues of (IV) the Internal Inspiration of the Holy Spirit Thesis and (V) the Scriptural Revelation Thesis, and (b) the metaphysical claims and/or presuppositions of Judaism are fully compatible with (I)–(III) and in no way preclude theses relevantly analogous to (IV) and (V).
- (3) Setting aside the dispute about whether obedience requirement is consistent with Plantingian religious epistemology, which we fully address in the next chapter, both (a) and (b) of (2) hold for Judaism.
- (4) Thus, the members of Judaism are the beneficiaries of intellectual and conceptual resources internal to Judaism which are necessary and sufficient for the articulation of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model as well as a uniquely Jewish extension of it. [From (2) and (3)]
- (5) Thus, the members of Judaism can make full use of Plantingian religious epistemology. [From (1) and (4)]

NOTES

1. *Deut. 6:4 (JPS). The Holy Scriptures According to the Masoretic Text, with the Aid of Previous Versions and with Constant Consultation of Jewish Authorities* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1917), 260. Unless otherwise noted, all quotes from the Tanakh are taken from this translation, which is abbreviated as JPS.

2. Moses Maimonides, "Thirteen Principles of the Faith," in *The Standard Prayer Book*, trans. Simeon Singer (New York: Bloch Publishing Company, 1915), 107–109.

3. Sam Lebens, "The Epistemology of Religiosity: An Orthodox Jewish Perspective," *International Journal of Philosophy and Religion* 74, no. 3 (2013): 316.

4. *Ibid.*, 325.

5. *The Holy Scriptures According to the Masoretic Text*, 104.

6. Lebens, "The Epistemology of Religiosity," 325.

7. *Ibid.*, 326. Lebens uses Frank Jackson's famous case of color blind Mary to demonstrate that there is nonpropositional knowledge. See P. Ludlow, Yujin Nagasawa, and Daniel Stoljar, *There's Something About Mary: Essays on Phenomenal Consciousness and Frank Jackson's Knowledge Argument* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2004).

8. Lebens, "The Epistemology of Religiosity," 330–331.
9. *Ibid.*, 330.
10. Cass Fisher, "Jewish Philosophy: Living Language and Its Limits," in *Jewish Philosophy for the Twenty-First Century: Personal Reflections* (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 79–82, 85, 87–88.
11. Cass Fisher, *Contemplative Nation: A Philosophical Account of Jewish Theological Language* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012), 66.
12. *Ibid.*, 68.
13. *Ibid.*, 69.
14. Plantinga, "Is Belief in God Properly Basic?" 44.
15. *Ibid.*, 69–70.
16. Fisher, "Jewish Philosophy," 92.
17. *Ibid.*, 92.
18. *Ibid.*, 92.
19. Alston William, *Beyond "Justification": Dimensions of Epistemic Evaluation* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005), 43, 39.
20. *Ibid.*, 151–152.
21. Cass Fisher, "Absolute Factuality, Common Sense, and Theological Reference in the Thought of Franz Rosenzweig," *Harvard Theological Review* 109, no. 3 (2016): 351.
22. *Ibid.*, 352.
23. Franz Rosenzweig, *Understanding the Sick and the Healthy: A View of World, Man, and God With a New Introduction by Hilary Putnam*, trans. Nahum Glatzer (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999), 53.
24. *Ibid.*
25. Fisher, "Absolute Factuality, Common Sense, and Theological Reference in the Thought of Franz Rosenzweig," 369–370.
26. *Ibid.*, 370.
27. Saadya Gaon, *The Book of Doctrines and Beliefs*, trans. Alexander Altmann with new introduction by Daniel H. Frank (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2002).
28. Moses Maimonides, *The Guide for the Perplexed*, trans. M. Friedlander (New York: Dover, 1956).
29. Joseph Harp Britton, *Abraham Heschel and the Phenomenon of Piety* (London: Bloomsbury, 2015), 71.
30. Abraham Joshua Heschel, *Man Is Not Alone: A Philosophy of Religion* (New York: Harper & Row, 1961), 67.
31. Abraham Joshua Heschel, *God in Search of Man: A Philosophy of Judaism* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1983), 22.
32. *Ibid.*, 120.
33. *Ibid.*, 121.
34. *Ibid.*
35. *Ibid.*
36. Joseph B. Soloveitchik, *And From There You Shall Seek* (Brooklyn: KTAV Publishing House, 2009), 16.
37. *Ibid.*, 17.

38. Moses Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah*, “Positive Commandments,” Part One, trans. Eliyahu Touger, accessed July 25, 2018, http://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/901695/jewish/Positive-Commandments.htm. For a print version, see Moses Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah: A New Translation with Commentaries, Notes, Tables, Charts, and Index*, trans. Eliyahu Touger (New York and Jerusalem: Maznaim, 1986).
39. In Ralph Lerner, *Maimonides’ Empire of Light: Popular Enlightenment in an Age of Belief* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 141.
40. Soloveitchik, *And From There You Shall Seek Him*, 158, note 4.
41. Ralph Lerner, “Maimonides’ Letter on Astrology,” *History of Religions* 8, no. 2 (1968): 145.
42. *Ibid.*, 145.
43. Gaon, *The Book of Doctrines and Beliefs*, 36–37, and 37 fn. 5.
44. Moses Maimonides, *The Eight Chapters of Maimonides on Ethics (Shemonah Peraḳim): A Psychological and Ethical Treatise*, edited, annotated, and translated with introduction by Joseph I. Gorfinkle, Ph. D (New York: Columbia University Press, 1912), 39.
45. *Ibid.*, 41.
46. Israel Drazin, *Maimonides: Reason Above All* (Jerusalem: Green Publishing House, 2009), 54.
47. Maimonides, *The Eight Chapters of Maimonides on Ethics*, 43.
48. Maimonides, *The Guide for the Perplexed*, 15.
49. See, for instance, Plantinga, *Warranted Christian Belief*, 213–216, 280–282 and *Knowledge and Christian Belief*, 48–52.
50. Menachem Marc Kellner, “Maimonides and Gersonides on Mosaic Prophecy Menachem,” *Speculum* 52, no. 1 (1977): 69.
51. *Ibid.*, 71.
52. *Ibid.*, 71–72.
53. *Deuteronomy*, 6:7–9.
54. Rabeinu Bahya ibn Paquda zt’l, *Shaar HaYichud—Gate of Unity of G-d (with select classic commentaries Gate #1 of Chovos Halevavos—Duties of the Heart*, translated by Rabbi Yosef Sebag (dafyomireview.com, 2017), 9.
55. Rabbi Moshe Becker, “Chovot Halevavot—or More? The Philosophy of R’ Bachya,” *The Journal of the Hashkafa Circle* 1, no. 1 (2008): 37.

Chapter 10

An Islamic Extension of the Standard Aquinas/Calvin Model

In this chapter, we aim to show there is a uniquely Islamic extension of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model.¹ First, we explain the main features of the Islamic worldview. This will put us in a position to show how Islam is consistent with and strongly implies the truth of proper functionalism. We then show that Islam affirms or entails the Dependency Thesis, the Design Thesis, and the Immediacy Thesis, which goes to show that Islam affirms or entails the truth of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model. This is sufficient to show that Muslims may accept the core elements of Plantinga's religious epistemology. We add the qualification that although Islam can account for these theses, due to endorsing a meta-level requirement on knowledge, it arguably ultimately fails to fully capture the spirit of Plantinga's reformed epistemology. We then go on to show how Islam affirms or entails the Internal Instigation Thesis and the Scriptural Revelation Thesis. Next, we go on to articulate uniquely Islamic specifications of these theses, which goes on to show there is a uniquely Islamic extension of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model. However, because passages (such as Qur'an 3:54) affirm that Allah is "the best planner," (as in plotter or deceiver), there are reasons for (at least some) Muslims to think that, for all they know, Allah is deceiving them about the propositional content of the Qur'an. Muslims who are aware of these passages and the problems they raise may therefore be subject to a subjective defeater for the content of Islamic belief. If this defeater holds, then Muslims can't accept Plantinga religious epistemology after all.

ISLAM 101

According to Islam, humans are born without sin, being born of pure nature and as God intended. That is to say, everyone is born a Muslim but due to sin, human thinking about the nature of God and how humans should act must be corrected.² Islam teaches that God has provided for this correction by sending prophets to his people. Islam endorses that the overall story of the Old Testament is a fallible record of God giving humans such prophets. Islam also accepts Jesus of Nazareth as a prophet to the world. As such, the Qur'an declares Jews and Christians are "people of the book" (Qur'an 3:64-71). That is, Jews and Christians are recognized as having received God's word in pure form, having had the Law and the Gospel revealed to them. Muslims maintain that this revelation was corrupted (Qur'an 2:75-79), which in turn perverted the teachings of faith of Islam, that is, original Abrahamic monotheism.

Islamic theology differs substantially from both Jewish and Christian theologies with respect to its theological understanding of the person of Jesus of Nazareth. In Judaism, Jesus was at best a good and faithful rabbi whose teachings were badly misunderstood by his followers. According to Islam, Jesus was a prophet, the messiah (*al-Maseeh*), who was born of a virgin and who anointed the blind. God raised Jesus up in order to bring back His people to the pure faith.

There are fundamental differences between Islam and Christianity with respect to the person and work of Jesus, however. Although Christianity affirms monotheism, it maintains that Jesus is the second person of the Trinity, having both a divine and a human nature. Furthermore, with respect to Jesus's human nature, Jesus suffered on the cross in order to atone for the world's sins. According to Christianity, this loving action pleased God to the point where God justified and vindicated Jesus by raising him from the dead. Islam rejects these faith claims: Jesus was created (Qur'an 3:59), wasn't God in the flesh (Qur'an 19:34-35), was merely a messenger from God (Qur'an 4:171), didn't die a cursed death (Qur'an 4:157), and wasn't raised from the dead but taken bodily into heaven (Qur'an 3:55). According to Islam, Jesus will come back to condemn those who worshipped him (Qur'an 4:156-159).

Thus, according to Islam, the other major branches of the Abrahamic faith traditions have strayed far from God's original intention and it was necessary for God to restore the truth about Himself and about how His followers should act. Islam teaches that God sent Prophet Muhammad (c. 570–632 CE) to the world to bring about this restoration. From his encounters with the angel Gabriel, Muhammad was reportedly given the Qur'an, which gave corrections to Jewish and Christian theologies. The pure "straight path" of Islam can be summarized by Qur'an 112:1-4, which states, "Say: He is Allah,

the One; Allah, the Eternal, Absolute; He begetteth not, Nor is He begotten; And there is none Like unto Him.”³

Islamic theology offers a path to God through the five pillars of Islam. These pillars go as follows:

- (1) The Confession (or *shahadah*): In order to become a Muslim, one must wholeheartedly assert “There is no god but God and Muhammad is the messenger of God.”
- (2) Prayer: In Islam, Muslims are commanded to pray five times a day (dawn, noon, afternoon, evening, and night).
- (3) Alms Giving: Muslims are commanded to give out of their own income.
- (4) Fasting: Muslims are commanded to fast during the month of Ramadan.
- (5) The Pilgrimage: Muslims are commanded to make a journey to Mecca and walk around the Kaaba seven times.⁴

The Qur’an predicates to God the traditional attributes of classical theism. According to Islamic theology, God possesses ninety-nine names and each name is a property that God possesses. For instance, God is called the merciful, the loving one, the creator, the all-knowing, the all-powerful, the forgiver, and the judge. With respect to how God is depicted, there are some differences between the Qur’an and the Old and New Testaments. According to both the Old and New Testaments, God has made humankind in His image and it is presumed that He has aimed human faculties toward producing true beliefs. While Islam affirms that God is truth and that God commands humans to be truthful, we also learn that God didn’t make humankind in His image, as “there is none like him” (Qur’an 112:4). In addition to this, we learn that He is the greatest plotter or planner, as in deceiver or schemer (Qur’an 3:54). Moreover, in John 3:16 and Gal. 3:12-13 of the Christian New Testament, God is portrayed as a God who loves sinners, even those who habitually oppose Him. In fact, He loves His enemies to the point that He humbled Himself by taking on human flesh so that He could die a cursed death for them. In contrast, the Qur’an teaches that God doesn’t love the sinner as much as it is possible to love them. There is no affirmation of His love for sinners; there exists only condemnation and calls for repentance. We also read that God’s love isn’t really unconditional, as it is based upon human merit (Qur’an 3:31). Of course, God isn’t without mercy in Islamic theology. The Qur’an commands repeatedly for sinners to stop doing their evil actions and to get right with Him so that he might forgive them and show them mercy. (See, for instance, Qur’an 3:74, 4:17, 4:96, 6:12, 17:87, and 25:68-70.) In sum, there are obvious similarities between the Old Testament and the New Testament conceptions of God with the Islamic conception of God. However, there are also some significant differences as well. As we shall see, on account of these

differences, a uniquely Islamic extension of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model will have certain features that distinguish it from Plantinga's uniquely Christian extension.

ISLAM AND THE STANDARD AND EXTENDED AQUINAS/CALVIN MODELS

Despite differences between Islam and Christianity, members of Islamic philosophical and religious traditions may affirm proper functionalism. There are reasons to think that Muslims can accept the standard Aquinas/Calvin model, as well as a uniquely Islamic extension of it that shows how it could be that Islamic belief is both internally and externally rational and warranted for Muslims in a basic way. Recall our strategy. First, we show that the core components of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model, namely, the Dependency, Design, and Immediacy Theses, are internal to Islamic religious and philosophical traditions and explain how it can accept proper functionalism. After doing this, we go on to show that Islam affirms analogues of the Internal Inspiration of the Holy Spirit Thesis and the Scriptural Revelation Thesis.

The Dependency Thesis in Islam

The truth of the Dependency Thesis, that humans are ontologically and epistemically dependent on and created by God, is suggested by the following Qur'anic verses:

(Qur'an 13:2-3) Allah is He Who raised the heavens without any pillars that ye can see; then He established himself on the Throne. He has subjected the sun and the moon! Each one runs (its course) for a term appointed. He doth regulate all affairs, explaining the signs in detail, that ye may believe with certainty in the meeting with your Lord. And it is He who spread out the earth, and set thereon mountains standing firm, and (flowing) rivers: and fruit of every kinds He made in pairs, two and two: He draweth the night as a veil o'er the Day.⁵

(Qur'an 32:5-7) He directs the affairs from the heavens to the Earth. . . . Such is He is the Knower of all things, hidden and open, the Exalted (in power), the Merciful;—He who created all things in the best way.

Commenting on these ideas, M. M. Sharif writes:

The Ultimate Being or Reality is God. God, as described by the Qur'an for the understanding of man, is the sole-subsisting, all-pervading, eternal and Absolute Reality.⁶

And,

God is omnipotent. To Him is due the primal origin of everything. It is He, the Creator, who began the process of creation and adds to creation as He pleases . . . He created the heavens and the earth.⁷

Classical Islamic philosophers and theologians presupposed the truth of the Dependency Thesis in their philosophical accounts of God's creation of the world. Al-Ghāzālī affirms that God created the world "by decree" and "from out of nothing."⁸ Al-Kindī affirms that "God is one, God is creator" and "the source of all things."⁹ Al-Fārābī and Ibn-Rushd (known as Averroes in the West), affirmed that the world is an eternally temporal emanation from God.¹⁰ Despite disagreements about some of the details, all Muslims agree that God is the ontological source of all things and that as such humans are ontologically dependent on God. They also maintain that it is due to God's sustaining power that humans are able to have any knowledge at all. Because God is the metaphysical ground of all created things, and because only God has perfect knowledge, it follows of necessity that humans are created knowers that can have at best imperfect and derivative knowledge. It is in this way that God's existence and sustaining activity makes it possible for humans to have knowledge in the first place.

The Design Thesis in Islam

The Design Thesis, that human cognitive faculties are created in accord with a design plan that is aimed at the production of true belief, is also central to an Islamic worldview. It is implicitly taught in the Qur'an. For instance, in Qur'an 32:9 we read, "He gave you (the faculties of) hearing, and sight, and understanding." Note again Qur'an 32:7, which states that God "created all things in the best way." Here we may glean that God creates all things such that they exhibit a degree of perfection proper to it as a member of its kind. Obviously, because humans are created, they are necessarily limited beings. Thus, human cognitive faculties aren't and can't be perfect without qualification. Only God has perfect and complete knowledge. However, whatever limitations humans are subject to, God creates them such that they have sufficiently reliable cognitive faculties.

Islamic philosophers have had much to say about the nature of the human cognitive design plan. For example, M. M. Sharif proposes a three-fold classification of knowledge: knowledge by inference, testimonial knowledge, and knowledge by means of personal experience or intuition.¹¹ Absar Ahmad maintains that God has endowed us with perceptual faculties for observation and faculties of reason for deduction and ratiocination.¹² And Mohamed

Table 10.1 Levels of Perceptual Processes and Cognitive Faculties

<i>Level of perception</i>	<i>Perceptual process</i>	<i>Faculty</i>
Sensory perception	Sight, hearing, smell, and so on.	Eyes, ears, nose, and so on; memory
Rational perception	1. Cognition, reasoning, and insight; also 2. Self-consciousness and conscious meta-level thinking	' <i>aq¹</i> (mind) ' <i>aq²</i> (mind)
Spiritual perception	Intuition, intellection, and inspiration	<i>qalb</i> (heart)

Source: Adapted, with modifications and additions, from Mohamed Yasien, *Fitrah: The Islamic Conception of Human Nature* (London: Ta-Ha Publishers, Ltd, 1996): 93.

Yasien maintains that humans are endowed with three levels of perception and that at each level of perception there is a corresponding perceptual process and an appropriate cognitive faculty. Table 10.1 sums up Yasien's account (see Table 10.1).

As indicated in Table 10.1, the cognitive faculties of sensory perception, our eyes, ears, nose, and so on, provide humans with sensory contact with objects in the external world. Memory also functions at this level. Humans comprehend and reason in accord with first principles, such as mathematical and logical truths and relations, at the level of rational perception. Per the table, the operative cognitive faculty at work with regard to these cognitive functions is '*aq¹*' (mind). Regarding our capacity for self-consciousness awareness and conscious meta-level thinking, the operative faculty is '*aq²*' (mind). Lastly, there is the faculty of spiritual perception, *qalb*, or heart. According to Yasien, it is by means of *qalb* that we are aware of spiritual realities, including the existence and presence of Allah.¹³ While the Islamic worldview maintains that divine revelation is ultimately necessary for complete knowledge of God and his purposes, *qalb* enables people to have immediate knowledge of him. Yasien writes, "Through the organ of the heart, its faculty of intellect, and the guidance of Divine Revelation, man is able to attain all levels of perception, even the knowledge of Allah in a direct and immediate way."¹⁴

On an Islamic worldview, while *qalb* is designed to be generally reliable in its functions, the human design plan is such that (if their faculties are functioning properly, etc.), there will always be some measure of doubt about that information, at least initially. Thus, if one's cognitive faculties are functioning as they ought to, then one will come to have a certain level of doubt about the reliability of their *qalb*. God created humans with cognitive faculties the proper function of which is to consider and evaluate at a second-order level of perception doubts that will inevitably arise at the first-order level. The proper function of '*aq²*' is to enable people to evaluate the veracity of the

deliverances of *qalb* in the presence of these doubts. Note, however, that '*aq^l*' can't perform its proper function unless humans choose to engage in meta-level thinking. Given these features of the human design plan, it isn't possible merely to accept the deliverances of *qalb* in a passive or automatic way.

According to an Islamic understanding of things, for the faithful, doubts that inexorably arise in accord with the human design plan don't serve as obstacles to faith but rather provide them with occasions to strengthen it and bring it to maturity. Successfully overcoming doubts enables the faithful to have a deeper and more robust knowledge of God, one that is more certain and more secure than that which is made possible by the operations of *qalb* alone. Doubt, therefore, plays a crucial function in the human cognitive design plan according to Islam. However, if a Muslim doesn't deal with these doubts responsibly and appropriately, then their beliefs about God, including those creedal beliefs that are specific to Islam, will lack warrant, or at least a degree of warrant that is sufficient for knowledge.

Many Islamic philosophers have held views along these lines. For example, in *Deliverance from Error*, al-Ghāzālī writes that God "casts a light that enlarges one's heart" and that this light is what enables one to "withdraw from the mansion of deception." He writes,

It was about this light that Muhammad (peace be upon him) said, "God created the creatures in darkness, and then sprinkled upon them some of His light." From that light must be sought an intuitive understanding of things Divine. That light at certain times gushes from the spring of Divine generosity.¹⁵

There are two more ramifications of a uniquely Islamic understanding of the Design Thesis to consider. First, while it is necessary for a subject's belief to be produced as the result of the proper functionalist constraints being in place, in order for a subject's belief to constitute higher-order knowledge, something more is needed. Even if all of one's cognitive faculties are functioning properly, one must still make use of one's faculty of second-order faculty of rational perception, '*aq^l*', in such a way so as to evaluate whether it's reasonable to believe that *qalb*, the faculty of spiritual perception, is performing its proper function. Doubts about the reliability of *qalb* aren't properly dealt with at the first-order level of cognition (the level at which '*aq^l*' operates), but only when an agent self-consciously deliberates and reasonably judges that their doubts have been satisfactorily overcome, at least by one's own best lights. This doesn't just happen, but rather takes effort.

This brings us to the second important point. While God requires much of people, he doesn't leave them to do all the work themselves. God graciously sees to it that humans can employ their faculties as they ought in order to acquire the second-order knowledge he requires of the faithful. By God's

design, while God graciously provides signs of his existence, including the revelation that is common to all, he also intends for people to have doubts about the deliverances of *qalb*. And yet he also sees to it that humans overcome those doubts by turning to him. Undergoing this process, it's possible for people to cultivate and exercise intellectual and moral virtues. Again, on a uniquely Islamic human design plan, full knowledge of God isn't merely a passive output function of cognitive faculties that are subject to no defects or malfunctions. Careful, self-conscious, and reflective second-order thinking is required in order for fundamental and significant beliefs about God to be held in an appropriate manner. But God himself, through his grace and mercy, makes it possible for humans to have limited second-order knowledge of God.

More needs to be said about the epistemological consequences of these features of the Islamic design plan. One implication is the truth of the following principle: if *S* knows *p* (where *p* is not a statement about what *S* knows), then *S* is in a position to know that *S* knows *p*. Notice, however, that this requirement may be limited in scope and contextual in nature. It isn't necessary that *S* must satisfy this requirement in order to have knowledge of most ordinary things we think we know, including such as whether there really is an external world or whether the future will resemble the past. While one may have extreme doubts about such things, the Islamic human design plan doesn't require that everyone will have or struggle with such doubts. Again, God's intention is that faithful people will come to hold doubts so that they might be motivated to cultivate a deeper and more significant experiential knowledge of himself. Because the necessity of this epistemic requirement depends on God's contingent will (namely, his desire that humans come have this sort of deep and significant experiential knowledge of himself), God is free to constrain the limits of that requirement as he sees fit. For instance, he might impose a higher-order requirement only on beliefs that have important theological content and only in certain situations and contexts. For Muslims, this higher-order requirement is not only attractive, it deftly avoids standard vicious regress problems that higher-order requirements on knowledge are said to generate.¹⁶ Naturally, God can't intend that we do or believe impossible things. Thus, no meta-level knowledge requirement that God imposes on us could generate a vicious epistemic regress. By God's design, there is and must be, then, an upper limit to the amount of kind of higher-order knowledge that humans can have. What can we say about those limits? Perhaps not much, but it is valuable to lay out some modest speculative thoughts about them. There is no reason at all to suppose that God would create humans with a design constraint that requires them to be able to iterate ever-higher and more complex orders of knowing for no good reason. We have some reasons to suspect, then, that God's design plan for humans would be such that *S*'s being in a position to know that *S* knows *p* doesn't necessarily require that

S be in a position to *know that S knows that one knows p*, and so on. The same point holds, *mutatis mutandis*, with respect to meta-level concepts.

Alternatively, perhaps being certain that *p* can involve having a kind of infinite knowledge after all. To explore this possibility, we take a cue from Ibn Sina, who writes, “Certitude is to know that you know, and to know that you know that you know, *ad infinitum*. And the apprehension of the self is like this. For you apprehend your self, and you know that you apprehend it, and you know that you know that you apprehend it *ad infinitum*.”¹⁷ What might he mean by this? As Deborah Black reads him, Ibn Sina takes certitude to be an introspective intentional state involving true belief.¹⁸ For Ibn Sina, being in a state of certitude requires that something is actually present in one’s intellect as the object of certainty. For example, being certain that *p* is a second-order state that takes a first-order belief as its object. Being certain that *p* is factive in the sense that if one’s confidence that *p* is mistaken or misplaced, then one can’t be certain that *p*. It follows that if *p* is certain for S, then S knows that *p*. It also follows that S knows that S may form the second-order belief *S knows that S knows that p* whether or not S actually forms that or any other higher-order belief. In sum, following Ibn Sina, a Muslim may maintain that S can in principle apprehend *that* there are ever increasing higher-order true statements about what S knows without S actually being able to explicitly formulate the relevant concepts and without necessarily being in the relevant intentional states. For instance, we know that between any two points there are infinitely many points even though we aren’t able to fully iterate them. That goes to show that the intuitional apprehension of infinitude with regard to number comes “all at once.” Similarly, perhaps being certain that *p* is a kind of buck-stopping intentional state involving infinite justification for *p*, in the sense that if S is certain that *p*, then S can’t be any more certain that *p*. Accordingly, if humans are capable of certitude (i.e., if God’s design plan for humans is such that being certain that *p* gives one “infinite justification” for *p*) it needn’t be the case that S is able to iterate ever-higher-order knowledge claims or that S is able to actually apprehend many infinitely many meta-level concepts. Note that although being certain that *p* or having second-order knowledge that *p* requires awareness of particular phenomenological features of one’s own mental states, having “infinite justification” may not require that S is actually aware of all of these higher-order claims about S’s potential knowledge states. For example, on this proposal, if S knows that *p*, then S can in principle know *that S knows that p*, and it follows that S can in principle know *that S knows that p* entails *that S can know that S knows that p*, and so on. The idea is that while people can’t possess full awareness of the levels of complexity here, they nevertheless have a vague idea or sense of what sorts of cognitive operations are involved here. Perhaps, by means of a sort of intellectual intuition, God can enable or expand the cognitive capacities of the

human mind to take in the truth of all of the relevant higher-order knowledge entailments “all at once”—to realize that there is in principle no limit to these logical knowledge entailments, as it were—even if S isn’t able actually to iterate all of these inferences. Is a design plan like this possible? Perhaps so. If so, then, it’s possible for humans to have a kind of knowledge of infinity with respect to their knowledge that *p* even if S lacks the capacity to explicitly formulate and hold infinitely many higher-beliefs about what S knows.

There are, to be sure, important differences between the human design plan according to Plantinga’s uniquely Christian extension of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model and a uniquely Islamic extension of it. Unlike in the Christian story, the Islamic design plan is such that (reflective) Muslims will, at some point or other, have significant doubts about certain aspects of Islamic belief. Moreover, at least some of those doubts won’t be possible to overcome without making use of arguments or propositional evidence at some point or other. Warranted Islamic belief involves having what we might call robust knowledge, a degree of knowledge which requires that a Muslim be able to give an answer for how he/she knows that God exists and/or that the Qur’an is trustworthy.¹⁹

Shaykh Nuh Ha Mim Keller provides a Qur’anic argument in favor of this view. He cites Qur’an 2:285: “The Messenger believeth in what hath been revealed to him from his Lord, as do the men of faith. Each one (of them) believeth in Allah, His angels, His books, and His messengers.” Keller notes that this verse defines a Muslim as one who believes in the prophet’s revelation, both in general and in detail. Keller then notes that one must know about the details of God’s message in order to believe them. He adds that it’s not possible to believe incoherent, absurd, or contradictory things. In this context, then, “belief” means holding some specific claim to be true, as opposed to accepting it uncritically, such as on the basis of testimony that may be unreliable for all one knows, or blindly accepting it without reference to its plausibility or its likelihood of truth or falsity. He concludes, “Islamic *kalam* theology exists because belief in Islam demands three things: (1) to define the contents of faith; (2) to show that it is possible for the mind to accept, not absurd or inconsistent; (3) and to give reasons to be personally convinced of it.” He notes that this burden is possible to fulfill, for, as Qur’an 2:286 says, “On no soul doth Allah place a burden greater than it can bear.” Essentially, the argument is that because the belief requirements specified in (1)–(3) are grounded in the Qur’an, they are obligatory, and because it is possible for Muslims to perform those duties, failure to do so is culpable failure and thus amounts to sin. This kind of argument holds much sway for Muslims, regardless of their more particular affiliations.²⁰

This is consistent with Plantingian epistemology more generally, however. For example, if Yasien is right, then all people (whose cognitive faculties are

functioning properly, etc.) have the capacity for immediate and epistemically basic awareness of the existence of his or her own self as a thinking thing. While philosophers may take this knowledge claim in different directions, effectively, there is broad agreement in the Islamic tradition that this kind of awareness makes it possible for belief in God to be properly basic in the sort of way that Yasiem describes. For instance, according to Ibn Sina, by reflecting on the nature of our own existence, together with reflection on the nature of existent things, we are able to come to know that all created things are contingent, from which we may infer that all things are metaphysically dependent on a necessarily existing God.²¹ In short, Muslims who accept Ibn Sina's views maintain that philosophical reflection of one's contingent existence can lead one to recognize that God is a necessarily existent being. It would be natural for those who have engaged in this line of reflection and have come to believe that God is a necessarily existent being to hold the view that the existence of God is as obvious as the existence of one's own self. Note that while evidence or arguments may be necessary in order for one to *come* to this realization, for those who do come to recognize God as a necessarily existent being and experiences God as such, evidence or argument is not required to *sustain* that belief. Moreover, reflection on the facts about contingent and necessary beings can serve as a sign that points to God's existence, which allows for belief in God to be grounded on an immediate intuition of the necessary being of God. Others in the Islamic tradition, including al-Ghāzālī and Rumi, maintain that God's existence can be seen to be as obvious as the existence of one's own self without the mediation of evidence or argument but rather by mystical religious experience. Rumi writes, "When the soul has been united with God, to speak of Soul (God) is to speak of this soul, and to speak of this soul means to speak of that Soul."²² It is important to note, however, that all three would be in fundamental agreement with Keller's views about the doxastic demands on Muslim believers.

In sum, whenever doubts about the existence of God arise, and according to the Islamic human design plan doubts will arise, so that one's faith may be made stronger, Muslims can and should dispense with those doubts appropriately. According to Islam, to appropriately deal with doubts requires relying on evidence and argument in some way or other and at some stage. Of course, this doesn't mean that Muslims can't account for the preconditions that make Plantinga's theory of warrant intelligible. Rather, unlike Christians, Muslims can't endorse the view that beliefs can be warranted apart from *any* propositional evidence or argument. Thus, though certain meta-level requirements are required for Islamic belief to ultimately be warranted, Islamic belief is nonetheless compatible with proper functionalism *simpliciter*. This is because a Muslim may initially come to believe in God in a properly basic manner and bring evidence and reasons to bear only when some aspect of Islamic

belief is exposed to doubt and hence subject to defeat. But once the relevant defeaters have been appropriately dealt with, a Muslim's beliefs in and about God could once more be formed and sustained in a basic way. That is, it is necessary for Muslims to have defeater-defeaters to deal with objections or obstacles to belief in God.

The Immediacy Thesis in Islam

Recall the Immediacy Thesis: God endows humans with special cognitive faculties or belief-forming processes by which God can be known in an epistemically immediate and basic manner. In light of the above discussion, qualifications must be made. Qur'an 26:192-193 asserts that Qur'anic revelation is true revelation from God to the hearts of men. (Note that the Arabic word translated as "heart" is *qalb*.) In a commentary on this passage, we read that the heart (*qalb*) is the "seat of the affections and the seat of the memory and understanding."²³ Maulana Muhammad Ali adds further commentary:

There is an inner light within each man telling him that there is a Higher Being, a God, a Creator . . . There is in man's soul something more than mere consciousness of the existence of God; there is in it a yearning after its Maker—the instinct to turn to God for help . . . it cannot find complete contentment without God.²⁴

Absar Ahmad writes:

The Holy Qur'an appeals to all thoughtful persons . . . to think and ponder over the outer universe of matter and the inner universe of spirit, as both are replete with unmistakable signs of the Almighty creator. Simultaneously, it invites them to deliberate over its own signs, i.e., its divinely inspired verses. Thus the Qur'an, in addition to its own verses, regards both "anfus" (self) and "afaq" (world) as sources of knowledge. By pondering over the three categories of signs, a man will be able to perceive a perfect concord between them; and, with the realization of this concord, he will grasp certain fundamental truths which are borne out by the testimony of his nature.²⁵

Ahmad doesn't identify signs indicative of the activity or presence of God with inferential evidence for the existence of God. What he says suggests that at least some of our knowledge about God and his doings in the world is both immediate and properly epistemically basic. Ahmad's suggestive views about signs may be developed in the following way. When reading "everyday" signs, for instance, billboards and street signs, we don't typically engage in anything like conscious deductive or inductive reasoning. We don't deliberate or reason about what these sorts of signs say unless we are in a less than

ideal cognitive environment. For instance, one might be forced to deliberate about what the street signs say if one has bad eyesight and has misplaced their glasses, or when one is trying to read a sign written in a foreign language. In typical cases, people just intellectually see or comprehend the meanings of these sorts of signs immediately and in an epistemically basic way. What Ahmad suggests is that, in an analogous sort of way (and perhaps only if we are appropriately sensitive to them and then only if we have or are otherwise open to acquiring certain background knowledge), we are able to non-inferentially and immediately see signs of order and design in nature that are indicative of the existence of God. This is consistent with Plantinga's view that belief in God is natural and spontaneously arises in certain appropriate circumstances. As Plantinga writes, "There is no spot in the universe wherein you cannot discern at least some sparks of his [God's] glory."²⁶ Along similar lines, Ibn Taymiyyah maintains that humans can have "revelation common to all (*al-waḥī al-muṣṭarak*)," a special kind of divine testimony that is made available not only to prophets, but to others, too, including anyone who is sensitive to God's call to obedience.²⁷ What Ibn Taymiyyah says suggests that humans are endowed with a cognitive faculty rather like the *sensus divinitatis*. Pulling these various threads together, we conclude that Islamic philosophers may readily affirm that God had created humans such that they are able to see signs of His existence. Awareness of these signs can serve, by design, as an occasion for Muslims to accept, in appropriate contexts and without evidence or argument, the content of theistic belief. And since a uniquely Islamic worldview affirms views that either entail or strongly suggest the Design Thesis, the Dependency Thesis, and the Immediacy Thesis, it follows that an Islamic worldview entails (or at least strongly suggests) the truth of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model (or something quite like it).

A UNIQUELY ISLAMIC EXTENSION OF THE STANDARD AQUINAS/CALVIN MODEL

It would be natural for Muslims who accept Plantinga's proper functionalism and the standard Aquinas/Calvin model to extend it to cover uniquely Islamic beliefs. In this section we show that there are uniquely Islamic analogues of the Internal Inspiration and Scriptural Revelation Theses, and hence a uniquely Islamic extension of the standard model.

Muslim Plantingians think that God acts in special ways so as to produce faith in humans that Islam is true. Javed Ahmad Ghamidi writes that the primary meaning of the Arabic word "*iman*" is to consider something to be true (which indicates that Islamic belief has a cognitive component) and to rely on it (which indicates that Islamic belief has conative or commitment

components). “*Iman*” appears often in the Qur’an and is often translated as faith. Ghamidi writes, “if something is accepted with the certitude of the heart, then this is called *iman*” and that “the conviction which exists with all the conditions and corollaries of humility, trust and acknowledgment is called faith.”²⁸ One’s faith is strengthened when one “remembers God and hears His revelations and witnesses His signs in the world within him and in that around him.” Recalling a parable in the Qur’an 14:24-25 that compares faith to a tree whose roots are deep in the soil and branches spread in the vastness of the sky, Ghamidi writes:

Do you not see how Allah sets forth a parable? A good Word (from Allah is) like a good tree, whose root is firmly fixed, and its branches (reach) to the sky—It brings out its fruit at all times, by the permission of its Lord. And Allah sets forth stories for men, so that they may remember and seek guidance.²⁹

Quoting Iman Amin Ahsan Islahi, Ghamidi continues:

In the verse [Qur’an 14:24-25], the expression “word of purity” [translated as “a good word” in the above passage] obviously refers to the “word of faith.” It is compared by the Almighty to a fruit-laden tree whose roots are firmly implanted in the soil and whose branches are nicely spread in the sky and it is bearing fruit in every season with the blessing of its Lord. Its roots being deeply implanted in the soil refers to the fact that faith is deeply and firmly implanted in human nature.³⁰

Similarly, A. A. Maududi writes that faith is “firm belief arising out of knowledge and conviction.” He continues:

The man who knows of and puts full trust in the Oneness of God, His qualities, His Revealed guidance, and in the Divine mechanism of reward and punishment is called *mu’min* or *faithful*. Such faith must direct man to a life of active obedience to the Will of Almighty God. And the person who lives this life of obedience is known as a Muslim.³¹

In order to develop a uniquely Islamic extension of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model, it is necessary to say more about the uniquely Islamic understanding of faith. Elsewhere, Erik Baldwin writes,

In Islam faith is an inner conviction and knowledge of the fundamental tenants of Islamic Belief accompanied by outer works and external signs of one’s inner conviction. The core elements of Islamic Belief, the content of “inner faith” in Islam, are specified in *The Qur’an* 2:284-285: (1) Belief in God, (2) Belief in the Angels, (3), Belief in the Prophets, (4), Belief in Divine Books, (5) and

Belief in the Day of Judgment. The outer signs that one has “inner faith” that the core elements of Islamic Belief are true are laid out in *The Five Pillars of Islam*.³²

And:

For the Muslim, faith is not only an inner conviction of Islamic Belief but also a kind of knowledge. Faith is produced in a person who responds appropriately to the basic sources of knowledge of God. According to Maududi, the knowledge aspect of faith is communicated to humans in various ways, including signs that indicate the “countless manifestations of God all around us” in nature are known. He maintains that it is by means of such signs that we are able to have knowledge of God’s attributes of wisdom, knowledge, providence, and goodness. Prophets and messengers of God, the foremost of which is Mohammed, also communicate faith by means of testimony. God uses prophets and messengers to guide humans in the right way of living and to preach the true meaning and purpose of life. Most importantly, faith is communicated by means of the divine testimony of *The Qur’an*.³³ Consider again the points made by al-Ghāzālī and Maulana Muhammad Ali regarding spiritual perception and inspiration discussed previously. Ali writes that inspiration is “a form of God’s speaking to man” and an “inner revelation,” a means by which God infuses ideas into the human heart and mind.³⁴ Al-Ghāzālī writes that God “casts a light that enlarges one’s heart” that removes doubts about Islamic Belief and that this light gushes directly from “the spring of Divine generosity.”³⁵

What Baldwin says here points support the conclusion that, according to a uniquely Islamic extension of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model, God works on human hearts and minds to produce faith and an inner conviction and knowledge of the central creedal statements of Islamic belief. As such, there are uniquely Islamic versions of both the Internal Inspiration Thesis and the Scriptural Revelation Thesis. Consequently, there is a uniquely Islamic version of the extended model, too. Making appropriate modifications to the Internal Inspiration of the Holy Spirit and the Scriptural Revelation Theses, yields the following two theses:

The Islamic Internal Inspiration Thesis: There is a special belief-forming process the purpose of which is to produce specifically Islamic beliefs about the nature of God, salvation, forgiveness of sins, eternal life, and the like.

The Islamic Scriptural Revelation Thesis: By means of scripture, which is identified with *The Quran*, God propositionally reveals to humans important divine teachings and doctrines.³⁶

We consider the Islamic Internal Inspiration Thesis and the Islamic Scriptural Revelation Thesis in greater detail in the next two sections.

The Islamic Internal Instigation Thesis

We have argued that, according to Islam, humans are endowed with a cognitive faculty, *qalb*, the proper function of which is to produce epistemically basic belief in God. Recall what al-Ghāzālī says about the operations of *qalb*: God created humans “in darkness” and graciously provides them with “some of His light,” which provides humans with “an intuitive understanding of things Divine.”³⁷ Note that what al-Ghāzālī says implies that God is actively involved in the production of beliefs about himself; God himself provides light that dispels whatever doubts about the truth of the deliverances of *qalb* arise. This light is called *wahy*, revelation or inspiration that comes from God.

The Qur’an speaks of various types of *wahy*. For example:

(Qur’an 42:51-52) It is not fitting for a man that Allah should speak to him except by inspiration, or from behind a veil, or by the sending of a messenger to reveal, with Allah’s permission, what Allah wills: for He is Most High, Most Wise. And thus have We, by Our Command, sent inspiration to thee: thou knewest not (before) what was Revelation, and what was Faith; but We have made the (Qur’an) a Light, wherewith We guide such of Our servants as We will; and verily thou dost guide (men) to the Straight Way.

Commentators (namely, the editors and translators of the holy Qur’an) write that there are two types of revelation, or inspiration (*wahyun*):

(1) a suggestion thrown by Allah into the heart or mind of man, by which man understands the substance of the Message, whether it is a command or prohibition, or an explanation of great truth; and (2) verbal or literal inspirations, by which the actual words of Allah are conveyed in human language.³⁸

In his commentary on Qur’an 42:51-52, Ali writes that there are three types of inspiration. Here he seems to be taking a cue from Ibn Taymiyyah, who, as we have seen, draws a distinction between “revelation common to all” and “speech from behind a veil.” The previously mentioned commentators apparently don’t draw this distinction, or at least don’t explicitly do so here. For our purposes, nothing substantive hangs on whether we think of “revelation common to all” and “speech from behind a veil” as two instances of the same type of revelation or as two distinct kinds or types of revelation. We follow Ali and Ibn Taymiyyah and take it that there are three distinct types of revelation.

According to Ali, the first type of *wahy* is “the inspiration of an ideas into the heart.” Ali tells us that in this passage, “*wahy* is used in its primary significance of a *hasty suggestion* or *infusing into the heart*, as distinguished from words.”³⁹ This type of *wahy* is a form of God’s speaking to man that is

common to prophets and non-prophets alike.⁴⁰ For this reason, Ali calls the first type of revelation inner revelation (*wahy khafī*). (Note that this clearly echoes Ibn Taymiyyah's views about the "revelation common to all (*al-wahī al-muṣṭarak*)."⁴¹) According to Ali, speech "from behind a veil" (*min warāi' hijab*) pertains to the second type of inspiration, namely, to how God speaks to humans in dreams, visions, or in certain meditative states and trances.⁴² The third and highest form of revelation is "*revelation that is recited in words (wahy matluww)*," best exemplified by Gabriel giving the divine message of the Qur'an to Muhammad.⁴³ Of these types of revelation, inner revelation (*wahy khafī*), is perhaps the most similar in nature and function to the kind of cognitive and belief-forming processes posited by the Internal Instigation of the Holy Spirit Thesis.

Putting all of this together, Islam affirms that by means of inner revelation (*wahy khafī*) God speaks to and infuses ideas into the human heart and mind. The content of inner revelation is the substance of the Message. To unpack the significance of this, recall the first pillar of Islam: There is no god but God and Muhammad is the messenger of God. In Islam, the phrase "the Message" refers to the Qur'an itself. The substance of inner revelation, then, is the heart of the message that Muhammad was given by God, namely, the Qur'an. The implication of this is that God directly enlightens the minds and hearts of humans to receive the heart of the Qur'anic message. The content of inner revelation, therefore, goes beyond the content of theistic belief. To be clear, we aren't saying that by means of inner revelation everyone receives precisely the same Qur'anic revelation that Muhammad received from God. Rather, by means of inner revelation, God reveals the gist or the essence of the central components of the message of the Qur'an. This line of reasoning supports for the claim that there is a uniquely Islamic analogue of the Internal Inspiration of the Holy Spirit Thesis.

The Islamic Scriptural Revelation Thesis

Of the three types of revelation, the third and highest form of revelation is "*revelation that is recited in words (wahy matluww)*." Muslims believe that God has spoken to humans through various prophets. As alluded to earlier in this chapter, Islam accepts that parts of the Christian and Jewish bibles are revelatory, in particular, portions of the Torah, the Psalms, the Books of the Prophets, and even the Gospels. Muslims believe that we cannot fully rely on these texts because they have been corrupted and mixed with many falsehoods. To correct these errors, God sent Mohammed, giving him a final pure, untainted message that would be acceptable to all people. Islam maintains that the Qur'an was dictated to Mohammed by the angel Gabriel. As we've seen, Gabriel giving Mohammed this message is a paradigmatic instance of

“revelation that is recited in words (*wahy matluww*).” On the basis of these sorts of considerations, Baldwin concludes that

for the Muslim, scripture is identified with *The Qur’an*—the only fully reliable divinely inspired text—and it is through *The Qur’an*, supplemented by *The Sunna* (the words and deeds of the Prophet that are passed down in *The Hadith*), that God now intends to propositionally reveal important divine teachings and doctrines. It obviously and straightforwardly follows that Islam effectively affirms a uniquely Islamic version of the Scriptural Revelation Thesis.⁴⁴

We conclude that there are good reasons to think that Muslims accept uniquely Islamic analogues of the Internal Instigation of the Holy Spirit and the Scriptural Revelation Theses. Therefore, there are good reasons to think there is a uniquely Islamic extension of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model.

AN EPISTEMIC DEFEATER FOR ISLAMIC BELIEF?

We’ve argued that Muslims can accept Plantingian religious epistemology. But there are some complications that must be discussed. Specifically, it would seem that some reflective Muslims may acquire a subjective defeater for the content of Islamic belief if they accept the Qur’an to be the literal and inspired word of God. That is, there are reasons for thinking that some of the things that are revealed in the Qur’an are, if true, sufficient for giving Muslims a subjective defeater for the main tenants of the Muslim faith. We first articulate this proposed defeater in detail. We then consider and evaluate possible responses that a reflective Muslim could give. We conclude that for some Muslims, the suggested responses will be unsuccessful.

According to Zain Ali, a reflective Muslim is “a person of Islamic faith who has come to acknowledge that people of other religious and non-religious traditions are as educated and concerned with seeking truth and avoiding error as they themselves are.”⁴⁵ Reflective Muslims are concerned about issues and questions that arise in contemporary philosophy of religion. They will be aware of the relevant literature, including Plantinga’s account of warrant and his religious epistemology more generally. They will be cognizant of how various non-Christian religions might adopt Plantinga’s religious epistemology, or something like it. It is just these Muslims who are in a position to be aware of the sorts of considerations that underlie the defeater developed here.

The defeater arises due to there being several verses in the Qur’an that state that God is a deceiver/schemer or even the greatest deceiver/schemer. The Arabic word for deceiver/schemer, *makr*, can be found in the following verses:⁴⁶

Qur'an 3:54 And they (the disbelievers) *schemed*, and Allah *schemed* (against them): and Allah is the best of *schemers*.

Qur'an 7:99 Are they then secure from Allah's *scheme*? None deemeth himself secure from Allah's *scheme* save folk that perish.

Qur'an 8:30 And when those who disbelieve *plot* against thee (O Muhammad) to wound thee fatally, or to kill thee or to drive thee forth; they plot, but Allah (also) *plotteth*; and Allah is the best of *plotters*.

Qur'an 13:42 And when We cause mankind to taste of mercy after some adversity which had afflicted them, behold! they have some *plot* against Our revelations. Say: Allah is more swift in *plotting*. Lo! Our messengers write down that which ye *plot*.

According to Edward Lane's Lexicon, *makr* expresses deceit, guile, or circumvention.⁴⁷ Hans Wehr's *A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic* defines *makr* similarly:

makara u (makr) to deceive, delude, cheat, dupe, gull, double-cross . . .⁴⁸
makr cunning, craftiness, slyness, wiliness, double-dealing, deception, trickery
makra ruse, artifice, stratagem, wile, trick, ruse, dodge
makkār and *makūr* cunning, sly, crafty, wily, crafty person, imposter, swindler
mākir sly, cunning, wily.⁴⁹

Apparently, *makr* carries strong negative connotations. These connotations do not go unnoticed by scholars. For instance, Sheik Saleh Al-Fawzan, a member of the Council of Senior Scholars and the former head of the Saudi Supreme Court, writes:

This cunning added to God Almighty and ascribed to him is not like the cunning of creatures, because the cunning of creatures is blameworthy, and the cunning added to the Almighty God is praised, because the cunning of creatures means deception and misinformation, and the delivery of harm to those who do not deserve it, and the cunning of God Almighty is good; as it is delivered to those who deserve punishment, so it is justice and mercy.⁵⁰

If it is more plausible than not to translate *makr* as a word describing deception/scheming, then, apparently, the Qur'an endorses that God is the greatest deceiver/schemer. That this is true seems to generate a major problem for Muslims who rely on the Qur'an as a basis for a uniquely Muslim epistemology. If God is a deceiver, then how can a Muslim know whether God is deceiving or scheming about the very nature of the inspiration of the Qur'an? Note the question does not pertain to whether deception is compatible with classical theism or perfect being theology.

We are granting that God deceiving His creation is compatible with the aforementioned views. The problem here is epistemic in nature. The faithful Muslim might respond that these verses tell us only that God sometimes deceives people and that as such they don't provide any reason to think that God would deceive the faithful. Moreover, one might add that God only deceives those who deserve it (for instance, because they have attempted to deceive God). We grant that, generally, in the context of these verses, we have cases in which God deceives unbelievers as a response to their evil actions. However, there is a case in the Qur'an where God directly deceives Muhammad, the most faithful, for the sake of a greater good. Qur'an 8:43-44 states,

When Allah showed them unto thee (O Muhammad) in thy dream as few in number, and if He had shown them to thee as many, ye (Muslims) would have faltered and would have quarreled over the affair. But Allah saved (you). Lo! He knoweth what is in the breasts (of men). And when He made you (Muslims), when ye met (them), see them with your eyes as few, and lessened you in their eyes, (it was) that Allah might conclude a thing that must be done. Unto Allah all things are brought back.

Note the counterfactual nature of this case: if the Muslims were to form true beliefs about the number of opposing soldiers, the Muslims would have fought against each other and thus lose the battle. However, if the Muslims were to believe that there weren't many opposing soldiers, the Muslims would win the battle. Thus, this verse informs us that God directly deceived Muhammad in order to bring about the good end that He wanted.

Let us take stock. We've argued that God boasts of being the best deceiver. And we've argued that the Qur'an informs us that God sometimes deceives faithful Muslims when it is necessary to bring about a greater good. This leaves room for the possibility that God deceives faithful Muslims about all sorts of things if it'd bring about a greater good. For instance, for all we know, God could be deceiving faithful Muslims about that which is revealed in the Qur'an. Granted, it seems beyond our ability to grasp the reasons God might have for doing this, but that intellectual failure doesn't entail that God couldn't deceive even the faithful about the inspired nature of the Qur'an. To better evaluate this line of reasoning, let GD stand for *God is the greatest deceiver*, and let GDF stand for *God deceives faithful believers only in order to actualize a greater good*. Consider the following argument:

- (1) Given GD and GDF, God could be deceiving faithful Muslims by not aiming their cognitive faculties successfully toward producing true beliefs for a greater good.

- (2) Upon seeing that (1) could be the case, if a Muslim lacks a justified reason for thinking God is not deceiving him, the Muslim should see that the probability that his faculties are reliable (R) is inscrutable.
- (3) If a Muslim sees that the probability for R is inscrutable, then he has a defeater for trusting his faculties.
- (4) If the Muslim has a defeater for R, then he has an undercutting defeater for his belief that the Qur'an is the inspired word of Allah.
- (5) If one has a defeater for their belief, it cannot be warranted.
- (6) The Muslim who comes to see that (1) could be the case and lacks a justified reason for thinking that God is not deceiving him has a defeater for his belief that the Qur'an is the inspired word of Allah and that belief cannot be warranted.

In what follows, we articulate and then critically evaluate robust responses to our argument.

REPLIES TO THE PROPOSED DEFEATER

Muslims won't be subject to the subjective defeater for Islamic belief we've articulated if there are conceptual resources internal to an Islamic worldview that prevent it from arising in the first place. For instance, it's possible that some Muslims won't acquire this (propositional) defeater on account of having another belief or on account being in a mental state (such as having an experience or a propositional attitude) that serves to render Islamic belief unsusceptible to defeat. Alternatively, some Muslims may contend that the defeater in question is readily defeasible. This second strategy will be successful for a typical Muslim if he or she is able, perhaps only with some degree of effort, either to form a new belief or to have a new experience that undermines or defeats our proposed defeater. We will consider each strategy.

According to the first strategy, the defeater arises only if the relevant passages aren't correctly interpreted. But so long as the passages are correctly interpreted, the defeater is easily avoided. Note that, we are assuming that our objector agrees with the translation of *makr*, which was discussed above.⁵¹

In order to show that our argument rests on a faulty interpretation of Qur'an 8:43-44, a reflective Muslim may make use of *tafsīr*, or Qur'anic exegesis, defined by Hussein Abdul-Raof as "a literary activity whose function is the clarification of the theological, grammatical, semantic and historical aspects of scripture."⁵² *Tafsīr* commentators make various assumptions about the nature of the Qur'an. Such assumptions include that the Qur'an is divine revelation, meaningful, coherent, and designed, and would remind us that these assumptions must be respected when clarifying and explaining the

meaning of the text. In order to correctly interpret it, one will have to take seriously its historical context, using philological methods to uncover the meaning of unusual words.⁵³ Reflective Muslims may look to these *tafsīr*, and look to citations of sayings and writings by reliable authorities, the most authoritative of which are the sayings of the prophet and reports of his teaching and actions (the *Sunna* and *Hadith*), for materials that may enable them to show that the purported defeater under consideration here does not serve as an actual defeater for Muslims who have read and understood the text correctly. One who employs this strategy may go on to argue that our reading of the relevant texts is faulty. In what follows we do our best to make this sort of case on behalf of reflective Muslims.

One resource for implementing this approach is Seyyid Qutb's commentary on Qur'an Surah 8. Focusing on God's sovereignty regarding the combatants in the battle of Badr, he writes:

It was God who brought them both to their positions by the hill, in order to accomplish a certain purpose of His own. Indeed, had they made prior arrangements to meet, they would not have taken their positions so close to each other and they would not have arrived there at the same time, as they actually did. God reminds the Muslim community of all this so that they always remember how God can accomplish any purpose He may have at any point in time. "[Remember the day] when you were at the near end of the valley and they were at the farthest end, with the caravan down below you. If you had made prior arrangements to meet there, you would have differed on the exact timing and location. But it was all brought about so that God might accomplish something He willed to be done." (Verse 42) Behind such an unplanned meeting there was certainly a purpose which God made the Muslim community the means to achieve. Moreover, He arranged all the circumstances that helped its accomplishment. What is this matter for the accomplishment of which God arranged all the necessary circumstances? It is the one which He describes in these terms: "*So that anyone who was destined to perish might perish in clear evidence of the truth and anyone destined to live might live in clear evidence of the truth.*" (Verse 42)⁵⁴

Qutb continues:

Part of God's planning for the battle was that His Messenger should see the unbelievers in his dream as small in number, having no real strength. He told his companions of this and it gave them encouragement. Here God's Messenger is told the reason for this vision. Had God shown him a large force, it would have demoralized his Companions, who were no more than a small group of believers who joined him on an expedition, neither expecting a battle nor prepared.⁵⁵

In these passages, Qutb makes a case for thinking that Muslims don't have to think that God's planning for the battle of Badr is an instance of epistemic

injustice. Of particular importance is the fact that he gives no indication that Muslims have any reason to think that God may be deceiving them about all the propositions that they believe. To the contrary, Muslims can be confident that should God make things appear other than they are on some occasions, any such deception on his part would be justified on account of its being in accordance with God's plan. God willing, that plan will be made known; if the plan is made known, Muslims may come to see that God had good reasons for the deception in question. Qutb writes:

It was an aspect of God's grace that He, knowing the weakness of the Muslim group in that particular situation, showed the unbelievers to His Messenger as small in number, whereas they were truly a much larger force. That dream had true significance. Their numerical strength was of little consequence, as their minds were for one. This would have weakened them and caused them to be in dispute over whether to fight or to avoid a confrontation. Such a dispute is the worst thing to happen to an army on the verge of meeting an enemy force: "But this God has spared you. He has full knowledge of what is in people's hearts." (Verse 43)⁵⁶

He continues:

When the two hosts actually met face to face, that which the Prophet saw in his true dream was repeated, but it was this time by actual eyesight and by both sides. This was again part of God's elaborate planning of which the believers are reminded in this review of the battle and its events: "When you actually met, He made them appear few in your eyes, just as He made you appear as a small band in their eyes, so that God might accomplish something He willed to be done. To God shall all things return." (Verse 44) This particular aspect of God's scheme encouraged both parties to go to war. The believers saw their enemies as a small force because they were looking at them from the viewpoint of real strength, while the unbelievers considered the believers to be of little consequence, because they judged them only by appearances. With the two facts shaping the way each party looked at the other, the purpose of God's planning was accomplished and His will was done.⁵⁷

Similarly, Muhammad Asad states the following:

at the time of the actual encounter the Muslims could no longer be in doubt as to the great number of the enemy force, the phrase "He made them appear as few in your eyes" has obviously a metaphorical meaning: it implies that, by that time, the Prophet's followers were so full of courage that the enemy appeared insignificant to them. The Quraysh, on the other hand, were so conscious of their own power and numerical superiority that the Muslims appeared but of little account to *them*—a mistake which ultimately cost them the battle and a great number of lives.⁵⁸

Furthermore, Ibn ‘Abbās specifies why God gave Muhammad a misleading dream. He writes:

(When Allah showed them unto thee) O Muhammad (in your dream) on the Day of Badr, (as few in number, and if He had shown them to thee as many, ye (Muslims) would have faltered) you would have been fearful (and would have quarreled over the affair) over the question of war. (But Allah saved (you)) He decreed otherwise. (Lo! He knoweth what is in the breasts (of men)) what is in people’s hearts. (And when he made you (Muslims), when ye met (them)) on the Day of Badr (see them with your eyes as few) such that He emboldened you vis-à-vis them, (and lessened you in their eyes) such that they were emboldened vis-à-vis you, ((it was) that Allah might conclude a thing) so that Allah might give victory and the spoils of war to the Prophet (pbuh) and his Companions and bring about death and defeat for Abu Jahl and his host (that must be done) that has to be. (Unto Allah all things) the end results of things (are brought back) in the Hereafter.⁵⁹

There are various ways of reading the relevant *surahs* in the Qur’an that would not lead Muslims to acquire the defeater in question. Equipped with these *tafsīr* commentaries, a reflective Muslim may avoid acquiring the purported defeater. Therefore, so the argument goes, if a particular reflective Muslim is aware of these *tafsīr* and makes use of them in the way that we’ve suggested, the purported defeater need not arise. We acknowledge that this argument won’t carry much weight for those outside of the Muslim community. But the argument doesn’t ask that non-Muslims accept these moves. Moreover, if a particular reflective Muslim isn’t aware of these readings and does acquire the defeater developed here, the Muslim may rebut the defeater by turning to *tafsīr* commentaries. Either way, so the argument goes, Islamic belief is not self-defeating like naturalism is for the naturalist (as we discussed in chapter 2).

A similar strategy that the Muslim can take relates to thinking about the proposed defeater in the context of other Islamic beliefs. A reflective Muslim may, for instance, appeal to other Qur’anic passages or additional conceptual resources internal to the Islamic tradition in order to provide reasons to think that God’s faithfulness or truthfulness is more centrally and securely embedded in a Muslim’s noetic structure than whatever epistemic doubts may arise from reading Qur’an 8:43-44. If this strategy is successful, then even if a typical Muslim is made aware of the “deceiving God” defeater, the notion that the Qur’an itself may be deceptive is a virtual nonstarter, inconsistent with the very roots of the Islamic faith. Specifically, such a Muslim will maintain that if Qur’an 8:43-44 is read in its proper context, we shall see that God deceived or sent Muhammad a misleading dream about the battle of Badr, Muhammad was epistemically misled by a “false dream” but only about a particular thing

on a particular occasion for a particular reason. A reflective Muslim might concede that it is possible for God to deceive a faithful Muslim. But they will in no way be inclined to accept that, for all they know, God deceived Muhammad about the entirety of the Qur'an. Universally held beliefs as they relate to the Qur'an prevent a typical Muslim from taking deception about the Qur'an to be epistemically possible. By way of analogy, a typical traditional Christian who has read *The Da Vinci Code* would agree that the story it tells is logically possible (specifically, we have in mind the story that Emperor Constantine compiled the Bible, that the council of Nicaea voted into being the doctrine of the divinity of Jesus, that Jesus married Mary Magdalene, of royal blood, and had children with her, and that all of this information has been secretly preserved and communicated using hidden symbols in Michelangelo's painting the *Last Supper*). No faithful Christian would take that story seriously. The story would be epistemically possible only if the Christian's central background beliefs about the doctrines of Christianity were antecedently assumed to be false. The same seems to be true with respect to the Muslim and the proposed defeater that we have developed.

Let us assume, for the sake of argument, that a faithful and reflective Muslim does acquire the proposed defeater that we have developed. Such a Muslim will have antecedently believed that *if Islam is true, then God sometimes deceives even believers but only if he has a good reason for doing so*. He or she will remember that God never deceives or instills doubt in the faithful without also providing for ways to resolve that doubt. A Muslim in the grip of this defeater has reason to doubt whether that antecedent belief is true and reason to doubt whether the above conditional is true. If the defeater in question is propositional in nature, and if it actually defeats Islamic belief in the way we've argued, then a Muslim cannot utilize propositions that are true only if Islamic belief is true in order to resolve it for that way of dealing with the defeater involves vicious epistemic circularity. But reflective Muslims who have read Michael Bergmann's views on the distinction between actual and believed defeaters may be able to deal with the defeater without epistemic impropriety. According to Bergmann, defeaters are either actual or believed defeaters and "to have a believed defeater for your belief B is to believe that your belief B is defeated."⁶⁰ Believed defeaters are "things believed to be mental state defeaters" and mental state defeaters are "mental states of a person, S, that cause a justified belief of S to become unjustified."⁶¹ Propositional defeaters needn't be believed in order for them to do their defeating work. According to Michael Sudduth, propositional defeaters are "conditions external to the perspective of the cognizer that prevent an overall justified true belief from counting as knowledge."⁶² Mental state defeaters are "conditions internal to the perspective of the cognizer (such as experiences, beliefs, withholdings) that cancel, reduce or even prevent justification."⁶³

For a Muslim to have a subjective defeater for Islamic belief, then, is for the Muslim to believe she has good reasons for thinking that. For instance, for all we know, God could be deceiving faithful Muslims about that which is revealed in the Qur'an.

But believed defeaters can be misleading; one who *falsely* believes that some reason R or evidence E defeats B acquires a misleading believed defeater for B. This leaves room for the possibility that a reflective Muslim in the grip of doubts raised by Qur'an 8:43-44 who has not read the commentators on the Qur'an (or has and doesn't properly understand them) may mistakenly think that there is no way to avoid acquiring the defeater. Alternatively, perhaps a reflective Muslim might judge that the interpretations of the *tafsīr* commentators are flawed in some way. For instance, one might think that these interpretations of the Qur'an are ad hoc or implausible. Again, as argued above, if the defeater in question is propositional in nature, question-begging propositional defeater-defeaters are of no use. But there are other mental states that may be of use, such as religious experiences or related propositional attitudes.⁶⁴ If, then, one has a certain kind of religious experience or comes to hold a relevant propositional attitude, one's doubts may be resolved. The following case could make this clearer.

A squad of soldiers is faced with overwhelming odds of being overrun and reinforcements cannot possibly arrive in time to help. The General knows that the soldiers have a chance of survival but only if they (falsely) believe that help is on the way. So, he tells the CO on the ground that reinforcements will arrive soon and to fight on with all they have. And so they fight, their hopes renewed. Holding the line, the enemy retreats and the battle is won. But the promised reinforcements never arrive. The CO and the soldiers on the ground have cause to think that they were deceived and question the General's truthfulness. Once safe behind friendly lines, the General goes so far as to *tell* them that he knew that reinforcements were never going to arrive but that they could hold the line only if he told them they were coming. Taken back, they wonder, "Can we trust anything the General tells us?"—they get a full defeater for the reliability of testimony from the CO. After having time to come down from the excitement of battle, they come to see that their skeptical worries were far overblown: they were deceived, yes, but about a very specific thing and only for a very good reason. They came to see that the deception really was necessary for their survival. They see *why* the General deceived them in their case and they come to recognize that they lack sufficient reasons or evidence to think that the General would deceive them about just any old thing after all.⁶⁵

This case is relevantly analogous to what happens in Qur'an 8:43-44. Since this is so, Qur'an 8:43-44 need not give reflective Muslims a defeater for trusting the Qur'an. However, a Muslim who has thought carefully about this case

may recognize some important and disanalogous factors. First, unlike Allah, the General doesn't consistently make a habit of boasting that he is the best deceiver. Second, the General simply lies; he didn't *cause* the cognitive faculties of the soldiers to malfunction or manipulate their environment in such a way as to cause them to form false beliefs. We may address these problems by changing certain features of the story in order to strengthen the analogy. Rather than lie, the General could order the CO on the ground to put a special chemical in the drinking water that makes the soldiers falsely believe that reinforcements are on the way. Or the General could expose the company of soldiers to some kind of radiation that causes them to believe that help is coming soon. After the battle, having discovered the truth about the general's unusual tactics, the CO and the soldiers might worry that someone might misuse or abuse such technology for nefarious ends. And perhaps they may wonder about the General's claims in the future, especially if the General is given to habitual boasting about how great of a deceiver he is. Thus, it may be that some of the soldiers acquire a defeater analogous to the one we've introduced here. But *must* they acquire any defeater? There is a strong bond of trust between the soldiers and the General. And given that the General has led them to many victories, perhaps many of the soldiers may reasonably judge that their shared history and experiences together, perhaps, with certain other propositional evidence, gives them sufficient reason to think that the General is generally trustworthy. Similarly, a reflective Muslim may concede that God does sometimes deceive even faithful Muslims about some things, but nevertheless have good reasons for thinking that God is not deceiving him about the truth of Qur'anic revelation. Thus, a reflective Muslim may reasonably conclude that there are limits on the sorts of things that God would deceive faithful Muslims about. In particular, although his doing so is logically and metaphysically possible, the notion that God actually would deceive faithful Muslims about the truth of the Qur'an far exceeds these constraints. In short, accepting that the Qur'an is true is absolutely central to Islamic belief and precludes any serious worries about the possibility that God might somehow be deceiving them about the truth of the Qur'an. Consider, for example, Qur'an 2:2-5:

This is the Book; in it is guidance sure, without doubt, to those who fear Allah; Who believe in the Unseen, are steadfast in prayer, and spend out of what we have provided for them; And who believe in the Revelation sent to thee, and sent before thy time, and (in their hearts) have the assurance of the Hereafter. They are on (true guidance), from their Lord, and it is these who will prosper.

Muslims will think that the following proposition, call it T, is true: God says that the Qur'an is trustworthy and Muslims can be assured that the Qur'an is true. Recall that GD stands for *God is the greatest deceiver* and GDF stands

for *God deceives faithful believers only in order to actualize a greater good*. Consider now the following counterargument to the previous argument proposed.

- (1) Given GD and GDF, it is epistemically possible that God is deceiving faithful Muslims by not aiming their cognitive faculties successfully toward producing true beliefs for a greater good.
- (2) Upon seeing that (1) is true, if a Muslim lacks a justified reason for thinking God is not so deceiving him, then he or she should see that the probability that their cognitive faculties are reliable is inscrutable.
- (3) However, even if a Muslim sees that (1) is true, if he or she has a justified reason for thinking that God is not deceiving him about such things (suppose, for instance, that T is justified for him or her), then it doesn't follow that he or she should see that the probability that their faculties are reliable is inscrutable.
- (4) It is reasonable to suppose that at least some (reflective) Muslims see that (1) is true and have a justified reason for thinking that God is not deceiving him or her about certain things, including T.
- (5) Thus, it doesn't follow that if a (reflective) Muslim who sees that (1) is true has a reason to think that T is unwarranted.

If any of the strategies proposed in this paper are successful, then a Muslim could be justified in thinking that T is true. Therefore, there might be reason to think that (4) is true for some Muslim. It follows that there is reason to think that this counterargument could be successful. On the other hand, if these various strategies are unsuccessful, it would follow that Muslims have an actual defeater on their hands.

CONCLUSION

We have made a strong case for thinking that Islam is consistent with both Plantinga's proper functionalism and his Standard and Extended Aquinas/Calvin models. And we have developed at length a uniquely Islamic extension of the standard model. However, because Qur'an 8:43-44 apparently suggests that Muslims have reason to think that Allah might be deceiving them, we also saw how the possibility of deception of the faithful threatens to provide even faithful Muslims with a subjective defeater for the (epistemic) reliability of their cognitive faculties. Similar in structure to Alvin Plantinga's evolutionary argument against naturalism, this defeater threatens to undermine *all* of a Muslims warrant claims.

Reflective Muslims may respond to this potential defeater by consulting *tafsīr* commentaries and by appealing to propositional evidence and/or experiential grounds for thinking that God is trustworthy and that the Qur'an is true. Ultimately, these strategies would be successful only if both the Qur'an is in fact true and a reflective Muslim has sufficient reason to trust that these sources of evidence are veridical. And there may be reasons to doubt both the *tafsīr* commentaries as well as the veracity of Qur'anic revelation. This goes to show that there is a subjective defeater for at least *some* Muslims based on Plantinga's truth-aimed condition.

The force of our argument is mitigated somewhat, however, by a more general problem of divine deception for any theistic religion that maintains that God is essentially omniscient and essentially perfectly good, including, Christianity, Judaism, and Mādhva Vedānta. Hud Hudson asks us to consider any purported bit of knowledge, K, that can be known only by means of testimonial revelation from a being that is both essentially omniscient and essentially perfectly good. We know K only if we are not being deceived about K. But because K is knowable only by divine testimony, we don't have a *guarantee* that we are not deceived about K, and we lack independent means to verify or check the status of K.⁶⁶ Hudson writes that we have no guarantee that God wouldn't deceive us about K,

if our being deceived about K is the kind of bad state of affairs for which there exists a compensating good or morally justifying reason. If there is a compensating good or morally justifying reason for such deception, God's essential perfect goodness is not in any way impugned by the deception—on the contrary, it may be morally obligatory to so deceive us.⁶⁷

Given skeptical theism, espoused by many theists as a solution to the evidential problem of evil, we have an additional reason to think there is a problem of divine deception. According to skeptical theism, we have no reason to think the goods we are aware of are representative of the goods there are, no reason to think the evils we are aware of are representative of the evils there are, and no good reason for thinking that the entailment relations we are aware of that hold between possible goods and the permission of possible evils are representative of the entailment relations there are between possible goods and the permission of possible evils.⁶⁸ Hudson maintains that if we don't know these things, then we don't know there is no compensating good or morally justifying reason for God to deceive us about K either, which threatens our knowledge of K. Hudson concludes,

We cannot without reservation trust such divine pronouncements—even if we simply help ourselves to the background assumptions that God exists, that God is essentially omniscient and essentially perfectly good, that God has provided

us with his testimony, and that we have interpreted that testimony aright. And once we have lost this particular kind of trust in the testimony, it cannot be the source of testimonial knowledge.⁶⁹

Hudson goes on to consider and evaluate various responses, we discuss two here. One response, variously defended by Aquinas, Descartes, and Kant, is that God, by his very nature, is perfect and cannot possibly deceive us. However, in response to the problem of evil, theists argue that an all-powerful, omniscient, and omnibenevolent God wouldn't allow the occurrence of some evil, E, unless there is a compensating good or some other morally justifying reason for the permission of E. While telling falsehoods is *prima facie* wrong, very plausibly, sometimes, telling a falsehood is, all things considered, necessary in order to prevent a much greater evil. According to Hudson, the notion that God is under an *absolute* obligation never to tell a falsehood or to deceive is on shaky ground.⁷⁰ Some might object that perhaps God would deceive us about some things, but that we can be confident that God would not give us deceptive revelation. However, given skeptical theism, we are in the dark about many of God's plans and purposes. Knowing so very little about them, on what grounds can we be so confident that God might deceive us about some things but not others? And how could we determine which sorts of things fall into what category? Consistency seems to require that we admit that we don't know whether God's revelation to us is deceptive.⁷¹ Summing up his argument, Hudson writes:

If there is a morally obligating reason for God to deceive me, then I am deceived. If there is no morally justifying reason for God to deceive me, then I am not deceived. If there is a morally justifying reason for God to deceive me, then either I am or am not deceived depending on God's other purposes. Skeptical theists would remind me that I am utterly in the dark about which of those three antecedents is satisfied. And thus the darkness expands so that I am also utterly in the dark about whether I am deceived in the most comprehensive, irresistible, and undetectable fashion.⁷²

If Hudson's arguments are good, it follows that any religion that affirms that God is essentially omniscient and essentially perfectly good has a problem of the possibility of divine deception. It follows that Christians, Jews, and Mādhvas would also have a problem of divine deception. But that wouldn't counter the specific problem for Islamic belief we discussed in this chapter. On the other hand, arguably, there are passages in the Bible that seem indicative of divine deception, too. Of the several candidate passages, Gen. 22:2, in which God commands Abraham to take Isaac to the land of Moriah and offer him up as a burnt sacrifice, seems the most plausible instance of divine deception. One plausible reading of this passage is that God didn't intend for

Abraham to sacrifice his son but was rather trying to teach him a lesson about faith. Nevertheless, the passage seems to indicate that God's command gets Abraham to fully believe that God wanted him to sacrifice Isaac, in which case it follows, according to Erik Wielenberg, that,

God knew both (i) His command to Abraham would cause Abraham to believe (reasonably) that Abraham was going to sacrifice Isaac and (ii) Abraham was not going to sacrifice Isaac. I agree with Hubert Martin's assessment that "in testing Abraham, God . . . deceives him."⁷³

In our judgment, this passage, and certain other passages in the Bible, threatens to give at least some Jews and Christians some reason to think that God might deceive the faithful in certain ways. But the biblical evidence is not as solid as the Qur'anic evidence is, for nowhere in the Bible do we find passages in which God boasts of having deceived people, and so on, like we find in the Qur'an. On balance, then, we concede that while there is a general problem of divine deception for all forms of theism, and while there is some reason for thinking that there are special scriptural problems of divine deception for both Christianity and Judaism, the problem of divine deception looms somewhat larger for Islam. On the other hand, given proper functionalism, perhaps a theist can insist that if one has reflected on this general problem of divine deception and still has the strong seeming that God's revelation is truthful and reliable, her beliefs formed by way of divine testimony can still be warranted—assuming such beliefs were formed by way of the proper functionalist constraints. We will discuss this in more depth in chapter 11.

Consider how Islam fits into our argument schema:

- (1) The members of Islam can make full use of Plantingian religious epistemology *if and only if* they are the beneficiaries of intellectual and conceptual resources internal to Islam which are necessary and sufficient for the articulation of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model as well as a uniquely Islamic extension of it.
- (2) The members of Islam are beneficiaries of conceptual resources necessary for the articulation of the standard Aquinas/Calvin and a unique non-Christian extension of it *if and only if* (a) the central and formative doctrinal teachings of Islam entail or suggest (I) the Dependency Thesis, (II) the Design Thesis, and (III) the Immediacy Thesis, and unique analogues of (IV) the Internal Inspiration of the Holy Spirit Thesis and (V) the Scriptural Revelation Thesis, and (b) the metaphysical claims and/or presuppositions of Islam are fully compatible with (I)–(III) and in no way preclude theses relevantly analogous to (IV) and (V).
- (3) Although the central teachings of Islam suggest or entail that the human design plan has features that raise certain problems for Plantingian

religious epistemology, and while it seems that (some) Muslims are subject to potential defeaters for Islamic belief, these problems don't seem insurmountable and the claim that both (a) and (b) of (2) hold for Islam is sufficiently well grounded.

- (4) If (3) then, probably, the members of Islam are the beneficiaries of intellectual and conceptual resources internal to Islam which are necessary and sufficient for the articulation of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model as well as a uniquely Islamic extension of it.
- (5) Thus, probably, the members of Islam are the beneficiaries of intellectual and conceptual resources internal to Islam which are necessary and sufficient for the articulation of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model as well as a uniquely Islamic extension of it. [From (2), (3) and (4)]
- (6) Thus, probably, the members of Islam can make full use of Plantingian religious epistemology. [From (1) and (5)]

In closing, let us consider once again the Islamic meta-level requirement and address the charge that it is sufficiently disanalogous to Plantinga's own religious epistemology so as not to count as genuinely Plantingian. We should keep in mind that Plantinga's models were originally designed to be broad and inclusive, which leaves open the possibility of their being versions of the models similar to Plantinga's that are out of step with some of Plantinga's epistemological views, perhaps in significant ways. Plantinga writes, "there is a whole range of models for the warrant of Christian belief, all different but similar to the A/C [Aquinas/Calvin] and extended A/C models."⁷⁴ He takes his own statement of models to be close to the truth and to fall within that range. While a meta-level requirement on knowledge is essential to Islam and not to Christianity, it has its share of Christian defenders, among them Augustine. In *The City of God*, in the context of explaining what can be sensibly doubted, he writes:

We know that we exist, and we are glad of this existence and this knowledge . . . the certainty that I exist that I know it, and that I am glad of it, is independent of any imaginary and deceptive fantasies. In respect of those truths I have no fear of the argument of the Academics. They say, "Suppose you are mistaken?" I reply "If I am mistaken, I exist." A non-existent being cannot be mistaken; therefore I must exist, if I am mistaken. Then since my being mistaken proves that I exist, how can I be mistaken in thinking that I exist, seeing that my mistake establishes my existence? Since therefore I must exist in order to be mistaken, then even if I am mistaken, there can be no doubt that I am not mistaken in my knowledge that I exist. It follows that I am not mistaken in knowing that I know. For just as I know that I exist, I also know that I know [that I exist].⁷⁵

Apparently recognizing concerns about infinite regress of knowledge claims, in *On the Trinity*, Augustine writes,

Someone who says, “I know that I am alive,” says that he knows one thing. Next, if he says, “I know that I know that I am alive,” there are now two things. The fact that he knows these two things, however, means that he knows a third. He can add a fourth and a fifth and an innumerable number if he is able. But since he cannot apprehend an innumerable number by adding one thing after another or speak innumerable many times, he apprehends with utmost certitude and says that it is both true and so innumerable that he cannot truly apprehend or speak of its infinite number.⁷⁶

Here Augustine suggests that even though we are unable to apprehend an innumerable number by subsequent enumerative addition, and as such are unable to fully apprehend infinite number, our understanding of infinite number is adequate for us to be able to know things like “I know that I know that I am alive” with certainty. Augustine appears to be associating our capacity for grasping the concept of infinite number with our capacity for meta-level knowledge of our own existence, for, elsewhere, in *On Free Choice of the Will*, Augustine maintains that numbers “are not perceived by the bodily senses” and that “No one perceives all the numbers by any bodily sense, for there are infinitely many of them.”⁷⁷ He proposes that our knowledge of number is acquired by means of “an inner light of which the bodily sense knows nothing.”⁷⁸ The inner light which enables humans to have knowledge of number and to formulate a conception of infinite number is *in* the human mind but not *of* it, for its existence and operation is dependent on the existence of an eternal and immutable God. In short, Augustine thinks that God, having complete knowledge and comprehension of infinity, has designed us such that we can have a derivative portion of his infinite knowledge.⁷⁹ Our ability to grasp mathematical infinities, however inchoately and incompletely, is given to us by God, and, somehow, our ability to understand infinity is associated with our ability to know things at the meta-level, things such as “I know that I know I exist.” Moreover, the inner light by which we have knowledge of mathematical infinities is that same light by which we have natural or innate knowledge of God. Paul Helm, on Augustine’s view of our knowledge of God, writes,

faith for Augustine is not primarily belief, but it is primarily reliance upon what is known; it is the act of relying on what is known, as distinct from distrusting and departing from what is known. It is the role of faith to renew this natural or innate knowledge of God (the *sensus divinitatis*).⁸⁰

And,

[Augustine] begins from a position of the innate knowledge of God. Faith seeks understanding, but already has some idea, before it seeks, of what it will find . . . this knowledge is provided, according to Augustine, in the natural, that is, the universal and innate, knowledge of God . . . God is the light of the mind, and to seek understanding is to seek a better knowledge of what is already known.⁸¹

To sum up, an Augustinian model of knowledge of God is clearly Plantingian: Augustinians affirm that we are designed by God, dependent on him for our existence, that we can know God immediately, and that God reveals truths about himself in scripture and by means of the Holy Spirit. However, according to Augustine, the human design plan is substantially different than Plantinga takes it to be. The Augustinian is committed to the view that we have innate knowledge of both numbers and of God, and affirms that humans are endowed with cognitive faculties or processes by which we can have meta-level knowledge of substantive truths, including those pertaining to our own existence. Whether there is a meta-level requirement on knowledge built into the human design plan, therefore, should be left open for debate among Christians, for Christians may or may not accept such a requirement. Note that the Islamic model of the human design plan is recognizably Augustinian in nature, too, so much so that if one were to claim that the Islamic model isn't sufficiently Plantingian, then one ought also to hold that the Augustinian model isn't sufficiently Plantingian either. But could one seriously contend that Augustine's model of the human design plan isn't sufficiently Plantingian? We think not.

NOTES

1. Some of the material in this chapter contains reworked material from Erik Baldwin and Tyler Dalton McNabb, "An Epistemic Defeater for Islamic Belief?" *International Journal of Philosophy and Theology* 76, no. 4 (2015): 352–367.

2. See, for instance, "There is no child who is not born in a state of *Fiṭrah*, then his parents make him a Jew or a Christian or a Magian" (*Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Volume 7, The Book Al-Qadr* [6755] 22–(2658) trans. Nasiruddin al-Khattab, ed. Huda Khattab, Riyadh: Darussalam, 2007), 32) and "There is no child who is not born in a state of *Fiṭrah* ... Recite: Allāh's *Fiṭrah* with which He has created all mankind. No change let there be in *Kḥala-illāh*, that is the straight religion." (ibid., [6757] 22–(2658), 33.)

3. We use the Saudi revision of Yusuf Ali's translation of the meanings of *The Qur'an* unless otherwise noted. Specifically, we quote from: *The Holy Qur'an: English Translation of the Meanings and Commentary*, ed. The Presidency of Islamic Researches, IFTA, Call and Guidance (The Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Fahd Complex for the Printing of the Holy Qur'an, 1413 H/1993).

4. For more on *The Five Pillars*, see Mauluna Muhammad Ali, *The Religion of Islam: A Comprehensive Discussion of the Sources, Principles, and Practices of Islam* (Columbus: Amaddiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam, 1990), 99–101, 263–442 and Saeed Abdullah, *Islamic Thought: An Introduction* (Routledge, 2006), 3.

5. We've modified some of the capitalizations in the text to enhance readability.

6. M. M. Sharif, "Philosophical Teachings of the Qur'an," in *A History of Muslim Philosophy, Volume I*, ed. M. M. Sharif (Kempten, Germany: Allgäuer Heimatverlag GmbH, 1961), 137.

7. M. M. Sharif, "Philosophical Teachings of the Qur'an," 139.

8. Michael E. Marmura, "Al-Ghazālī," *The Cambridge Companion to Arabic Philosophy*, eds. P. Adamson and R. C. Taylor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 141–42.

9. Peter Adamson, "Al-Kindī and the Reception of Greek Philosophy," *The Cambridge Companion to Arabic Philosophy*, eds. P. Adamson and R. C. Taylor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 35–36.

10. See David Reisman, "Al-Fārābī and the Philosophical Curriculum," *The Cambridge Companion to Arabic Philosophy*, eds. P. Adamson and R. C. Taylor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 56–60 and Oliver Leaman, *An Introduction to Classical Islamic Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 45–48.

11. Sharif, "Philosophical Teachings of the Qur'an," 146–47.

12. Absar Ahmad, *Exploring Islamic Theory of Knowledge*, accessed July 25, 2018, <http://ionamasjid.org/publications/articles/63-dr-absar-ahmad/553-exploring-islamic-theory-of-knowledge>.

13. Mohamed Yasien, *Fitrah: The Islamic Conception of Human Nature* (London: Ta-Ha Publishers, Ltd., 1996), 95.

14. *Ibid.*, 97.

15. Al-Ghāzālī, *The Faith and Practice of Al-Ghazali*, trans. Montgomery Watt (London: George Allen, 1963), 25–26. Note this book is a primarily translation of Al-Ghāzālī's *al-Munqidh min al-Dalal (Deliverance from Error)*.

16. For more on the regress problem, see, for instance, Michael Bergmann, "Defeaters and Higher-Level Requirements," *The Philosophical Quarterly* 55, no. 220 (2005): 419–36. Also see his *Justification Without Awareness*.

17. In Deborah Black, "Certitude, Justification, and the Principles of Knowledge in Avicenna's Epistemology," *Interpreting Avicenna*, ed. Peter Adamson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 139.

18. *Ibid.*, 139–41.

19. For more on this, see Erik Baldwin "On the Prospects of an Islamic Externalist Account of Warrant," *Classic Issues in Islamic Philosophy and Theology Today*, eds. A-T. Tymieniecka and Nazif Muhtaroglu, *Islamic Philosophy and Occidental Phenomenology in Dialogue* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2010), 28–31.

20. Shaykh Nuh Ha Mim Keller, "Kalam and Islam," accessed July 25, 2018, http://www.livingislam.org/ki_e.html.

21. For a good discussion of Ibn Sina's argument strategy, see Peter Adamson, "From the Necessary Existent to God," in *Interpreting Avicenna: Critical Essays*,

eds. Peter Adamson and Richard C. Taylor (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2013), 170–89.

22. See Erkan Turkman and Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī, *The Essence of Rumi's Masnevi, Including His Life and Works* (Konya: Enis Booksellers, 1992), 347.

23. *The Holy Qur'an*, The Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Fahd Complex for the Printing of the Holy Qur'an, 1081, fn. 3225.

24. Maulana Muhammad Ali, *The Religion of Islam*, 105–06.

25. Ahmad, *Exploring Islamic Theory of Knowledge*.

26. Plantinga, *Warranted Christian Belief*, 174. Also see Plantinga, *Where the Conflict Really Lies: Science, Religion, and Naturalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011) and C. Stephen Evans, *Natural Signs and Knowledge of God: A New Look at Theistic Arguments* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

27. M. M. Sharif, *A History of Muslim Philosophy, Volume 2* (Kempton, Germany: Allgäuer Heimatverlag GmbH, 1966), 803.

28. Javed Ahmad Ghamidi, *Faith and Beliefs*, trans. S. Saleem, (Lahore: Al-Mawrid, 2001), 5.

29. This passage is taken from *Interpretation of the Meaning of the Glorious Qur'an*, trans. S. V. Ahamed, sixth edition (Elmhurst: Tahrie Tarsile Qur'an, Inc., 2008), 200.

30. Amin Ahsan Islahi, *Tazkiyah Nafs*, fourth edition (Lahore: Faran Foundation, 2005), 325.

31. Syed Abul Ala Maududi, *Towards Understanding Islam* (Chicago: Kazi Publications, Inc., 1992), 18.

32. Erik Baldwin, *Fully Informed Reasonable Disagreement and Tradition Based Perspectivalism*, 36. We have made a few stylistic changes to the text.

33. Maududi, *Towards Understanding Islam*, 20.

34. *Ibid.*, 20.

35. Al-Ghāzālī, *The Faith and Practice of Al-Ghazali*, 25–26.

36. Baldwin, *Fully Informed Reasonable Disagreement and Tradition Based Perspectivalism*, 37. We have made a few stylistic changes to the text.

37. Al-Ghāzālī, *The Faith and Practice of Al-Ghazali*, 25–26.

38. *The Holy Qur'an*, The Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Fahd Complex for the Printing of the Holy Qur'an, 1493, fn. 4598.

39. Ali, *The Religion of Islam*, 154.

40. *Ibid.*, 155.

41. M. M. Sharif, *A History of Muslim Philosophy, Volume 2*, 803.

42. Ali, *The Religion of Islam*, 155.

43. *Ibid.*

44. Baldwin, *Fully Informed Reasonable Disagreement and Tradition Based Perspectivalism*, 39.

45. Zain Ali, *Faith, Philosophy, and the Reflective Muslim* (Palgrave MacMillan, 2013), 3.

46. These verses and lexicon definitions were brought to our attention by consulting, Shaykh Ṣāliḥ Al-Fawzan, “The Meaning of ‘Allah is the Best Deceiver’ and the Interpretation of Surah 8:30,” trans. Abdullah Almutairi, 2006, accessed July 17, 2017, <https://ar.islamway.net/fatwa/5229/معنى-قوله-تعالى-والله-خير-الماكرين>.

47. W. Lane and S. Lane-Poole, *Arabic-English Lexicon: Volume 8* (New York: F. Ungar Publishing Company, 1955), 256.

48. We omit the Arabic letters and words here.

49. Hans Wehr, *A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic*, ed. J. Milton Cowan, third edition (Ithaca: Spoken Language Services, 1976), 917.

50. Shaykh Šāliḥ Al-Fawzan, “The Meaning of ‘Allah is the Best Deceiver.’”

51. Note, that we are aware that English interpretations of *The Qur’an* render the meaning of “*makr*” in the relevant *Qur’anic* passages differently. For instance, consider the following translations of the term from *The Sahih International* interpretation of the meanings:

Qur’an 3:54 And the disbelievers planned, but Allah planned. And Allah is the best of planners.

Qur’an 7:99 Then did they feel secure from the plan of Allah? But no one feels secure from the plan of Allah except the losing people.

Qur’an 8:30 And [remember, O Muhammad], when those who disbelieved plotted against you to restrain you or kill you or evict you [from Makkah]. But they plan, and Allah plans. And Allah is the best of planners.

52. Hussein Abdul-Raof, *Schools of Qur’anic Exegesis: Genesis and Development*, ed. Ian Richard Netton (London and New York: Routledge, 2010), 12.

53. See Hussein Abdul-Raof, “Schools of Qur’anic Exegesis: Genesis and Development,” 7, 9.

54. Sayyid Qutb, *The Shade of the Qur’an*, ed. and trans. Adil Salahi, Vol. VII Surah 8 (England and Qatar: The Islamic Foundation and Islamonline.net, 2003/1424 AH), 151–152.

55. *Ibid.*, 154.

56. *Ibid.*, 154–55.

57. *Ibid.*, 155.

58. Muhammad Asad, *The Message of the Qur’an: The Full Account of the Revealed Arabic Text Accompanied by Parallel Translation*, trans. Muhammad Asad. Vol. 2 (Bristol: The Book Foundation, 2003), 279, fn. 49.

59. ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Abbās, *Tanwīr al-Miqbās min Tafsīr Ibn ‘Abbās*, trans. Mokrane Guezou (Amman: Royal Aal al-Bayt Institute for Islamic Thought, 2007), 189.

60. Bergmann, *Justification Without Awareness*, 161.

61. *Ibid.*, 161, 155.

62. Michael Czapkay Sudduth, “Defeaters in Epistemology,” in *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, last modified 2015, accessed July 25, 2018, <http://www.iep.utm.edu/ep-defeat/>.

63. *Ibid.*

64. Bergmann, *Justification Without Awareness*, 155.

65. Erik Baldwin and Tyler Dalton McNabb, “An Epistemic Defeater for Islamic Belief?” *International Journal of Philosophy and Theology* 76, no. 4 (2015): 11. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21692327.2015.1130642>

66. Hud Hudson, "The Father of Lies?" in *Oxford Studies in Philosophy of Religion, Volume 5*, ed. Jonathon L. Kvanvig (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 153.
67. *Ibid.*, 154.
68. Michael Bergmann, "Skeptical Theism and the Problem of Evil," in *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophical Theology*, eds. Thomas Flint and Michael Rea (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 376.
69. Hud Hudson, "The Father of Lies?" 154.
70. *Ibid.*, 155–58.
71. *Ibid.*, 158.
72. *Ibid.*, 163.
73. Erik J. Wielenberg, "Divine Deception," in *Skeptical Theism: New Essays*, eds. Trent Dougherty and Justin P. McBrayer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 242.
74. Alvin Plantinga, *Warranted Christian Belief* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 170.
75. Augustine, *The City of God, Volume 1*, trans. Rev. Marcus Dods, M.A. (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1888), 468–69.
76. Augustine, *On the Trinity*, 15.12.21, in *Augustine and Academic Skepticism: A Philosophical Study*, ed. Blake D. Dutton (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2016), 241.
77. Augustine, *On Free Choice of the Will*, trans. Thomas Williams (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1993), 45, 46.
78. *Ibid.*, 46.
79. On a related point, in *The City of God*, Augustine writes, "The infinity of number, though there be no numbering of infinite numbers, is yet not incomprehensible by Him whose understanding is infinite. And thus, if everything which is comprehended is defined or made finite by the comprehension of him who knows it, then all infinity is in some ineffable way made finite to God, for it is comprehensible by His knowledge." (Augustine, *The City of God*, 508.
80. Paul Helm, *Faith and Understanding* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1997), 45.
81. *Ibid.*, 45.

Part IV

**OBJECTIONS TO PLANTINGIAN
RELIGIOUS EPISTEMOLOGY**

Chapter 11

Objections to Plantingian Religious Epistemology

If the arguments in Part II and Part III are good, there are multiple viable non-Christian extensions of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model. On the basis of these arguments, we conclude that it is plausible to think that it is epistemically possible for some non-Christian theists to accept the core elements of Plantingian religious epistemology (namely, reformed epistemology, proper functionalism, and the standard model) as well as a unique extension of the standard model that covers the creedal specific beliefs of some non-Christian theistic religions. In our assessment, there are at least two fully viable non-Christian extensions of the standard model: there are models that show how it could be that the creedal specific beliefs of Judaism and Islam could be both properly basic and warranted for Jews and Muslims, respectively. We think that a Jewish extension of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model is roughly equal as viable as the Christian extension. While there are some difficulties associated with articulating an Islamic extension, we don't think that they are insurmountable. Whether there are additional extensions is more controversial.

Whether there is a viable extension that covers Mādhva Vedānta belief hangs on whether an actual infinite is possible and if so whether it is intelligible to maintain that humans can have cognitive design plans on the assumption that they have eternal (i.e., everlasting) existence. It also depends on whether central doctrines of Mādhva Vedānta (namely, that Viṣṇu is a perfect being and that Viṣṇu loves people conditionally) generate a contradiction that gives Mādhvas a defeater for their belief system. There can be a fully viable Mādhva Vedānta extension of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model only if these problems can be satisfactorily dealt with. We concluded that perhaps these problems are insoluble, which would ultimately prevent the viability of a robust Mādhva Vedānta extension of the Aquinas/Calvin model. On the

other hand, perhaps Mādhvas can fully make use of Plantingian religious epistemology by showing how there is no contradiction here or by making a few amendments and modifications to their theology. Setting these theological problems aside, however, it is plausible enough to suppose that there is a Mādhva Vedānta extension of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model. We also argued that if there are (or were or could be) theistic branches of Daoism and Confucianism, then there are (or were or could be) fully viable extensions of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model that cover theistic Daoist belief and theistic Confucian belief. While there is at least some reason to think that there were theistic branches of Daoism and Confucianism in the distant past, that claim is quite controversial. In any case, it is hard to imagine contemporary Daoists and Confucians being motivated to return to their purportedly theistic roots just so that they could go on to make full use of Plantingian religious epistemology.

While we have covered a lot of ground, we haven't considered the prospects of Plantingian religious epistemology for all of the religions that typically appear on the list of the world's predominant religious traditions and which are often included in text books on world religions. We haven't, for instance, considered the prospects of Plantingian religious epistemology for Jainism, Shinto, Zoroastrianism, Sikhism, and Bahá'í. Nor have we considered the many and varied religions that are indigenous to North America, South America, Africa, and Southeast Asia, some of which affirm monotheism, or something very similar to it. There is, then, the possibility that there are additional world religions that may be able to make full use of Plantingian religious epistemology. We haven't considered these world religions here for their inclusion would make this book prohibitively long. We hope to consider the prospects of Plantingian religious epistemology for other world religions another time.

Having shown that there are at least a few non-Christian religions that possess the resources needed to make intelligible Plantingian religious epistemology, in this chapter we consider whether the fact that there are multiple viable extensions of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model raises problems for the plausibility of Plantingian religious epistemology. First, in order to set things up properly, we briefly consider and respond to a related but distinct objection, the Pandora's box objection.

THE PANDORA'S BOX OBJECTION

In contrast to the Great Pumpkin and Son of Great Pumpkin objections (discussed in chapter 1), according to the Pandora's box objection, although crazy, irrational, or "way out there" beliefs shouldn't be seen

as serious threats to Plantingian religious epistemology, there are still diverse religious beliefs that, when combined with Plantinga's epistemology, could be warranted in an analogous way to Christian belief.¹ Thus, Plantinga is seen as having opened up something like Pandora's box, and this, somehow, is thought to undermine his epistemological project. Rose Ann Christian, for example, applies Plantinga's epistemology to Advaita Vedānta. She thinks that the fact that advocates of Advaita Vedānta can apply or adopt Plantinga's religious epistemology weakens Plantinga's epistemology.² David Tien defends similar views with respect to Neo-Confucian belief.³ Plantinga himself, while denying that there is a problem with advocates of other religions being able to utilize his epistemology, apparently concedes that advocates of various religious traditions could use his epistemology:

For any such set of beliefs, couldn't we find a model under which the beliefs in question have warrant, and such that given the truth of those beliefs, there are no philosophical objections to the truth of the model? Well, probably something like that *is* true for the other theistic religions: Judaism, Islam, some forms of Hinduism, and some forms of Buddhism, some forms of American Indian religion. Perhaps these religions are like Christianity in that they are subject to no de jure objections that are independent of de facto objections.⁴

What are we to make of the Pandora's box objection? As we have argued, we think convincingly, given their essential metaphysical and doctrinal commitments, many of the world's great religious traditions are unable to accommodate Plantingian epistemology. In chapter 2, we argued that naturalistic accounts of proper function fail.⁵ In chapters 4 and 7 we argued that, like Naturalism, Sāṃkhya, Advaita Vedānta, and Mādhyamaka Buddhism are unable to supply the preconditions needed to make Plantinga's proper function theory of warrant intelligible. In chapter 5 we argued that the formation of the human design plan cannot depend on or involve an actual infinite.⁶ Thus, while Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta and Mādhva Vedānta are, for the most part, able to make use of Plantingian religious epistemology, since all orthodox Hindu *darśanas* accept the existence of an actual infinity, ultimately, none of them can account for the design plan of our faculties. Lastly, in chapter 10 we argued that the designer will need to be such that his nature and past actions are compatible with Plantinga's truth-aimed conditions. Proponents of the Pandora's box objection, therefore, have falsely presumed that Plantingian religious epistemology can be readily adopted by very many world religions. Comparatively few of the world's great religions are such that their core creedal beliefs are fully consistent with Plantingian religious epistemology. We conclude that the Pandora's box objection fails because

it seriously overstates the number of the world religions that can make full use of Plantingian religious epistemology as well as the degree to which they can do so.

THE MULTIPLE VIABLE EXTENSIONS OF THE AQUINAS/CALVIN MODEL DEFEATER: A FIRST APPROXIMATION

While there aren't as many religions that can make full use of Plantingian religious epistemology as proponents of the Pandora's box objection suppose, there are several viable non-Christian extensions of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model. Since only one of them can be fully correct, it follows that most of these extensions are incorrect. Anyone who accepts an incorrect extension holds one or more centrally important unwarranted religious beliefs. Thus, many Plantingians would have unwarranted religious beliefs. Awareness of this state of affairs threatens to undermine the claim that Plantingians reasonably accept the target propositions of any of the various extensions of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model. This, in brief, is the gist of what we call the multiple viable extensions objection.

The multiple viable extensions objection assumes that reformed epistemology and proper functionalism are true and that the standard Aquinas/Calvin model is correct. It supposes that there are multiple viable extensions of the standard model and that at most only one of them can be fully correct. For an extension of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model to be *viable*, it must be epistemically possible. It must be, as Plantinga writes, "consistent with what we know, where 'what we know' is what all (or most) of the participants in the discussion agree on."⁷ It must not contradict obvious or virtually certain empirical or historical facts, it must not be an explicit work of fiction or merely logically possible, and it must have some degree of empirical adequacy. For an extension of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model to be *fully correct*, the world and the states of affairs in it must be as the model presents them and all of the central target propositions of the model must be true. Note that extensions of the standard model can be more or less correct, depending on how accurately the model presents things and on how many of its central target propositions are true, or approximately so. While Plantingians who that accept an incorrect extension of the model claim that their central religious beliefs are warranted in a probably basic way, because most extensions are incorrect to some degree, many will hold beliefs that lack warrant. That these things are so threatens to undermine the claim that any Plantingian reasonably accepts the target propositions of the extension of the model he or she believes to be fully correct.

To formulate the most powerful version of the objection, we make several assumptions. Suppose that there are philosophers in several mutually exclusive monotheistic religions who accept Plantingian religious epistemology, namely, reformed epistemology, proper functionalism, as well as the standard Aquinas/Calvin model and a unique extension of it. (It's not necessary to suppose substantial agreement about other characteristically Plantingian views. For instance, we need not maintain that all accept the truth of essentialism, that the free will defense is successful, or that the evolutionary argument against naturalism is sound, etc.) Suppose, then, that there is a possible world (roughly, a possible world is a maximal description of how things could have been⁸) in which Plantingian religious epistemology has taken root and spread widely among the world's major religious and philosophical traditions. To make things interesting, vivid, and easy to work with, suppose that in this possible world there is a vast mixed multitude of Christian and non-Christian Plantingian philosophers doing work in philosophy of religion and religious epistemology who regularly interact with one another at conferences and engage one another's work in print. There are many Jewish and Muslim Plantingians. There are theistic Daoists and Confucians, too. And there are and Mādhvan and Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedāntan Plantingians who vigorously argue against the claim that they can't ultimately fully account for proper function and design because they affirm the existence of an actual infinity. There are even Sāṃkhya and Buddhist Plantingians who endeavor to show that their world views are able to supply the preconditions needed to make Plantinga's proper function theory of warrant intelligible. Note that adding these colorful details isn't *necessary* for the multiple viable extensions objection to get off the ground. Our idealized case is somewhat fanciful. For one, as things stand, Plantingian religious epistemology is relatively new to the scene and has yet to be accepted by large groups of non-Christian philosophers. However, perhaps one day it will be as noncontroversial to say that there are Christian, Jewish, Muslim, and Hindu Plantingians as it is now is to say that there are Christian, Jewish, Muslim, and Hindu rationalists and empiricists. It is enough that there are multiple viable extensions of the standard Aquinas/Model that cover the creedal specific beliefs of several non-Christian religions. And we have argued that those conditions are satisfied in the actual world.

We suppose that several Plantingians who belong to different world religions are very well-acquainted with one other, both personally and professionally. All are equally well-informed about one another's views and why they hold them. We suppose that each has had relevantly similar religious experiences, but none that are earthshaking, like Alvin Plantinga himself.⁹ We suppose that none of the Plantingians in our idealized case thinks that there are any successful arguments for the existence of God, that each

believes that God has providentially seen to it that their cognitive environment is conducive to the formation of true beliefs about God, that their scriptures are divinely inspired and have been revealed by genuine prophets, that scriptural revelation is reliable and has been accurately handed down, and the like, and that each maintains that at least one or more of these things is *not* so for the others. We make these assumptions in order to isolate key variables that would introduce unnecessary complications and distractions that would impede the development of our case.

Lastly, we suppose that at least some of the members of this groups of Plantingians are epistemic peers. Following Bryan Frances' definition of the term, we suppose that, regarding all of the disagreement factors, each Plantingian is roughly equal to the others.¹⁰ Specifically, each Plantingian: (a) is aware of roughly the same data, namely, the same relevant overall body of (publicly accessible and sharable) evidence, (b) has roughly the same publicly accessible and sharable evidence, (c) has had roughly equal time to consider that body of evidence, (d) is roughly equal in terms of cognitive ability, (e) has roughly the same relevant background knowledge, and (f) has gone about their investigations in circumstances that are roughly equal, for instance, none were plagued by annoying distractions or other impediments.¹¹ To make the claim that they are epistemic peers more plausible, suppose that while each member of this group of Plantingians is committed to their own tradition, each subscribes to the core ideals of global philosophy. That is, each of them approaches philosophy "in a way that is open . . . to the insights and approaches from philosophers and philosophical traditions around the globe."¹² Each of them looks "to creatively interact at specific points" with "thinkers and texts from other traditions in order to expand the philosophical resources at [their] disposal and submit [their own] ideas to external criticism."¹³ Along these lines, for instance, suppose that each is an active member of The Society for Global Plantingian Religious Philosophy, a vibrant association dedicated to furtherance of these ideals.

One might object that because we have made a great many unrealistic suppositions our case isn't very troubling. We grant that our case is highly idealized. It would be more realistic, for instance, to suppose that this group of Plantingians is roughly equal with respect to only some of these disagreement factors or that some of the parties are in epistemically superior or inferior positions relative to the others. It would be more realistic to suppose that some Plantingians accept that at least some theistic arguments are good and that others have had strong and epistemically significant religious experiences. Again, we don't consider such cases that include these factors, however, for doing so would introduce very many unnecessary complications. Even so, adding these complications wouldn't show that there aren't any fundamental problems here, for it would still be necessary to consider

what would be reasonable for Plantingians to believe in these more complex cases, too. Isolating these variables allows us to focus on the nature of the problem at hand: namely, the fact that there are multiple extensions of the standard Aquinas/Model, and that fact alone, undermines the plausibility of Plantingian religious epistemology.

Note that in a possible world in which there are many and various Plantingians who belong to several different religious and philosophical traditions, it wouldn't be unreasonable to suppose there is a group of Plantingians who are equally well versed in the world's major philosophical and religious traditions and as such have roughly the same data and roughly the same publicly accessible and sharable evidence about them. We suppose that these Plantingians, being professional philosophers, have had roughly equal time and opportunity to consider the relevant data, and so on, and that they are roughly equal in terms of cognitive ability, having roughly the same relevant background knowledge and roughly equal favorable circumstances in which to go about their philosophical investigations. We concede that there may be very few, if any, Plantingians in the actual world who satisfy these conditions and have the opportunity to enter into the sort of religious disagreement we envision, but it doesn't thereby follow that we can safely sidestep or ignore the multiple viable extensions objection and the problems it raises. Given the way things are in the actual world, the problems the objection raises apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to us, too.

THE MULTIPLE VIABLE EXTENSIONS CRYSTALIZED

We now turn to the task of providing a more precise formulation of the multiple viable extensions objection. Notice that each Plantingian affirms that if the extension of the standard model he/she accepts is true, and if their cognitive faculties are functioning properly, and so on, then his/her beliefs about God are both internally and externally rational and warranted. Note also that each knows that the others affirm that proposition, too. We express this shared conviction as the following indexicalized conditional:

- (1) If the extension of the Standard Aquinas/Calvin model *I* affirm is true, then, given that *my* cognitive faculties are functioning properly, and so on, *my* central creedal specific beliefs about God are both internally and externally rational and, if true, probably warranted.

All Plantingians, whatever faith tradition they belong to, will accept (1). Each is also committed to thinking that all of their own central creedal belief statements are true and that those held by the others contain significant

falsehoods. This is because all Plantingians concede that only one extension of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model is fully correct, and all recognize that it would be incoherent to think that mutually exclusive models could somehow all be fully correct. Consequently, while each may grant that the beliefs held by the others may be internally rational, all will recognize, at least implicitly, that at least some and perhaps even most of the creedal beliefs held by the others fail to be externally rational and as such are unwarranted. We condense these claims thus:

- (2) Given that only one extension of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model can be fully correct, it follows that most of its multiple viable extensions are not fully correct.
- (3) Insofar as a given viable extension is incorrect, the central creedal beliefs that are purported to be internally and externally rational and warranted in accord with an incorrect extension of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model are externally irrational, false, and warranted for those who hold them.

Taking into consideration (1), (2), and (3), we formulate (4), another proposition that all Plantingians are committed to holding:

- (4) Most of the viable extensions of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model are not fully correct, and insofar as the extension of it *I* accept isn't fully correct, it follows that some of *my* central creedal specific beliefs about God are externally irrational, false, and warranted.

To clarify, all Plantingians think that most viable extensions of the standard Aquinas/Model are not fully correct. Specifically, all think that most of the central creedal specific beliefs about God affirmed by other extensions of the standard model are false. While none of them think that the extension that he or she accepts is incorrect about these things, each accepts that the conditional "insofar as the extension of it *I* accept isn't fully correct, it follows that *my* central creedal specific beliefs about God are externally irrational, false, and warranted" is true. However, each of them takes that conditional to be only trivially true of themselves, understanding it as a logical possibility or counterfactual claim. In other words, each accepts the logical truth that *if* the extension of the model he or she accepts isn't fully correct, then their central creedal specific beliefs *are* externally rational, and so on, but none think that the antecedent of that conditional holds true for him or her, whereas each maintains that the antecedent holds true for all of the others.

Moreover, in addition, each Plantingian has an explanation of how it is that all of the others are mistaken, an error theory that accounts for how the others have gotten things so wrong. Each of them is fully aware of all of those error

theories and recognizes that at most only one of them can be fully correct. Lastly, at least initially, all maintain that the facts of their case do not give any of them a good reason to think that the extensions that they accept are false or probably false, none of them believe that they acquire any defeater for the target propositions of their respective models, and all concede that all of them reasonably hold their respective beliefs. We can condense these additional claims thus:

- (5) Given *my* error theory, which explains why *I* have got things correct and why others have gotten things so wrong, although most of the viable extensions of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model are not fully correct, it is reasonable for *me* to maintain that *my* credal beliefs are both internally and externally rational and if true, probably, warranted.

Recall that each religion for which there is a viable extension of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model will have its own error theory. Each of these error theories assumes the truth of the model in question. This leads us to (6):

- (6) All Plantingians know that most of the error theories which are purported to explain why some Plantingians have gotten things correct and why others have gotten things so wrong are not fully correct but rather contain significant and serious falsehoods.

Awareness of these things, particularly of (4) to (6), so the objection goes, threatens to give all Plantingians (at least all who are sufficiently informed of the relevant facts, etc.) a defeater for thinking that their central credal specific beliefs are warranted. Specifically, Plantingians who are aware of the fact that there are apparently equally reasonable and well-informed Plantingians who accept mutually exclusive viable extensions of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model, as well as mutually exclusive error theories that are purported to explain disagreement about which of these viable extensions is true, have a reason to wonder whether the extension of it that he or she accepts and its corresponding error theory are correct after all. It would be unreasonable for people in this epistemic situation simply to be unconcerned about whether the extension he or she prefers, along with its corresponding error theory, is correct. Whatever view one has about what reasonability requires, it is intuitive and noncontroversial to think that it requires dealing appropriately with concerns such as those brought up in the case under consideration.

One could argue that it would be inappropriate to reflect on the facts of this case and merely reiterate one's initial first-order epistemic seemings because the veracity of those first-order epistemic seemings is what is being called into question. One way to make this mistake would be to make a naïve appeal to

phenomenal conservatism, characterized by Michael Huemer as the view that “if it seems to you that *p*, then, in the absence of defeaters, you thereby have at least some degree of *prima facie* justification for believing *p*.”¹⁴ We don’t deny that appealing to this principle can be fully appropriate in a wide range of cases, but there could be reason to think that it would be inappropriate here. Recall the situation. The Plantingians are aware that there are multiple viable extensions of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model. Each knows that the others affirm a different extension, and all know that at most one of them is fully correct. While each has an epistemic seeming that the model he or she accepts is true, each is aware of the fact that most of these respective epistemic seemings are and must be misleading. All of this straightforwardly supports the judgment that to rely heavily on object-level epistemic seemings at this juncture would be unreasonable.¹⁵ The nature of the problem is roughly analogous to a case in which several people on an assembly line are looking at some widgets. All have the phenomenal (perceptual) seeming, namely, *that the widget before me is red*. Suppose that each also knows that one and only one of the widgets is actually red and all the widgets appear red because they are illuminated by red light. In this case, one might argue that the reasonable thing for each of them to do, even the fortunate person who actually sees the red widget as red, would be to remain agnostic about the truth of the proposition *the widget in front of me is red*. Each of them acquires an undercutting rationality defeater for thinking that their visual perceptions are indicative of how things really are.¹⁶ The Plantingians in our case are in a case very much like this one. Like the people in the widget case, apparently, each Plantingian acquires an undercutting rationality defeater for thinking that he or she affirms the correct extension of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model. As such, apparently, each of them should remain agnostic about the truth of their credal specific beliefs, too. While this response is rather straightforward and intuitive, as we shall see, it may not actually be correct.

RESPONSES TO THE MULTIPLE VIABLE EXTENSIONS OF THE AQUINAS/CALVIN MODEL DEFEATER

How should the Plantingians in The Case of Plantinga and his Comrades respond? In this section, we map out several different general responses. We leave it to individual Plantingians who find themselves moved by our case to decide which of the following solutions seems most reasonable to them.

Being as the case in question is a highly sophisticated case of peer disagreement, it behooves us to turn to the relevant literature on the epistemology of disagreement. There is a wide range of views about disagreement between epistemic peers. According to Alvin Goldman, on one end of the

spectrum we have the conciliatory view, or the Equal Weight View, according to which whenever epistemic peers are aware of being in disagreement about whether some proposition is true, each of them should become substantially less confident in holding that belief.¹⁷ There are at least two versions of this view. The first is the skeptical response, which maintains that both parties to the disagreement should suspend judgment, for each party acquires a full defeater for their respective beliefs on account of neither party having a good reason to think they are correct. This view is held by Richard Feldman (2006, 2007), Adam Elga (2007), David Christensen (2007), and Jonathan Matheson (2009, 2015). A second version of this view, defended by Michael Thune (2005, 2010), is that both parties acquire a *partial* defeater view for their belief. At the other end of the spectrum is the Steadfast View, or the non-conciliatory view, according to which, in cases in which epistemic peers are aware of being in disagreement, neither party is rationally required to change their view in any way. This view is defended by Thomas Kelly (2005, 2010), Peter van Inwagen (2010), and Michael Titlebaum (2015). Let us consider representative defenses of these views.¹⁸

First Response: Withholding Judgment

Feldman's view, the Equal Weight View, states that disagreements between epistemic peers are such that each person ought to give equal weight to an epistemic peer. He writes,

In general, to say that one ought to "give equal weight" to a peer's opinion is to say that one should revise one's attitude to a point halfway between that of one's original attitude and that of one's peer. Where the original attitudes in question are belief and disbelief (as is often the case), the only available midpoint is withholding.¹⁹

In response to the details of The Case of Plantinga and his Comrades, philosophers who hold the Equal Weight View think that each of the Plantingians should remain agnostic about which extension of the standard model is fully correct. They should remain agnostic, so they think, because giving equal weight to the views of the others requires meeting the others halfway, in which case none of the Plantingians will be able to remain steadfast in their creedal beliefs. Consider one way of fleshing out this objection.²⁰

One might think that careful reflection on The Case of Plantinga and his Comrades supports equal weight agnosticism. Let us turn toward considering how one might motivate the agnostic response.²¹ One might argue that the central creedal specific beliefs of each of the extensions of the standard model are unclear, unreliable (with respect to moral and factual claims),

comparatively unimpressive (at least by divine standards), and relatively lacking in terms of moral fruit (in the lives of believers and as exemplified in religious institutions). Other things being equal (assuming that none of the Plantingians have a defeater-defeater or anything like that), it wouldn't be reasonable for any of the Plantingians in the case to accept their creedal specific beliefs. They may press the point further and argue that even if it is assumed that the standard Aquinas/Calvin model is true, that religious experiences of the traditional theistic God are generally veridical, and that it is reasonable to accept that theistic belief (TB) can be warranted in a properly basic way, it would nevertheless be unreasonable for the Plantingians to accept their creedal specific beliefs given the facts of the case. Here's why. In virtue of accepting the Christian extension of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model, the Christian adds to TB the creedal specific beliefs of Christianity. Muslim, Jewish, and Hindu Plantingians, in virtue of having specifically Islamic, Jewish, or Hindu religious commitments and experiences, add to the content of TB creedal specific content that is associated with Islamic, Jewish, or Hindu belief. In short, the traditional Plantingian accepts the conjunction of TB and some extension of the standard model, whereas the Plantingian who affirms generic theist accepts TB and the conjunction of the negations of all purported extensions of the standard model. But on what grounds do those who accept one of these extensions add its content to TB? And given the background information (namely, that all of these purported revelations from God are unclear, unreliable, comparatively unimpressive, and relatively lacking in terms of moral fruit), on what grounds do the Christian Plantingians in the case reasonably add to TB specifically Christian content rather than specifically Islamic, Jewish, or Hindu content? The same point holds, *mutatis mutandis*, for all of the other Plantingians in the case. Generic theism is comparatively much more modest than the conjunction of TB and some extension of the standard model. It is comparatively more reasonable to reject all extensions of the standard model and accept generic theism instead. Moreover, there is simply no way to objectively verify which specific theistic tradition or extension should be preferred. Generic theism doesn't face the same sort of problems that the creedal specific beliefs of any of the purportedly revealed religions do. Other things being equal, the equal weight agnostic maintains that going beyond the content of generic theism would be unnecessary, unmotivated, and unreasonable. In conclusion, given the facts of their case, Plantingians should be agnostic about which, if any, of their creedal specific beliefs are warranted.

Some will find this line of argument convincing. They will think the proper response for the Plantingians in the case is that they withhold judgment about truth of their creedal specific beliefs. For instance, those who antecedently accept proper functionalism and lean toward generic theism or Ultimism and

nothing more than that, or anyone else who is otherwise on the fence about some aspects of Plantingian religious epistemology, will, having thought about the above arguments, probably be much less inclined to accept in full all of the points of Plantingian religious epistemology. They may find themselves convinced that it'd be unreasonable for Plantingians in the case to go beyond the standard model and the generic theism it entails. And they may think that those conclusions generalize in some way to show that Plantingians are generally being unreasonable in believing what and as they do. However, Plantingians who are committed members of a particular theistic faith tradition are very likely to demur. They aren't at all likely to give up on their credal specific beliefs on account of this line of argument. Moreover, Plantingians object to the notion that they first accept the standard model and then add to that model the credal beliefs of their theistic religious tradition. Can something more be said in favor of taking this view? In the next few sections, we consider a few different ways to show how the Plantingians in *The Case of Plantinga* and his Comrades could accept not only the standard Aquinas/Calvin model but also a unique extension that covers the credal specific beliefs of their respective faith tradition.

Second Response: The Steadfast View, aka, the Classic Plantingian Response

Thomas Kelly, a defender of the Steadfast View, writes,

[O]nce I have thoroughly scrutinized the available evidence and arguments that bear on some question, the mere fact that an epistemic peer strongly disagrees with me about how that question should be answered does not itself tend to undermine the rationality of my continuing to believe as I do. . . . Indeed, confidently retaining my original belief might very well be the uniquely reasonable response in such circumstances.²²

In keeping with the Steadfast View, there is a traditional response that proper functionalists have utilized when it comes to dealing with defeaters which attempt to show that a proposition shouldn't be believed because it isn't probable given the objective or shareable evidence.²³ (We will call the probability that is based on objective or shareable evidence, objective probability.) It has to do with nonpropositional evidence outweighing, at times, S's relevant propositional evidence. Take the following as an example of this:

Say I am known for stealing philosophy books, in fact, there is even a picture of me, warning the clerks that I like to steal books. If, one day, the whole philosophy section of the library went missing and there were several witnesses saying they saw me steal a lot of books, the objective probability that I stole the books

would be very high. Nonetheless, if I had a very distinct and highly warranted memory of myself at my house during the time that the books disappeared, would I have a defeater for my belief that I was at my house when the book snatching occurred? It doesn't appear to be the case that I would. As I hold to this belief with a sufficient amount of firmness (which is partly responsible for my level of warrant being high), the probability that I stole the philosophy books wouldn't play any significant role in my doxastic process.²⁴

Similarly, Michael Bergmann argues that naturalists can deflect the evolutionary argument against naturalism (EAAN) by way of appealing to non-propositional evidence. Again, roughly, the EAAN is the argument that one has an undercutting defeater for believing that their faculties are reliable if one believes their faculties are the result of natural selection. According to Bergmann, "Even if a naturalist believed that $P(R/N\&E)$ is low or inscrutable, this needn't give her a defeater for R. For she could have *nonpropositional* evidence for R that is sufficiently strong to make belief in R rational, reasonable, and warranted—even for someone whose total relevant *propositional* evidence, k, was such that $P(R/k)$ is low or inscrutable."²⁵

As shown in the example above, there are clearly cases where the objective probability of a belief being false is high and yet the belief can be warranted due to the level or degree of warrant the belief has for a subject. For a proper functionalist, the level of warrant depends on how firmly one holds to a proposition, which, as articulated above, can depend on both propositional evidence and nonpropositional evidence. This means that, unlike objective probability, mere confidence that p (at least, confidence produced from the proper functionalist conditions being in place) is what counts for proper doxastic formation. Thus, even if the objective probability that the faculties responsible for one's credal specific religious belief are reliable is low, that low probability wouldn't entail that one automatically acquires a doxastic defeater. And though the objection isn't motivated directly by the low objective probability that one's credal specific belief is true, that judgment does have something to do with why it would apparently be unreasonable for the Plantingians in *The Case of Plantinga and his Comrades* to be unconcerned about which extension of the standard model is actually true. But, in response to this, a Plantingian might say that it is by way of the God's repairment of the *sensus divinitatis* and His testifying to a subject that God assures us that one's confidence that p will be high or at least high enough for the subject to rationality continue to hold to his credal specific religious belief, even in light of there being a low objective probability that one's religious faculties are functioning properly.

Contra the classic response articulated here, Jonathon Matheson argues that Plantinga's approach doesn't enable a subject to be rational in light of epistemic peer disagreement. He states, "To focus simply on your seeming

that p is to ignore what else seems true to you (that an equally qualified individual disagrees with you on this matter), and so simply sticking with that one seeming is not the rational course of action.”²⁶ Notice, we echoed Matheson’s sentiments when formulating the multiple viable extension objection. However, in response to this concern, while what Matheson says might be true on epistemological theories like phenomenal conservatism, it wouldn’t necessarily be the case on proper functionalism. Even if S has two powerful but conflicting seemings, if one of the seemings is significantly stronger than the other, then, as long as the stronger seeming was the result of the proper functionalist conditions being in place, the stronger seeming will help create a defeater deflector.²⁷ The proper functionalist, after all, defines rational belief in terms of a belief being produced in accord with proper function conditions on warrant. Thus, the proponent of the classic Plantingian approach will endorse the following theses:

The Classic Plantingian Response: (CPR): S ’s belief that p can deflect defeater D if S still believes p on the reflection of D and p is the product of properly functioning faculties which are successfully aimed at truth and there is a high objective probability (insofar as frequency is concerned, and not with regard to the objective and sharable evidence) that the belief produced under these conditions would be true.

In this case, since the subject is literally hard wired to produce p , and because there is a high objective probability that p is true (given that it is produced in accord with these conditions), the belief in question still has a sufficiently tight enough connection to truth such that the belief can be warranted even in light of a proposed defeater. So, even if the Plantingian thinks that his Plantingian comrades are his epistemic peers, he could be within his epistemic rights to hold fast to his belief.

How would a proponent of the classic Plantingian response respond to the objector who argues that the classic Plantingian is in no different of a situation as to that of the subject in the red widget case? The classic Plantingian could concede that this is the case but then argue that the subject in the red widget case could actually have warranted belief. Again, according to CPR, as long as the subject still firmly believes that p after she reflects on the attempted defeater and her belief that p is the result of the proper function constraints being in place, her belief is warranted. There is no reason to think this couldn’t be the case with the subject in the red widget case. The reason why philosophers are inclined to initially think the subject would gain a defeater is because of how the scenario is glossed. If, however, the situation was such that the subject was hardwired to produce the belief, even after reflecting on the attempted defeater, that the widget was red, and, there was a high objective probability that the belief is true (given that it is

produced from the proper functionalist constraints), the intuitions no longer support defeat.

Perhaps, one thinks that the Plantingian could avoid the debate on epistemic peer disagreement by way of denying that his comrades are epistemic peers. Naturally, this would change the setup of our original case somewhat. If one makes this move, then there is reason to reject the claim that his Plantingian comrades pose an insurmountable threat to his religious belief. While this move would be open to those who promote the conciliatory view, we think there is something about the multiple viable extensions objection, that, if unaddressed, could still threaten the Plantingians' creedal specific religious beliefs. This is because, even if the epistemic subjects in question aren't epistemic peers, there doesn't appear to be any non-question begging objective reason or evidence (at least, in the original Case of Plantinga and his Comrades) for thinking that the Plantingians aren't epistemic peers. Therefore, even to make the claim that a specific Plantingian (e.g., a Christian Plantingian) is in an epistemically superior situation as to that of his comrades, one would ultimately need to appeal to nonpropositional evidence (in conjunction with the proper functionalist constraints) to show that this move is epistemically available.

THIRD RESPONSE: THE PLANTINGIANS' RELIGIOUS BELIEFS ARE SUBJECT TO DEFEAT (FULL OR PARTIAL) UNLESS SOMETHING MORE IS ADDED

Another type of response is to maintain that the Plantingians in The Case of Plantinga and his Comrades acquire a partial or a full defeater for their creedal beliefs but that these defeaters may be dealt with adequately. There are various specific ways to spell out how this goes. We consider three.

Partial Defeat

One might think that, on the one hand, the multiple viable extensions objection isn't strong enough to fully defeat one's creedal specific religious beliefs. On the other hand, one might disagree with the view that their creedal specific beliefs aren't subject to defeat at all. For those who find either of these options too extreme, another response is available: The multiple viable extensions objection is sufficiently strong so as to render one's creedal specific religious beliefs partially but not completely defeated. On this view, the partial defeater view, developed by Michael Thune, in at least some cases in which a group of epistemic peers are aware that they disagree about something of

importance, all parties acquire a partial defeater. We explicate the partial defeater view in some detail before going on to consider whether the Plantingians in *The Case of Plantinga and his Comrades* all acquire partial defeaters for their creedal beliefs.

Thune is concerned about disagreements between epistemic peers. He writes:

Two people are epistemic peers with respect to some question if and only if (i) they are (positively) equals with respect to their familiarity with (and their ability to assess) the evidence and arguments which bear on that question; (ii) they are (positively) equals with respect to general epistemic virtues such as intelligence, thoughtfulness and freedom from bias; (iii) both parties are objectively about equally likely to get things wrong with respect to that question.²⁸

Problems arise when one factors into one's "total evidence" the fact that one's epistemic peers disagree about what about something of epistemic significance. Thune writes,

One's "total evidence" includes what he calls the "first-order" evidence (i.e., the "objective" arguments, reasons, etc., which seem to support one's belief) as well as the "higher-order" (or "psychological") evidence gleaned from one's awareness of disagreement.²⁹

Thune, following Thomas Kelly, holds that the fact that someone *S* disagrees with another *S** about the truth of some object-level proposition *p* gives *S* some evidence against the truth of *p*, and this evidence against *p* is stronger if *S* believes that *S** is an epistemic peer.³⁰ Awareness of the fact that *S** disagrees with *S* is higher-order evidence that counts against *S*'s object-level belief that *p* in such cases. When *S*'s higher-order evidence against *p* (supplied to *S* in virtue of becoming aware of their being in disagreement with *S** regarding *p*) is outweighed by *S*'s object-level evidence, *S* doesn't acquire a defeater for *p*. In a second case, when *S*'s higher-order evidence against *p* is significant, *S*'s object-level evidence for *p* is defeated. Thune presents a third possibility, namely, that *S*'s first-order evidence outweighs *S*'s higher-order evidence, "though not significantly."³¹ Thune thus introduces the following principle:

PPD. *Principle of partial defeat*: if in a disagreement *S* believes or epistemically should believe that a conversational partner is as reliable as *S* (with respect to some topic) and that it is not obvious which party (if either) is in a more privileged epistemic position (concerning the particular disputed proposition), even if these beliefs are not fully justified or strongly held, then *S*'s belief (about the proposition which is the subject of that disagreement) is at least partially defeated.³²

Thune goes on to consider a couple of cases involving disagreement about the metaphysics of modality (for instance, disagreement about the modal status of a claim) between purported epistemic peers.

In one sort of case, after careful reflection, *S* concludes that *S** must have made some sort of mistake and concludes that *S*'s belief about this particular claim is correct and *S** is mistaken. In such a case, Thune maintains that even though *S* thinks that *S** isn't correct in this one instance, that isn't enough to overturn the notion that they are epistemic peers. The reason being that *S* believes that *S** is and *S* are generally about as reliable with respect to getting at truths but *S* need not believe that they are equally reliable regarding getting to the truth about modal claims. In that case, *S* doesn't believe that *S** is objectively about as likely to be mistaken about the disputed claim, and so *S* doesn't think that *S** is an epistemic peer after all. When *S* does consider *S** to be about as equally reliable regarding the metaphysics of modality, however, the fact that *S** disagrees with *S* provides *S* with significantly strong higher-order evidence.³³ In short, if, on further reflection, *S*'s first-order evidence is undermined somewhat but remains sufficiently strong such that *S*'s total evidence is weighed only slightly more heavily than the relevant higher-order evidence, *S* has a partial defeater for *p*.³⁴ More fully, let *r* be the belief that *S* and *S** are equally reliable regarding making modal claims and *n* be the belief that *S* and *S** disagree about the modal status of a proposition *p* on a particular occasion. *S*'s belief that *r* and *n*, together with that fact that *S** has "judged that the relevant evidence and arguments warrant a different conclusion concerning the disputed thesis," gives *S* some reason to doubt whether *S* has actually got things right on this occasion.³⁵ In such a case, having some reason to doubt whether *S* got things right on this occasion, *S*'s degree of confidence that *p* is only moderately weakened and *S* has a partial defeater for *p*. Note that if one acquires a partial defeater for *p*, other things being equal, while *S*'s belief that *p* is weakened to some degree, *p* may still be justified or warranted to a degree sufficient for knowledge.

If the Plantingians in *The Case of Plantinga* and his Comrades acquire partial defeaters, then the degree to which is it reasonable to think that their own extension is fully correct must be weakened to some extent. However, it would still be possible for their respective creedal beliefs—the target propositions of the respective extension of the standard Aquinas/Model—to be warranted to a significant degree. This leaves room, then, for the view that for the Plantingian who affirms the correct extension of the Aquinas/Calvin model, their creedal beliefs are warranted to a degree sufficient for knowledge. On this possibility, each Plantingian recognizes that each of the others is generally reliable when it comes to getting to truth and yet also recognizes the fact that *at most* only one of them is such that their creedal specific beliefs

have warrant sufficient for knowledge. These facts, which are included in their total evidence, gives each of them a partial defeater for their respective creedal specific beliefs but one that is only moderately strong. Consequently, each of them remains confident enough that he or she affirms the correct extension. It follows, then, that while all of the Plantingians' beliefs have a significant degree of warrant, only one of them is such that their creedal beliefs have a degree of warrant sufficient for knowledge, for only one of the extensions of the Aquinas/Calvin model can be correct. From here on, this response to the multiple viable extensions objection proceeds in same way as that of the classic Plantingian response. Call this the optimistic partial defeater response.

But suppose these Plantingian's reflect further on the claim that all of their beliefs have a significant degree of warrant but only one of them is such that their creedal specific beliefs have warrant sufficient for knowledge. Mightn't awareness of their being in this situation give at least some of them good reason to doubt whether they in fact affirm the correct extension of the Aquinas/Calvin model? Thune doesn't go into detail as to when one *should* acknowledge that one has a partial defeater, and he doesn't consider under what conditions one has reason to think that one's beliefs have warrant or justification that falls short of that which is sufficient for knowledge. But it isn't implausible to suppose that at least some of the Plantingians in this situation could have sufficiently strong doubt about the truth of their creedal beliefs and that those doubts would render their creedal specific religious beliefs warranted to a degree that isn't sufficient for knowledge. Apparently, in such a circumstance, in order for a Plantingian's beliefs to have warrant sufficient for knowledge, he or she should appeal to evidence or argument of some kind to either block, defeat, or outweigh the (perhaps partial) defeater one gets on account of the multiple viable extensions objection. In such a case, the grounds for accepting that a particular extension of the Aquinas/Calvin model is fully correct are at least partially nonbasic, for what makes the difference between having warranted belief and warranted belief sufficient for knowledge rests on having dealt with the defeater in question in an appropriate way, and that, in this case, requires making use of evidence and argument to deal with the defeater. The basic idea is that if evidence and arguments are used to increase the degree of warrant to an amount that is sufficient for knowledge, then that evidence and arguments is crucially important in the sense that the target propositions of the models no longer would be warranted without it. If the evidence and arguments weren't present or if their force were somehow taken away or diminished, then, rather like a heavily laden Thanksgiving table will fall when one of its legs is removed, one's creedal beliefs would lack warrant sufficient for knowledge.³⁶ Call this the less than optimistic partial defeater response.

In conclusion, if the multiple viable extensions objection does give each Plantingian in *The Case of Plantinga and his Comrades* a partial defeater, then not all is lost. Whether one goes with the optimistic or less than optimistic response, it is still possible for all of the Plantingians' creedal beliefs to be warranted to some degree or other. The crucial difference, of course, is that on the view under consideration here, evidence and argument will be necessary for a Plantingian's creedal beliefs to have a degree of warrant sufficient for knowledge.

Bi-Level Evidentialism

Another response to *The Case of Plantinga and his Comrades* is that all of the Plantingians get full defeaters but that these defeaters can be dealt with by making use of propositional evidence and argumentation. One way of proceeding along these lines is developed by Michael Sudduth, who argues that bi-level evidentialism is compatible with Plantingian epistemology. Sudduth contends that two internalist criteria are essential to Plantingian proper functionalism and to the Aquinas/Calvin models: the no-defeater condition and the defeater-defeater requirement. He states the no-defeater condition as follows:

Given any person S, S's belief B (held to some degree n) is warranted only if S does not have an undefeated defeater for B.³⁷

Essentially, the no-defeater condition states that if one has a defeater for B, then one must defeat this defeater—that is, one must have a defeater-defeater for B—if B is to be warranted. A defeater-defeater for B will be a belief that shows that the supposed defeater for B is in fact false or unwarranted. Sudduth spells out the defeater-defeater requirement this way:

[DD] A person S who acquires an undefeated defeater D for his theistic belief T at some time t_1 is Pf-rational in holding T at some later time t_2 (when D is a least accessible clearly on reflection) only if S has a defeater-defeater D^* for D at t_2 .³⁸

A defeater-defeater provides reasons for thinking that one's creedal belief(s) is (are) Pf-rational (that is, proper function rational) and warranted by rebutting or undercutting the original defeater for one's creedal belief(s). These reasons will often be evidential in both form and character. Sudduth writes, "defeater defeaters . . . provide evidence for the truth of certain higher-level beliefs, and such evidence is epistemologically significant for rationality at the lower level."³⁹

A word of explanation is in order concerning higher-level and lower-level beliefs. Sudduth refers to the no-defeater condition as the primary belief state,

or the zero-level state. The state of having an undefeated defeater for one's creedal beliefs occurs at the first-level and the state of having a defeater-defeater for those beliefs occurs at the second-level. At the zero-level, one's creedal beliefs are properly basic. At the first-level, one's creedal beliefs are defeated by another belief and no longer have warrant even if true. At the second-level, if the defeater for one's creedal beliefs is shown to be faulty in some fashion, then those beliefs will once again have warrant for a person. (Recall that Plantinga thinks that creedal beliefs can have what is called an intrinsic defeater-defeater. On his view, when creedal beliefs are held with a high degree of internal *pf*-rationality, then, once any defeaters are defeated, they revert to the status of being properly basic.) Sudduth argues that propositional evidences help ground zero-level beliefs by providing defeater-defeaters for the first-level beliefs that serve as defeaters for one's creedal beliefs. In so doing he in effect argues that, with regards to *The Case of Plantinga and his Comrades*, the grounds that render a given Plantingian's creedal beliefs warranted cannot be entirely basic but rather must, at least in part, depend on higher-level beliefs. According to Sudduth, part of what makes one's creedal beliefs rational is one's having internal access to second-level propositional evidences that properly ground zero-level beliefs that have been subjected to first-level rationality or warrant defeaters. Once these second-level beliefs defeat the first-level defeaters for one's creedal beliefs, they once again are warranted. If the second-level beliefs were absent or lacked warrant, then one's zero-level beliefs would lack warrant.⁴⁰

On Sudduth's view, natural theology may function to ground second-level beliefs that would defeat first-level defeaters for one's zero-level belief that one's creedal beliefs are warranted. One would expect that if one's creedal beliefs were true, the world would be such that their own religion makes more sense of the data than other faiths, all things being equal. One would also expect different faiths to be more or less in harmony with sources of knowledge and background information that are external to the divine revelation of one's own religious tradition. So, if a religion accepts something that is clearly false, then, given these other sources of knowledge, one must give up the relevant creedal belief or hold it irrationally. Whether or not a given bit of (purported) revelation is consistent with one's background knowledge can be assessed by comparing plausible interpretations of the text to one's current beliefs. If they are found to be consistent, that would confer a higher degree of warrant on the belief that claim. If the evidence is inconsistent with steadfastly held beliefs, that would provide grounds for thinking that the relevant claim neither is nor contains revelation from God—at least in the places where there is disagreement. Sudduth also maintains that natural theology and propositional evidences can help a believer to have a better understanding of his or her faith. Evidence can help to increase the number of true beliefs

and help to decrease the number of false beliefs held concerning one's faith, which are clear epistemic virtues. Sudduth adds that this approach can go toward fulfilling the goal of reflective rationality, which consists in one's having "rational beliefs about the epistemic status of one's beliefs" and pertains to "acquiring rational beliefs about the status of one's belief in God, that it is justified, warranted, or constitutes knowledge."⁴¹

In conclusion, bi-level evidentialism and the use of natural theology may in principle provide a Plantingian with additional grounds for thinking that their creedal beliefs are true and thus provide grounds for rationally preferring one extension is (fully) correct and that others that are in conflict with it are incorrect (to some degree or other). However, the merits of bi-level evidentialism depend on one's background knowledge and other propositions that are used to assess the warrant of the relevant lower-level beliefs. All Plantingians may adopt these methods and use them to conclude that *their* creedal beliefs are true, or at least more likely to be true than any of the other faiths, given *their* background knowledge. But it is also possible that after investigating the matter further, a person will judge that their religious tradition is not as well supported by these considerations as another religious tradition seems to be. This will give that person reason to investigate the teachings of this other religion further. In some case, it may even result in a religious conversion or deconversion.

A Virtue Epistemology Response

According to the third response we consider, problems arise for Plantingian religious epistemology because it does not fully adequately acknowledge the importance of intellectual virtue with respect to having warranted beliefs in the face of defeaters. On this view, Plantinga's proper functionalism isn't wrong but rather incomplete and must be modified and/or amended. Before continuing, it is essential to explain the account of reasonableness at issue here.

Following Robert Audi, reasonable people are governed by reason; that is, they are responsive to reasons, willing to correct their views if they are subjected to criticism, and willing to provide others with reasons when applicable.⁴² Audi writes, "A reasonable person is, in a suitably stable way, governed by reason; and a reasonable belief or action is, though not necessarily reasoned, of a kind of exhibiting support by reasons."⁴³ Being reasonable in this sense is not automatic or passive; reasonable people govern themselves reasonably. As David Owens puts it, being reasonable involves having and exercising reflective control over one's beliefs. Being reasonable is more than simply uncovering additional first-order reasons for belief. It involves coming to acknowledge, by means of a higher-order judgment, the normative force

of those first-order reasons.⁴⁴ According to Audi, reasonableness is a second-order or meta-cognitive virtue that involves patterns of feeling, thought, and action that we must nurture or maintain.⁴⁵ This supports the conclusion that in order to manifest the meta-cognitive virtue of reasonableness, it is necessary but not sufficient that one's cognitive faculties or processes be functioning properly in a suitable cognitive environment.⁴⁶

Following virtue epistemologists Robert C. Roberts and W. Jay Wood, in order to manifest the meta-cognitive virtue of reasonableness, a person qua epistemic agent (and not just a person's cognitive faculties or processes) must be functioning well epistemically by having and exercising certain epistemic virtues.⁴⁷ Additionally, a person qua epistemic agent must have and exercise the relevant epistemic virtues, including the love of knowledge, firmness, courage and caution, humility, autonomy, generosity, and practical wisdom.⁴⁸ As Wood writes,

Someone who takes this approach [the approach of the virtue epistemologist] has given up the spirit of a faculty epistemology Faculty epistemologists who are willing to accord to character traits a major and essential role in the acquisition of some epistemic goods have wandered far from the original idea of a faculty epistemology, because what is doing the work in the new permutation of their view is no longer just the faculties but, in the upper-end cases at least, the epistemic agent who *uses* the faculty virtuously for his or her purposes. The epistemologist may wish to keep the virtues in the humble role of supplementing the functioning of faculties, but in reality he has reduced the faculties to appliances in the hands of a person.⁴⁹

According to this virtue epistemology approach, even if reasonability doesn't absolutely required that the aforementioned Plantingian's religious beliefs be held in a nonbasic way in order for them to be reasonable (given the need that one have some reason or ground for thinking that either the extension that he or she affirms is true or that competing extensions are false), it isn't true that he or she manifests the meta-cognitive virtue or reasonableness *just in case* their credal specific beliefs are internally and externally rational. But traditional Plantingians affirm that internal and external rationality are *necessary and sufficient* for warranted belief. It follows, therefore, that those who accept traditional Plantingian religious epistemology can't adequately deal with the multiple viable extensions objection (at least not without giving up some or modifying some of their core epistemological commitments).

Note that the multiple viable extensions objection assumes Plantinga's proper functionalism and the truth of the standard model. In sum, we have a group of apparently reasonable Plantingians disagree about which extension of the standard model is correct and which of their beliefs about God are internally and externally rational and warranted. This particular combination

of epistemic similarity and religious diversity provides the makings for a more forceful objection to Plantingian epistemology. Because the truth of their creedal beliefs is suspect, reasonability requires that if any of the Plantingians continue to hold their creedal beliefs in their disagreement, they must do so in an intellectually appropriate manner or be in danger of acquiring an internal rationality defeater for their creedal beliefs. This assumes the following principle:

(P1) If it is unreasonable for S to believe that p , and if S comes to realize that S unreasonably believes that p , then it is not internally rational for S to continue to believe that p and S acquires an (undercutting) internal rationality defeater for the belief that p .⁵⁰

In short, if the Plantingians realize that it'd be unreasonable to think that the extension of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model he or she affirms is correct, as they should, so the objection goes, they thereby acquire an internal rationality defeater for the truth of the target propositions of that extension. To deal with the threat of defeat, Plantingians must do something that involves exercising intellectual virtue. While it isn't plausible to think that that which needs to be done *always* requires relying on evidences and argumentation, it would be unreasonable to the point of obstinateness to steadfastly refuse ever to make use of or rely on evidences here. A character-based virtue epistemological approach accepts that, sometimes, relying on evidence is necessary if one's creedal beliefs are to be internally rational and warranted. Moreover, the evidence in question must be acquired by a person qua epistemic agent, and not just passively received on account of the fact that the input-output functions of one's cognitive equipment are functioning properly. Taking a cue from Jason Baehr, the basic idea is that, at least sometimes, and particularly in *The Case of Plantinga and his Comrades* and cases like it, a person's creedal beliefs are internally rational *only if* he or she qua epistemic agent makes a salient contribution to either the content or to the handling of evidence in favor of one's creedal beliefs and does so in a manner consistent with intellectual virtue.⁵¹ Now, if evidence or arguments does any work here, then one's creedal beliefs are warranted but they won't be fully properly basic. Plantingians are able to take this route, therefore, *only if* they make significant modifications or amendments to classic Plantingian religious epistemology. In effect, one who takes this route contends that while an important aim of the human cognitive design plan is the formation of warranted creedal beliefs about God, in many aspects, this end requires the cultivation of intellectual and moral virtues and sometimes it is fully appropriate and perfectly in accord with the human cognitive design plan for one's creedal beliefs not to be fully properly basic.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, there are a wide variety of plausible responses to the multiple viable extensions objection. According to most of the responses we've discussed, the objection fails to show that none of the Plantingians in *The Case of Plantinga and his Comrades* have warranted credal beliefs. Although some responses to the objection require certain amendments or modifications to Plantingian religious epistemology, in our view, these amendments and modifications are not such that those who advocate them can no longer be considered genuine Plantingians.

NOTES

1. James Beilby probably best articulates this objection. See James K. Beilby, *Epistemology as Theology: An Evaluation of Alvin Plantinga's Religious Epistemology* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2006), 131–36.

2. Christian, "Plantinga, Epistemic Permissiveness, and Metaphysical Pluralism," 568–69. Note that James Beilby mentions that though there might be possible objections to the worldview of Advaita Vedānta, one might be able to handle these potential defeaters similarly to the way Plantinga handles objections to Christianity. See Beilby, *Epistemology as Theology*, 131.

3. David W. Tien, "Warranted Neo-Confucian Belief: Religious Pluralism and the Affections in the Epistemologies of Wang Yangming (1472–1529) and Alvin Plantinga," 31–55. As noted in the section dealing with equal weight theory, we do not find Tien's claim to be a problem for Plantinga's claims about Christian belief being warranted.

4. Plantinga, *Warranted Christian Belief*, 350.

5. See Ruth Millikan, "In Defense of Proper Functions," 288–89 and Peter Graham, "Functions, Warrant, and History," 15–35.

6. For further defense of this claim, see Tyler Dalton McNabb and Erik Baldwin, "Reformed Epistemology and the Pandora's Box Objection," 451–65.

7. Plantinga, *Warranted Christian Belief*, 169.

8. For more, see Plantinga, *The Nature of Necessity*, 44–45 and *God, Freedom, and Evil*, 34–39.

9. Plantinga writes, "I can't remember a time when I wasn't a Christian, and can scarcely remember a time when I wasn't aware of and interested in objections to Christianity and arguments against it. Christianity, for me, has always involved a substantial intellectual element. I can't claim to have had a great deal by way of unusual religious experience, although on a few occasions I have had a profound sense of God's presence; but for nearly my entire life I have been convinced of the truth of Christianity." (Alvin Plantinga, "Self Profile," in *Profiles: Alvin Plantinga*, eds. James E. Tomberlin and Peter van Inwagen, volume 5 (Dordrecht: D. Reidel Publishing Company, 1985), 33.) Elsewhere, Plantinga explains in a bit more detail one of

these profound religious experiences, had while an undergraduate at Harvard in the 1950s. He writes: “I was coming back from the university dining hall one miserable November evening, and suddenly felt as if the heavens had lit up and opened. I heard music of the most incredible beauty and sweetness (Mozart—Barth thought that there would be a lot of Mozart in heaven). There weren’t any voices or anything like that: it just felt like a kind of confirmation of what I’d thought all along. It wasn’t as if I could literally see into heaven, but it felt somewhat as though I could. The experience was in the general neighborhood . . . There weren’t any actual orchestras around, as far as I know, at the time. Whether other people could have heard it had they been there, I can’t say. But that’s the way it seemed to me.” (Alvin Plantinga and Christopher J. Insole, “The Philosophy of Religion” in *God’s Advocates: Christian Thinkers in Conversation*, ed. Rupert Shortt (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2005), 44.)

10. Bryan Frances, *Disagreement* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2014), 43–44.

11. For more on these disagreement factors, see Frances, *Disagreement*, 18–26.

12. Stephen C. Angle, “中國哲學家與全球哲學 [Chinese Philosophers and Global Philosophy], 《中國哲學與文化》, *Chinese Philosophy and Culture* 1, no. 1 (2007), 3–4.

13. Tim Connolly, *Doing Comparative Philosophy* (London and New York: Bloomsbury, 2015), 193.

14. Michael Huemer, “Compassionate Phenomenal Conservatism,” *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 74, no. 1 (2007): 30.

15. For more in defense of this point, see Erik Baldwin, *Fully Informed Reasonable Disagreement and Tradition Based Perspectivalism*, Studies in Philosophical Theology Vol. 56 (Leuven: Peeters Publishing, 2016), 62–64.

16. Alvin Plantinga comes to the same conclusion when discussing a similar case involving red widgets in *Warrant and Proper Function* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 230–31. He derives his case from John Pollock’s original case. See John Pollock, *Contemporary Theories of Knowledge*, third edition (Savage, Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield, 1986), 39–45.

17. Alvin Goldman and Thomas Blanchard, “Social Epistemology,” in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2016 Edition), ed. Edward N. Zalta, accessed July 25, 2018, <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2016/entries/epistemology-social>.

18. Goldman notes that a third more complicated middle ground position, the dynamic account of disagreement, which recommends conciliation in some cases and steadfastness in others.

19. Michael Thune, “Religious Belief and the Epistemology of Disagreement,” *Philosophy Compass* 5, no. 8 (2010): 714.

20. Baldwin also states this in, *Fully Informed Reasonable Disagreement and Tradition Based Perspectivalism*, 69–70.

21. The following arguments are broadly inspired by the works of Paul Draper and J. L. Schellenberg. See, for instance, Paul Draper, *God or Blind Nature? Philosophers Debate the Evidence* (Internet Infidels (Online Publisher), 2008), “Atheism and Agnosticism,” *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2017 Edition), ed.

Edward N. Zalta, accessed July 25, 2018, <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2017/entries/atheism-agnosticism>, and Paul Draper and Ryan Nichols, "Diagnosing Bias in Philosophy of Religion," *The Monist* 96, no. 3 (2013): 420–46. See also Schellenberg, *The Wisdom to Doubt: A Justification of Religious Skepticism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007), *Evolutionary Religion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013) and *The Hiddenness Argument: Philosophy's New Challenge to Belief in God* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

22. Thomas Kelly, "The Epistemic Significance of Disagreement," in *Oxford Studies in Epistemology*, eds. John Hawthorne and Tamar Gendler Szabo, volume 1 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 170.

23. This section, in part, is taken from Tyler McNabb and Erik Baldwin, "Divine Methodology: A Lawful Deflection of Kantian and Kantian-esque Defeaters," *Open Theology* 3, no. 1 (2017): 451–65.

24. This scenario first appeared in Tyler Taber and Tyler McNabb, "Is the Problem of Divine Hiddenness a Problem for the Reformed Epistemologist?" *Heythrop Journal* 57, no. 6 (2016). The scenario is based on examples given by Alvin Plantinga which can be found in Alvin Plantinga, *Where the Conflict Really Lies: Science, Religion, and Naturalism*, 176–80.

25. Michael Bergmann, "Commonsense Naturalism," in *Naturalism Defeated? Essays on Plantinga's Evolutionary Argument against Naturalism*, ed. Jonathon L. Kvanvig (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996), 68.

26. Jonathan Matheson, *The Epistemic Significance of Peer Disagreement* (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2015), 49.

27. Paraphrasing Alvin Plantinga, a defeater deflector is proposition p such that by virtue of S 's believing p S doesn't get a defeater for another proposition q . See Plantinga, *Where the Conflict Really Lies: Science, Religion, and Naturalism*, 346.

28. Michael Thune, "'Partial Defeaters' and the Epistemology of Disagreement," *The Philosophical Quarterly* 60, no. 239 (2010): 359. For a more complete defense of Thune's partial defeater view, see Michael Thune, "The Epistemology of Disagreement," PhD diss., Purdue University, 2008.

29. Thune, "'Partial Defeaters' and the Epistemology of Disagreement," 360.

30. See Thomas Kelly, "Peer Disagreement and Higher Order Evidence," in *Disagreement*, eds. Richard Feldman and Ted Warfield (Oxford University Press, 2008), 111–74.

31. Thune, "'Partial Defeaters' and the Epistemology of Disagreement," 360.

32. *Ibid.*, 364.

33. *Ibid.*, 361.

34. *Ibid.*, 362.

35. *Ibid.*, 363.

36. For more on this line of argument, see Erik Baldwin and Michael Thune, "The Epistemological Limits of Experience-Based Exclusive Religious Belief," *Religious Studies* 44, no. 4 (2008): 445–55.

37. Michael Sudduth, "The Internalist Character and Evidential Implications of Plantingian Defeaters," *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 45, no. 3 (1999): 171.

38. Sudduth, "The Internalist Character and Evidential Implications of Plantingan Defeaters," 174–75.
39. *Ibid.*, 176–78.
40. *Ibid.*
41. Michael Czapkay Sudduth, "The Prospects for 'Mediate' Natural Theology in John Calvin," *Religious Studies* 31, no. 1 (1995): 67.
42. Robert Audi, *The Architecture of Reason: The Structure and Substance of Rationality* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 149–50.
43. Robert Audi, *Rationality and Religious Commitment* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 39.
44. David Owens, *Reasons Without Freedom: The Problem of Epistemic Normativity* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 19.
45. Audi, *The Architecture of Reason*, 149–53.
46. This paragraph derives, with some modification, from Erik Baldwin, *Fully Informed Reasonable Disagreement and Tradition Based Perspectivalism*, *Studies in Philosophical Theology* Vol. 56 (Leuven: Peeters Publishing, 2016), 7–8. Similarly, the next few paragraphs derive, with considerable modification, from pages 63–64 and 67–72.
47. Robert C. Roberts and W. Jay Wood make this suggestion. See their *Intellectual Virtues: An Essay in Regulative Epistemology* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007), 96. We take it that a rough and ready, everyday understanding of these intellectual virtues is enough for our purposes. For more, see Part II of *Intellectual Virtues*.
48. *Ibid.*
49. *Ibid.*, 110–11.
50. Baldwin, *Fully Informed Reasonable Disagreement and Tradition Based Perspectivalism*, 59.
51. Jason Baehr, *The Inquiring Mind: On Intellectual Virtues and Virtue Epistemology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 82.

Bibliography

- Ibn ‘Abbās, ‘Abdullāh. *Tanwīr al-Miqbās min Tafṣīr Ibn ‘Abbās*. Translated by Mokrane Guezzou. Amman: Royal Aal al-Bayt Institute for Islamic Thought, 2007.
- Abdul-Raof, Hussein. *Schools of Qur’anic Exegesis: Genesis and Development*. Culture and Civilization in the Middle East. Edited by Ian Richard Netton. London and New York: Routledge, 2010.
- Adamson, Peter. “Al-Kindī and the Reception of Greek Philosophy.” In *The Cambridge Companion to Arabic Philosophy*, edited by Peter Adamson and Richard C. Taylor, 32–51. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- . “From the Necessary Existent to God.” In *Interpreting Avicenna: Critical Essays*, edited by Peter Adamson, 170–89. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013.
- Ahmad, Absar. “Exploring Islamic Theory of Knowledge.” Accessed July 17, 2018. <http://ionamasjid.org/publications/articles/63-dr-absar-ahmad/553-exploring-islamic-theory-of-knowledge>.
- Al-Ghāzālī. *The Faith and Practice of Al-Ghazali*. Translated by Montgomery Watt. London: George Allen, 1963.
- Ali, Mauluna Muhammad. *The Religion of Islam: A Comprehensive Discussion of the Sources, Principles, and Practices of Islam*. Columbus: Amaddiyya Anjuman Isha’at Islam, 1990.
- Ali, Zain. *Faith, Philosophy, and the Reflective Muslim*. Palgrave MacMillan, 2013.
- Allan, Sarah. “The Great One, Water, and the Laozi: New Light from Guodian.” *T’oung Pao* 89, no. 4/5 (2003): 237–85.
- Allen, Barry. *Vanishing Into Things*. Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2015.
- Alston, William. *Beyond “Justification”: Dimensions of Epistemic Evaluation*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005.
- Angle, Stephen C. “中國哲學家與全球哲學 [Chinese Philosophers and Global Philosophy], 《中國哲學與文化》. *Chinese Philosophy and Culture* 1, no. 1 (2007): 239–56.
- Aquinas, Thomas. *Summa Theologica: Complete English Edition in Five Volumes*. Westminster: Christian Classics, 1981.

- Armstrong, David. "Postscript: 'Naturalism, Materialism, and First Philosophy' Reconsidered." In *Contemporary Materialism: A Reader*, edited by Paul Moser and J. D. Trout, 48–52. London: Routledge, 1995.
- Asad, Muhammad. *The Message of the Qur'an: The Full Account of the Revealed Arabic Text Accompanied by Parallel Translation*. Vol. 2. Translated by Muhammad Asad. Bristol: The Book Foundation, 2003.
- Audi, Robert. *The Architecture of Reason: The Structure and Substance of Rationality*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.
- . *The Good in the Right: A Theory of Intuition and Intrinsic Value*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2004.
- . *Rationality and Religious Commitment*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.
- . *Moral Perception*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2013.
- . *City of God*, Volume 1. Translated by Rev. Marcus Dods, M.A. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1888.
- . *The Essential Augustine*. Edited by Vernon J. Bourke. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1974.
- . *On Free Choice of the Will*. Translated with introduction and notes by Thomas Williams. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1993.
- Aurobindo, Sri. *Essays Divine and Human: Writings From Manuscripts 1910–1950*. The Complete Works of Sri Aurobindo. Pondicherry, India: Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust, 1997.
- Baehr, Jason. *The Inquiring Mind: On Intellectual Virtues and Virtue Epistemology*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011.
- Baker, Deane-Peter, editor. *Alvin Plantinga*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.
- Baldwin, Erik. "Could the Extended Aquinas/Calvin Model Defeat Basic Christian Belief?" *Philosophia Christi* 2, no. 8 (2006): 383–99.
- . "On the Prospects of an Islamic Externalist Account of Warrant." In *Classic Issues in Islamic Philosophy and Theology Today*, edited by A-T. Tymieniecka and Nazif Muhtaroglu. Islamic Philosophy and Occidental Phenomenology in Dialogue, 19–44. Dordrecht: Springer, 2010.
- . *Fully Informed Reasonable Disagreement and Tradition Based Perspectivalism*. Studies in Philosophical Theology. Vol. 56, Leuven: Peeters Publishing, 2016.
- . "Why Islamic 'Traditionalists' and 'Rationalists' Both Ought to Accept Rational Objectivism." *Religious Studies* 53, no. 4 (2017): 467–77.
- Baldwin, Erik and Michael Thune. "The Epistemological Limits of Experience-Based Exclusive Religious Belief." *Religious Studies* 44, no. 4 (2008): 445–55.
- Baldwin, Erik and Tyler McNabb. "An Epistemic Defeater for Islamic Belief?" *International Journal of Philosophy and Theology* 76, no. 4 (2015): 352–67.
- Bartley, C. J. *The Theology of Rāmānuja: Realism and Religion*. London: Routledge Curzon, 2002.
- Bartley, Christopher. *An Introduction to Indian Philosophy*. London: Continuum, 2011.
- Becker, Rabbi Moshe. "Chovot Halevavot – or More? The Philosophy of R' Bachya." *The Journal of the Hashkafa Circle* 1, no. 1 (2008): 32–64.
- Beilby, James K. *Epistemology as Theology: An Evaluation of Alvin Plantinga's Religious Epistemology*. Burlington: Ashgate, 2006.

- Bergmann, Michael. "Commonsense Naturalism." In *Naturalism Defeated? Essays on Plantinga's Evolutionary Argument against Naturalism*, edited by Jonathon L. Kvanvig, 61–90. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996.
- . "Defeaters and Higher-Level Requirements." *The Philosophical Quarterly* 55, no. 220 (2005): 419–36.
- . *Justification without Awareness*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006.
- . "Skeptical Theism and the Problem of Evil." In *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophical Theology*, edited by Thomas Flint and Michael Rea, 374–99. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.
- . "Rational Religious Belief without Arguments." In *Philosophy of Religion: An Anthology*, edited by Louis Pojman and Michael Rea. 7th edition, 609–24. Boston: Wadsworth, 2015.
- Bhatt, S. R. *Studies in Rāmānuja Vedānta*. New Delhi: Heritage Publishers, 1975.
- Black, Deborah L. "Al-Fārābī." In *History of Islamic Philosophy, Routledge History of World Philosophies*, edited by Oliver Leaman and Seyyed Hossein Nasr, 178–97. New York: Routledge, 2001.
- . "Certitude, Justification, and the Principles of Knowledge in Avicenna's Epistemology." In *Interpreting Avicenna*, edited by Peter Adamson, 120–42. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013.
- Boyce, Kenneth. "Colloquium on Justification." Meeting of the American Philosophical Association Pacific Division, March 31st, 2016.
- . "Proper Functionalism." In *The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Accessed July 25, 2018. <http://www.iep.utm.edu/prop-fun>.
- Boyce, Kenneth and Alvin Plantinga. "Proper Functionalism." In *The Continuum Companion to Epistemology*, edited by Andrew Cullison, 143–63. London: Continuum, 2012.
- Boyce, Kenneth and Andrew Moon. "In Defense of Proper Functionalism: Cognitive Science Takes on Swampman." *Synthese* 193, no. 9 (2016): 2987–3001.
- Brent, James O. P. "God's Knowledge and Will." In *The Oxford Handbook of Aquinas*, edited by Brian Davies and Elenore Stump, 158–72. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.
- Britton, Joseph Harp. *Abraham Heschel and the Phenomenon of Piety*. London: Bloomsbury, 2015.
- Burks, Alice R. and Arthur W. *The First Electronic Computer: The Atanasoff Story*. Ann Arbor, The University of Michigan Press, 1989.
- Burton, Watson, translator. *The Complete Works of Chuang Tzu*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1968.
- Calvin, John. *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. Translated by Henry Beveridge. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994.
- Carroll, William E. "Creation, Evolution, and Thomas Aquinas." *Revue des Questions Scientifiques* 171, no. 4 (2000): 319–47.
- Chadwick, H. "Origen." In *Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Medieval Philosophy*, edited by A. H. Armstrong, 182–92. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967.
- Chakravarti, Pulinbihari. *Origin and Development of the Sāṃkhya System of Thought*. New Delhi: Oriental Books Reprint Corp, 1975.

- Chan, Alan. "Neo-Daoism." *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2017 Edition). Edited by Edward N. Zalta. Accessed July 25, 2018. <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2017/entries/neo-daoism>.
- Chan, Wing-Tsit. *A Sourcebook in Chinese Philosophy*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1963.
- Chang, Carsun. "Wang Yang-Ming's Philosophy." *Philosophy East and West* 5, no. 1 (1955): 3–18.
- Chari, S. M. Srinivasa. *Vaiṣṇavism: Its Philosophy, Theology and Religious Discipline*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2000.
- Chatterjee, Satischandra and Dhirendramohan Datta. *An Introduction to Indian Philosophy*. Calcutta: University of Calcutta Press, 1984.
- Childers, Timothy. *Philosophy & Probability*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.
- Ching, Julia. *Chinese Religions*. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis, 1993.
- Chisholm, Roderick M. *The Problem of the Criterion*. Marquette University Press, 1973.
- Christian, Rose Ann. "Plantinga, Epistemic Permissiveness, and Metaphysical Pluralism." *Religious Studies* 28, no. 4 (1992): 553–73.
- Christensen, David. "Epistemology of Disagreement: The Good News." *Philosophical Review* 116, no. 2 (2007): 187–17.
- Churchland, Patricia Smith. "Epistemology in the Age of Neuroscience." *The Journal of Philosophy* 84, no. 10 (1987): 544–53.
- Churchland, Patricia and Paul. "Patricia and Paul Churchland." In *Conversations on Consciousness: What the Best Minds Think About the Brain, Free Will, and What It Means to Be Human*, edited by Susan Blackmore, 50–67. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006.
- Churchland, Paul. *The Engine of Reason, the Seat of the Soul: A Philosophical Journey into the Brain*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1995.
- Clark, Kelly James. "The Gods of Abraham, Isaiah, and Confucius." *Dao: A Journal of Comparative Philosophy* 5, no. 1 (2005): 109–36.
- . "The Conception of Divinity in Early Confucianism." In *Dialogue of Philosophes, Religions, and Civilizations in the Era of Globalization*, edited by Zhao Dunhua vol. 25, Chinese Philosophical Studies, 47–64. Washington, DC: The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 2007.
- Clark, Kelly James and Liu Zongkun. "The Polished Mirror: Reflections on Natural Knowledge of the Way in Zhuangzi and Alvin Plantinga." In *Chinese Philosophy in an Era of Globalization*, edited by R. Robin Wang, 163–83. Albany: SUNY Press, 2004.
- Confucius. *Analects: With Selections from Traditional Commentaries*. Translated by Edward Slingerland. Indianapolis: Hackett, 2003.
- Connolly, Tim. *Doing Comparative Philosophy*. London and New York: Bloomsbury, 2015.
- Conze, Edward. "Text Sources, and Bibliography of the Prajñāpāramitā-hṛdaya." *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 80, no. 1–2 (1948): 33–51.
- Craig, William Lane. "Creation and Conservatism Once More." *Religious Studies* 34, no. 2 (1998): 177–88.
- . *Time and Eternity: Exploring God's Relationship to Time*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2001.

- Crisp, Thomas. "On Naturalistic Metaphysics." In *The Blackwell Companion to Naturalism*, edited by Kelly James Clark, 61–74. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley and Sons Inc., 2016.
- Dasgupta, Surendranath. *A History of Indian Philosophy: Volume III: Indian Pluralism*. Cambridge University Press, 1955.
- . *A History of Indian Philosophy: Volume IV: Indian Pluralism*. Cambridge University Press, 1955.
- Dasti, Matthew. "Hindu Theism." In *Routledge Companion to Theism*, edited by Charles Taliaferro, Victoria Harrison, and Stewart Goetz, 77–87. New York: Routledge, 2013.
- Davidson, Donald. "Knowing One's Own Mind." *Proceedings and Addresses of the American Philosophical Association* 60, no. 3 (1987): 441–58.
- De Bary, William. *Neo-Confucian Orthodoxy and the Learning of the Mind-and-Heart*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1981.
- Dennett, Daniel. *The Intentional Stance*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1987.
- . *Darwin's Dangerous Idea: Evolution and the Meanings of Life*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995.
- . *Breaking the Spell: Religion as a Natural Phenomenon*. New York: Viking, 2006.
- Dennett, Daniel, and Alvin Plantinga. *Science and Religion: Are They Compatible?* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.
- DePoe, John M. "In Defense of Classical Foundationalism: A Critical Evaluation of Plantinga's Argument That Classical Foundationalism Is Self-Refuting." *South African Journal of Philosophy* 26, no. 3 (2007): 245–51.
- DeRose, Keith. "Voodoo Epistemology." Society of Christian Philosophers, Eastern Division Meeting of the American Philosophical Association, December 29, 1999.
- Descartes, René. *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes, Volume II*. Translated by John Cottingham, Robert Stoothoff, and Dugal Murdoch. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984.
- Deuteronomy, Bible, English Standard Version.
- Deutsch, Elliot and Rohit Dalvi. *The Essential Vedānta: A New Source Book of Advaita Vedānta*. Bloomington: World Wisdom, 2004.
- Devanandan, Paul. *The Concept of Maya*. London: Lutterworth Press, 1950.
- Devitt, Michael. "Naturalism and the A Priori." *Philosophical Studies* 92, no. 1 (1998): 45–65.
- Dougherty, Trent and Patrick Rysiew. "Fallibilism, Epistemic Possibility, and Concessive Knowledge Attributions." *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 78, no. 1 (2009): 123–32.
- Draper, Paul. *God or Blind Nature? Philosophers Debate the Evidence*. Internet Infidels: Online Publisher, 2008.
- . "Atheism and Agnosticism." *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. (Fall 2017 Edition), Edited by Edward N. Zalta. Accessed July 25, 2018. <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2017/entries/atheism-agnosticism>.
- Draper, Paul and Ryan Nichols. "Diagnosing Bias in Philosophy of Religion." *The Monist* 96 no. 3 (2013): 420–46.
- Drazin, Israel. *Maimonides: Reason Above All*. Jerusalem: Green Publishing House, 2009.

- Dutton, Blake D. *Augustine and Academic Skepticism: A Philosophical Study*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2016.
- Elga, Adam. "Reflection and Disagreement." *Noûs* 41, no. 3 (2007): 478–502.
- Evans, C. Stephen. *Natural Signs and Knowledge of God: A New Look at Theistic Arguments*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.
- Fales, Evan. "Darwin's Doubt, Calvin's Calvary." In *Naturalism Defeated? Essays in on Plantinga's Evolutionary Argument against Naturalism*, edited by James Beilby, 43–58. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002.
- Al-Fawzan, Shaykh Sālih. "The Meaning of 'Allah is the Best Deceiver' and the Interpretation of Su rah 8: 30." Translated by Abdullah Almu tairi, 2006. Accessed August 29, 2015. <https://ar.islamway.net/fatwa/5229/ال-معنى-قوله-تعالى-وال-خير-الماكرين>.
- Feldman, Richard. "Epistemological Puzzles about Disagreement." In *Epistemology Futures*, edited by Stephen Hetherington, 216–36. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006.
- . "Reasonable Religious Disagreements." In *Philosophers Without Gods*, edited by Louise Antony, 194–214. New York: Oxford UP, 2007.
- Feser, Edward. *Aquinas: A Beginners Guide*. Oxford: Oneworld, 2009.
- Fisher, Cass. *Contemplative Nation: A Philosophical Account of Jewish Theological Language*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012.
- . "Jewish Philosophy: Living Language and Its Limits." In *Jewish Philosophy for the Twenty-First Century: Personal Reflections*, edited by Hava Tirosh-Samuelson and Aaron W. Hughes, 81–100. Leiden: Brill, 2014.
- . "Absolute Factuality, Common Sense, and Theological Reference in the Thought of Franz Rosenzweig." *Harvard Theological Review* 109, no. 3 (2016): 342–70.
- Fodor, Jerry. "Is Science Biologically Possible?" In *Naturalism Defeated? Essays on Plantinga's Evolutionary Argument against Naturalism*, edited by James Beilby, 30–42. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002.
- Foot, Philippa. "Goodness and Choice." In *Virtues and Vices*, edited by Philippa Foot, 132–47. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002.
- Forsthoefel, Thomas. *Knowing Beyond Knowledge: Epistemologies of Religious Experience in Classical and Modern Advaita*. Alderhot, England: Ashgate, 2002.
- Frances, Bryan. *Disagreement*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2014.
- Fraser, Chris. "Knowledge and Error in Early Chinese Thought." *Dao: A Journal of Comparative Philosophy* 10, no. 2 (2011): 127–48.
- Frazier, Allie. *Readings in Eastern Religious Thought*. PA: Westminster Press, 1969.
- Frykenberg, Robert E. "The Emergence of Modern 'Hinduism' as a Concept and as an Institution: A Reappraisal with Special Reference to South India." In *Hinduism Reconsidered*, edited by G. D. Sontheimer and H. Kulke, 29–49. New Delhi, India: Manohar, 1989.
- Fu, Wei-Hsun. "Lao Tzu's Conception of the Dao." *Inquiry: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Philosophy* 16, no. 1–4 (1973): 367–94.
- Gaon, Saadya. *The Book of Doctrines and Beliefs*. Translated by Alexander Altmann with new introduction by Daniel H. Frank. Indianapolis: Hackett, 2002.
- Garfield, Jay L. *The Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way: Nāgārjuna's Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995.

- . “Nāgārjuna’s Theory of Causality: Implications Sacred and Profane.” *Philosophy East and West* 51, no. 4 (2001): 507–24.
- . “Epochē and Śūnyatā: Scepticism East and West.” In *Empty Word: Buddhist Philosophy and Cross-Cultural Interpretation*, 3–23. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.
- . “Nāgārjuna and the Limits of Thought (with Graham Priest).” In *Empty Word: Buddhist Philosophy and Cross-Cultural Interpretation*, 86–105. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.
- Garfield, Jay L. and Graham Priest, “Mountains Are Just Mountains.” In *Pointing at the Moon: Buddhism, Logic, Analytic Philosophy*, edited by Mario D’Amato, Jay L. Garfield, and Tom J. F. Tillemans, 71–82. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.
- Ganeri, Martin. *Indian Thought and Western Theism: The Vedānta of Ramanuja*. London: Routledge, 2015.
- Gautama. *The Nyāya-Sūtra: Selections with Early Commentaries*. Translated with introduction and explanatory notes by Matthew Dasti and Stephen Phillips. Indianapolis: Hackett, 2017.
- Ghamidi, Javed Ahmad. *Faith and Beliefs*. Translated by Shezad Saleem. Lahore: Al-Mawrid, 2001.
- Graham, J. Peter. “Intelligent Design and Selective History: Two Sources of Purpose and Plan.” In *Oxford Studies in Philosophy of Religion*, edited by Jonathon L. Kvanvig, 67–88. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.
- . “Functions, Warrant, and History.” In *Naturalizing Epistemic Virtue*, edited by Abrol Fairweather and Owen Flanagan, 15–35. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014.
- Goldman, Alvin and Blanchard, Thomas. “Social Epistemology.” In *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2016 Edition). Edited by Edward N. Zalta. Accessed July 25, 2018. <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2016/entries/epistemology-social>.
- Gowans, Christopher W. *Philosophy of the Buddha*. London and New York: Routledge, 2003.
- Gudmunsen, Chris. *Wittgenstein and Buddhism*. New York: Barnes & Noble Books, 1977.
- Guyer, Paul. *Kant*. London and New York: Routledge, 2006.
- , editor. *The Cambridge Companion to Kant’s Critique of Pure Reason*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.
- Hacker-Wright, John. *Philippa Foot’s Moral Thought*. London: Bloomsbury, 2013.
- Haigh, Thomas, Mark Priestley and Crispin Rope. *ENIAC in Action: Making and Remaking the Modern Computer*. Cambridge, The MIT Press, 2016.
- ibn al-Hajjāj, Muslim. *Saḥīḥ Muslim, Volume 7*. Translated by Nasiruddin al-Khattab, edited by Huda Khattab. Riyadh: Darussalam, 2007.
- Hall, David. “The Way and Truth.” *A Companion to World Philosophy*, edited by Elliot Deutsch and Ron Bontekoe, 214–24. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Company, 1999.
- Hall, David and Roger Ames, *Thinking Through Confucius*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1978.

- Hanson, Erik and Erik Baldwin. "Grounding a Transcendental Ethic of Love: Kierkegaard and Daoism." *Kinesis* 35, no. 2 (2008): 7–20.
- Harrison, Victoria. *Eastern Philosophy: The Basics*. London: Routledge, 2012.
- Helm, Paul. *Faith and Understanding*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1997.
- Heschel, Abraham Joshua. *Man Is Not Alone: A Philosophy of Religion*. New York: Harper & Row, 1961.
- . *God in Search of Man: A Philosophy of Judaism*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1983.
- Hick, John. *An Interpretation of Religion: Human Responses to the Transcendent*. Second edition. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2004.
- Hiriyanna, M. *The Essentials of Indian Philosophy*. London: Diamond Books, 1996.
- Hochsmann, Hyun. *On Chuang Tzu*. Belmont: Wadsworth, 2001.
- Hoonhout, Michael A. "God's Love is Conditional." *Seat of Wisdom* 5 (2012): 77–83.
- Hudson, Hud. "The Father of Lies?" In *Oxford Studies in Philosophy of Religion, Volume 5*, edited by Jonathon L. Kvanvig, 147–66. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014.
- Hughes, Gerard. *The Nature of God: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion*. New York: Routledge, 2005.
- Huemer, Michael. "Moore's Paradox and the Norm of Belief." In *Themes from G. E. Moore: New Essays in Epistemology and Ethics*, edited by Susana Nuccetelli and Gary Seay, 142–57. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007.
- . "Compassionate Phenomenal Conservatism." *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 74, no. 1 (2007): 30–55.
- Hume, David. *A Treatise of Human Nature*. Edited by Dave Fate Norton and Mary J. Norton. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.
- Interpretation of the Meaning of the Glorious Qur'an*. Translated by Syed Vickar Ahamed. 6th edition. Elmhurst, New York: Tahrike Tarsile Qur'an, Inc., 2008.
- Islahi, Amin Ahsan. *Tazkiyah-i Nafs*. 4th edition. Lahore: Faran Foundation, 2005.
- Ivanhoe, Philip J. "Zhuangzi on Skepticism, Skill, and the Ineffable Dao." *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 61, no. 4 (1992): 639–54.
- Ivanhoe, P. J. and B. Van Norden. *Readings in Classical Chinese Philosophy*. New York: Seven Bridges Press, 2001.
- Kalupahana, David J. *A History of Buddhist Philosophy: Continuities and Discontinuities*. Honolulu: The University of Hawaii Press, 1992.
- Kant, Immanuel. *Critique of Pure Reason*. Edited and translated by Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.
- Keller, Shaykh Nuh Ha Mim. "Kalam and Islam." Accessed July 25, 2018. http://www.livingislam.org/k/ki_e.html.
- Kellner, Menachem Marc. "Maimonides and Gersonides on Mosaic Prophecy Menachem." *Speculum* 52, no. 1 (1977): 62–79.
- Kelly, Thomas. "The Epistemic Significance of Disagreement." In *Oxford Studies in Epistemology*, edited by John Hawthorne and Tamar Gendler Szabo, Volume 1, 167–96. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- . "Peer Disagreement and Higher Order Evidence." In *Disagreement*, edited by Richard Feldman and Ted Warfield, 111–74. Oxford University Press, 2010.

- Keynes, John Maynard. *A Treatise on Probability*. London: Macmillan and Company, 1921.
- Khapa, Rje Tsong. *Ocean of Reasoning: A Great Commentary on Nāgārjuna's Mulamadhyamakakārikā*. Translated by Geshe Ngawang Samten and Jay L. Garfield. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006.
- Kim, Joseph. *Reformed Epistemology and the Problem of Religious Diversity: Proper Function, Epistemic Disagreement, and Christian Exclusivism*. Eugene: Pickwick Publications, 2011.
- King, Richard. *Indian Philosophy: An Introduction to Hindu and Buddhist Thought*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999.
- Kinsley, David R. *Hinduism: A Cultural Perspective*. 2nd edition. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1993.
- Klein-Franke, Felix. "Al-Kindī." In *History of Islamic Philosophy, Routledge History of World Philosophies*, edited by Oliver Leaman and Seyyed Hossein Nasr, 165–77. New York: Routledge, 2001.
- Klostermaier, Klaus K. *A Survey of Hinduism*. 2nd edition. New York: State University of New York Press, 1994.
- Krishna, Íswara. *The Sānkyha Kārikā, with The Bhāshya, or Commentary of Gaurapāda*. Translated by Henry Thomas Colebrooke. Oxford: A. J. Valpy, 1837.
- Kvanvig, Jonathon L., editor. *Warrant in Contemporary Epistemology: Essays in Honor of Plantinga's Epistemology*. New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 1996.
- Lane, W and S. Lane-Poole. *Arabic-English Lexicon: Volume 8*. New York: F. Ungar Publishing Company, 1955.
- Laozi. *The Daodejing of Laozi*. Translation and commentary by Philip J. Ivanhoe. New York: Seven Bridges Press, 2002.
- Law, Stephen. "Latest Version of EAAN Paper." Last modified November, 2010. Accessed July 25, 2018. <http://stephenlaw.blogspot.com/2010/11/latest-version-eaan-paper-for-comments.html>
- . "Naturalism, Evolution and True Belief." *Analysis* 72, no. 1 (2012): 41–48.
- Leaman, Oliver. *A Brief Introduction to Islamic Philosophy*. Oxford: Polity Press, 1999.
- . *An Introduction to Classical Islamic Philosophy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.
- Lebens, Sam. "The Epistemology of Religiosity: An Orthodox Jewish Perspective." *International Journal of Philosophy and Religion* 74, no. 3 (2013): 315–32.
- Lee, Yong-yun. "A Naturalistic Understanding of Taiyi Sheng Shui's 太一生水 Cosmology." 2010 Creel-Luce Paleography Workshop, The University of Chicago, Sunday, April 25, 2010.
- Legge, James. *The Notions of the Chinese Concerning God and Spirits*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong Register Office, 1852.
- . *The Chinese Classics, Vol. III: The Shoo King*. London: Trübner Co., 1865.
- Leiter, Brian. "Naturalism and Naturalized Jurisprudence." In *Law: New Essays in Legal Theory*, edited by Brian Bix. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007.
- Lerner, Ralph. "Maimonides' Letter on Astrology." *History of Religions* 8, no. 2 (1968): 143–58.
- . *Maimonides' Empire of Light: Popular Enlightenment in an Age of Belief*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000.

- Levin, Michael. "Plantinga on Functions and the Theory of Evolution." *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 75, no. 1 (1997): 83–98.
- Lewis, David. *On the Plurality of Worlds*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 1986.
- . *Parts of Classes*. Cambridge: Blackwell, 1991.
- Linville, Mark. "The Moral Argument." In *The Blackwell Companion to Natural Theology*, edited by William Lane Craig and J. P. Moreland, 391–448. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009.
- Littlejohn, Ronnie. *Chinese Philosophy: An Introduction*. London and New York: I. B. Tauris, 2016.
- Liu, JeeLoo. *An Introduction to Chinese Philosophy: From Ancient Philosophy to Chinese Buddhism*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2006.
- Lopez, Donald. *Buddhist Scriptures*. London: Penguin, 2004.
- Ludlow, P., Yujin Nagasawa, and Daniel Stoljar. *There's Something About Mary: Essays on Phenomenal Consciousness and Frank Jackson's Knowledge Argument*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2004.
- Maha-Saccaka Sutta: The Longer Discourse to Saccaka*. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F8JbRHJpo58>.
- Maimonides, Moses. *The Eight Chapters of Maimonides on Ethics (Shemonah Peraḳim): A Psychological and Ethical Treatise*. Edited, annotated, and translated with introduction by Joseph I. Gorfinkle, Ph.D. New York: Columbia University Press, 1912.
- . "Thirteen Principles of the Faith." In *The Standard Prayer Book*. Translated by Simeon Singer. New York: Bloch Publishing Company, 1915.
- . *The Guide for the Perplexed*. Translated by M. Friedlander. New York: Dover, 1956.
- . *Mishneh Torah: A New Translation with Commentaries, Notes, Tables, Charts, and Index*. Translated by Eliyahu Touger. New York; Jerusalem: Maznaim, 1986.
- . *Mishneh Torah*. Translated by Eliyahu Touger. Accessed July 25, 2018. http://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/901695/jewish/Positive-Commandments.htm
- Michael, Thomas. *The Pristine Dao: Metaphysics in Early Daoist Discourse*. New York: State University of New York Press, 2005.
- Manalapuzhavila, Antony. "Nature and Origin of the World According to Rāmānuja." Potifica Universitas S. Thomas Aquinatis, 1966.
- Marmura, Michael E. "Al-Ghazālī." In *The Cambridge Companion to Arabic Philosophy*, edited by Peter Adamson and Richard C. Taylor, 137–54. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- Martin, Michael. *Atheism: A Philosophical Justification*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1992.
- Matheson, Jonathan. "Conciliatory Views of Disagreement and Higher-Order Evidence." *Episteme: A Journal of Social Epistemology* 6, no. 3 (2009): 269–79.
- . *The Epistemic Significance of Disagreement*. London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2015.
- Maududi, Syed Abul Ala. *Towards Understanding Islam*. Chicago: Kazi Publications, Inc., 1992.

- McNabb, Tyler Dalton. *Warranted Religion: Alvin Plantinga's Theory of Warrant Defended and Applied to Different World Religions*. MA Thesis, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2012.
- . "Warranted Religion: Answering Objections to Alvin Plantinga's Epistemology." *Religious Studies* 52, no. 4 (2014): 477–95.
- . "Defeating Naturalism: Defending and Reformulating Plantinga's EAAN." *Eleutheria: A Graduate Student Journal* 4, no. 1 (2015): 35–51.
- . "Closing Pandora's Box: A Defence of Alvin Plantinga's Epistemology of Religious Belief." Thesis, University of Glasgow, 2016.
- McNabb, Tyler Dalton and Erik Baldwin. "Reformed Epistemology and the Pandora's Box Objection: The *Vaiśeṣika* and Mormon Traditions." *Philosophia Christi* 18, no. 2 (2016): 451–65.
- . "Divine Methodology: A Lawful Deflection of Kantian and Kantian-Esque Defeaters." *Open Theology* 3, no. 1 (2017): 293–304.
- McGrew, Timothy. *The Foundations of Knowledge*. Lanham: Littlefield Adams Books, 1995.
- Millikan, Ruth Garrett. "In Defense of Proper Functions." *Philosophy of Science* 56, no. 2 (1989): 288–302.
- Mitchell, Donald W. *Buddhism: Introducing The Buddhist Experience*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.
- Mohanty, J. N. *Classical Indian Philosophy*. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2000.
- Moore, G. E. *Principia Ethica*. Revised Edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.
- Morris, Thomas V. *Our Idea of God: An Introduction to Philosophical Theology*. Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP Academic, 1991.
- Nāgārjuna and Kenneth K. Inada, *Nāgārjuna: A Translation of His Mūlamadhyamakakārikā with an Introductory Essay of Kenneth K. Inada*. Tokyo: Hokuseido Press, 1970.
- Nayar, Nancy Ann. *Poetry as Theology: The Śrīvaiṣṇava Stotra in the Age of Rāmānuja*. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz Verlag, 1992.
- Needham, Joseph. *History of Scientific Thought. Science and Civilization in China*, vol. 2. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956.
- Neander, Karen. "Functions as Selected Effects: The Conceptual Analyst's Defense." *Philosophy of Science* 58, no. 2 (1991): 168–84.
- Nicholson, Andrew. "Reconciling Dualism and Non-Dualism: Three Arguments in Vijnānabhikṣu's *Bhedābheda Vedānta*." *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 35, no. 3 (2007): 371–403.
- Nielsen, Kai. *Ethics Without God*. London: Pemberton, 1973.
- Owens, David. *Reasons without Freedom: The Problem of Epistemic Normativity*. New York: Routledge, 2000.
- Patañjali. *The Yoga-Darśana, the Sutras of Patañjali with the Bhāṣya of Vyasa*. Bombay: Rajaram Tukaram Tatya, 1907.
- Peckham, John. *The Love of God: A Canonical Model*. Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP Academic, 2015.
- Phillips, Stephen. *Epistemology in Classical India: The Knowledge Sources of the Nyaya School*. London: Routledge, 2012.

- Plantinga, Alvin. "Review of God and Rationality." *The Reformed Journal* 24, no. 1 (1974): 28–29.
- . *God, Freedom, and Evil*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1974.
- . *The Nature of Necessity*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974.
- . "Is Belief in God Rational?" In *Rationality and Religious Belief*, edited by C. Delaney, 7–27. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1979.
- . "The Reformed Objection to Natural Theology." *Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association* 54 (1980): 49–62.
- . "Is Belief in God Properly Basic?" *Nous* 15, no. 1 (1981): 41–52.
- . "On Reformed Epistemology." *The Reformed Journal* 32, no. 1 (1982): 13–17.
- . "Reason and Belief in God." In *Faith and Rationality*, edited by Alvin Plantinga and Nicholas Wolterstorff, 16–93. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983.
- . "Self Profile." In *Profiles: Alvin Plantinga*, edited by James E. Tomberlin and Peter van Inwagen, Volume 5, 3–97. Dordrecht: D. Reidel Publishing Company, 1985.
- . "The Foundations of Theism: A Reply." *Faith and Philosophy* 3, no. 3 (1986): 298–313.
- . *God and Other Minds: A Study of the Rational Justification of Belief in God*. Paperback edition, with a new preface by the author. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990. (The first edition was published in 1967.)
- . "Divine Knowledge." In *Christian Perspectives on Religious Knowledge*, edited by C. Stephen Evans and Merold Westphal, 40–65. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993.
- . *Warrant and Proper Function*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993.
- . *Warrant: The Current Debate*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993.
- . *Warranted Christian Belief*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.
- . "Reply to Beilby's Cohorts." In *Naturalism Defeated? Essays on Plantinga's Evolutionary Argument Against Naturalism*, edited by James Beilby, 204–76. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002.
- . "Designed intelligence." *Times Literary Supplement*. [London, England] July 21, 2006.
- . "Appendix: Two Dozen (or So) Theistic Arguments." In *Alvin Plantinga*, edited by Deane-Peter Baker, Contemporary Philosophers in Focus, 203–27. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.
- . "Evolution vs. Naturalism: Why They are Like Oil and Water." *Books and Culture*, July/August 2008. Accessed July 25, 2018. <http://www.booksandculture.com/articles/2008/julaug/11.37.html>
- . *Where the Conflict Really Lies: Science, Religion, and Naturalism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.
- . "Replies to my commenters." In *Plantinga's 'Warranted Christian Belief': Critical Essays with a Reply by Alvin Plantinga*, edited by Dieter Schönecker, 237–62. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015.
- . *Knowledge and Christian Belief*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015.

- Plantinga, Alvin and Christopher J. Insole. "The Philosophy of Religion." In *God's Advocates: Christian Thinkers in Conversation*, edited by Rupert Shortt, 43–66. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2005.
- Plantinga, Alvin and Michael Tooley. *Knowledge of God*. Malden: Blackwell, 2008.
- Pollock, John. *Contemporary Theories of Knowledge*. 3rd edition. Savage, Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield, 1986.
- Priest, Graham. "The Logic of the Catuskoti." *Comparative Philosophy* 1, no. 2 (2010): 24–54.
- Prebish, Charles S. and Damien Keown. *Introducing Buddhism*. London and New York: Routledge, 2006.
- Qutb, Sayyid. *The Shade of the Qur'an*. Edited and translated by Adil Salahi, Vol. VII Surah 8. England and Qatar: The Islamic Foundation and Islamonline.net, 2003/1424 AH.
- Quine, W. V. O. *Theories of Things*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981.
- Radhakrishnan, Sarvepalli. *The Vedānta According to Śamkara and Rāmānuja*. London: Allen & Unwin, 1928.
- . *Indian Philosophy: Volume 2*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1998.
- Radhakrishnan, Sarvepalli and Charles A. Moore, editors. "The Sāṃkhya-Karika." In *A Sourcebook in Indian Philosophy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957.
- Raju, P. T. *Structural Depths of Indian Thought*. New York: SUNY Press, 1985.
- Rao, Rallapalli Venkateswara. *The Concept of Time in Ancient India*. Delhi: Bharatiya Kala Prakashan, 2004.
- Rao, K. B. Ramakrishna. "The Guṇas of Prakṛti According to the Sāṃkhya Philosophy." *Philosophy East and West* 13, no. 1 (1963): 61–71.
- Ratzsch, Del. "Perceiving Design." In *God and Design: The Teleological Argument and Modern Science*, edited by Neil A. Manson, 125–45. Routledge, 2003.
- Raphals, Lisa. "Skeptical Strategies in the *Zhuangzi* and *Theaetetus*." *Philosophy East and West* 44, no. 3 (1994): 501–26.
- The Rig Veda: An Anthology*. Translated by Wendy O'Faherty. London: Penguin Books, 1981.
- Rāmānuja, Sri. *The Vedānta-Sūtras with the Commentary of Rāmānuja: Part III*. Translated by George Thibaut. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1904.
- Rahula, Walpola. *What the Buddha Taught*. New York: Grove Press, 1959.
- Rea, Michael. *World without Design: The Ontological Consequences of Naturalism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.
- Reisman, David C. "Al-Fārābi and the Philosophical Curriculum." In *The Cambridge Companion to Arabic Philosophy*, edited by Peter Adamson and Richard C. Taylor, 52–71. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- Roberts, Robert C. and W. Jay Wood. *Intellectual Virtues: An Essay in Regulative Epistemology*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007.
- Robinson, Richard H. "Some Logical Aspects of Nāgārjuna's System." *Philosophy East and West* 6, no. 4 (1957): 291–308.
- Rošker, Jana. "Epistemology in Chinese Philosophy." *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2017 Edition). Edited by Edward N. Zalta. Accessed July 25, 2018. <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2017/entries/chinese-epistemology>.

- Rosenzweig, Franz. *Understanding the Sick and the Healthy: A View of World, Man, and God With a New Introduction by Hilary Putnam*. Translated by Nahum Glatzer. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999.
- Rudavsky, T. M. "Medieval Jewish Neoplatonism." In *History of Jewish Philosophy*, edited by Daniel H. Frank and Oliver Leaman, 118–48. New York: Routledge, 1997.
- Rukmani, T. S. "VijñāNabhikṣu On Bhava-Pratyaya And UpāYa-Pratyaya YogīS In Yoga-Sutras," *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 5, no. 4 (1978): 311–17.
- Ruse, Michael "God is Dead. Long Live Morality." Last modified March 15, 2010. Accessed July 25, 2018. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/belief/2010/mar/15/morality-evolution-philosophy>.
- Russell, Bertrand. *Human Knowledge: Its Scope and Limits*. London: George Allen and Unwin LTD, 1923.
- Ryle, Gilbert. "Knowing How and Knowing That: The Presidential Address." *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 46, no. 1 (1945–1946): 1–16.
- Saeed, Abdullah. *Islamic Thought: An Introduction*. New York: Routledge, 2006.
- Śankarācārya, Swami Prabhavananda and Christopher Isherwood. *Shankara's Crest-Jewel of Discrimination*. Hollywood: Vedānta Press, 1978.
- Sarma, Deepak. "Regulating Religious Texts: Access to Texts in Madhva Vedanta." *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 27, no. 6 (1999): 583–634.
- . *An Introduction to Mādhva Vedānta*. Ashgate World Philosophies Series. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003.
- . *Epistemologies and the Limitations of Philosophical Inquiry: Doctrine in Mādhva Vedānta*. London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2005.
- Sartre, Jean-Paul. *Essays in Existentialism*. Edited with a forward by Wade Baskin. New Jersey: The Citadel Press, 1965.
- Satprakashananda, Swami. *Methods of Knowledge According to Advaita Vedanta*. Kolkata: Advaita Ahsrama, 1965.
- Sayre, Patricia A. "Personalism." In *A Companion to Philosophy of Religion*, 2nd Edition, edited by Charles Taliaferro, Paul Draper, and Philip L. Quinn, 151–58. Wiley-Blackwell: Malden, Mass., 2010.
- Schellenberg, J. L. *The Wisdom to Doubt: A Justification of Religious Skepticism*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007.
- . *Evolutionary Religion*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.
- . *The Hiddenness Argument: Philosophy's New Challenge to Belief in God*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015.
- Shanbhag, D. N. *Śrī Madhvācārya and His Cardinal Doctrines*. Dharwad: Bharat Book Depot & Prakashan, 1990.
- Sharma, B. N. K. *The Philosophy of Śrī Madhvācārya*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1986.
- Sharif, M. M. "Philosophical Teachings of the Qur'an." In *A History of Muslim Philosophy, Volume 1*, edited by M. M. Sharif, 136–54. Kempton, Germany: Allgäuer Heimatverlag GmbH., 1961.
- . *A History of Muslim Philosophy, Volume 2*. Kempton, Germany: Allgäuer Heimatverlag GmbH, 1966.

- Sennett, James F. *Modality, Probability, and Rationality: A Critical Examination of Alvin Plantinga's Epistemology*. New York: Peter Lang, 1991.
- . "Direct Justification and Universal Sanction." *Journal of Philosophical Research* 23 (1998): 257–87.
- Siderits, Mark. *Buddhism as Philosophy: An Introduction*. Indianapolis: Hackett, 2007.
- Smith, Brian K. "Exorcising the Transcendent: Strategies for Defining Hinduism and Religion," *History of Religions* 27, no. 1 (1987): 32–55.
- Smith, Huston. *The World's Religions: Our Great Wisdom Traditions*. San Francisco, CA: Harper San Francisco, 1991.
- Soloveitchik, Joseph B. *And From There You Shall Seek*. Translated by Naomi Goldblum. Brooklyn: KTAV Publishing House, 2009.
- Sosa, Ernest. "Reliabilism and Intellectual Virtue." In *Knowledge in Perspective: Selected Essays in Epistemology*, 131–48. Cambridge Studies in Philosophy. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.
- . "Proper Functionalism and Virtue Epistemology." In *Warrant in Contemporary Epistemology: Essays in Honor of Plantinga's Theory of Knowledge*, edited by Jonathon L. Kvanvig, 253–70. New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 1996.
- . "Tracking, Competence, and Knowledge." In *The Oxford Handbook of Epistemology*, edited by Paul K. Moser, 266–84. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.
- . "Knowledge: Instrumental and Testimonial." In *The Epistemology of Testimony*, edited by Jennifer Lackey and Ernest Sosa, 116–23. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006.
- Stace, Walter T. "Naturalism and Religion." *Proceedings and Addresses of the American Philosophical Association* 23 (1949): 22–46.
- Stanley, Jason. "Fallibilism and Concessive Knowledge Attributions." *Analysis* 65, no. 2 (2005): 126–31.
- Stanley, Jason. "Knowledge and Certainty." *Philosophical Issues* 18, no. 1 (2008): 35–57.
- Stark, Rodney. *Discovering God: The Origins of the Great Religions and the Evolution of Belief*. New York: HarperOne, 2007.
- Streng, Frederick J. *Emptiness: A Study in Religious Meaning*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1967.
- Sudduth, Michael Czapkay. "The Prospects for 'Mediate' Natural Theology in John Calvin." *Religious Studies* 31, no. 1 (1995): 53–68.
- . "The Internalist Character and Evidential Implications of Plantingan Defeaters." *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 45, no. 3 (1999): 167–87.
- . "Defeaters in Epistemology." *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Last modified 2015. Accessed July 25, 2018. <http://www.iep.utm.edu/ep-defeal/>.
- Sukhamala Sutta: Refinement*. <https://www.accesstoinight.org/tipitaka/an/an03/an03.038.than.html>.
- Swinburne, Richard. *The Evolution of the Soul*, Revised Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997.
- . *The Existence of God*, 2nd edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.

- Sydnor, Jon Paul. *Ramanuja and Schleiermacher: Toward a Constructive Comparative Theology*. Cambridge: James Clarke & Co, 2012.
- Swain, Marshall. "Epistemic Defeasibility." *American Philosophical Quarterly* 11, no. 1 (1974): 15–25.
- Swami Tapasyananda. *Sri Madhvacarya: His Life, Religion & Philosophy*. Myslapore: Sri Ramakrishna Math Printing Press, 2012.
- Taber, Tyler and Tyler McNabb. "Is the Problem of Divine Hiddenness a Problem for the Reformed Epistemologist?" *Heythrop Journal* 57, no. 6 (2016): 1–11.
- Takakusu, Junjirō. *The Essentials of Buddhist Philosophy*. Edited by Wing-tsit Chan and Charles A. Moore. Delhi, India: Motilal Banarsidass, 1978.
- Taylor, James. "Colloquium on Justification." Meeting of the American Philosophical Association Pacific Division, March 31st, 2016.
- The Connected Discourses of the Buddha: A New Translation of the Saṃyutta Nalāya*. Translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi. Somerville, MA: Wisdom Publications, 2000.
- The Holy Scriptures According to the Masoretic Text, with the Aid of Previous Versions and with Constant Consultation of Jewish Authorities*. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1917.
- The Holy Qur'an: English Translation of the Meanings and Commentary*. Edited by The Presidency of Islamic Researches, IFTA, Call and Guidance. The Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Fahd Complex for the Printing of the Holy Qur-an, 1413 H/1993.
- Thune, Michael. "The Epistemology of Disagreement." PhD diss., Purdue University, 2008.
- . "Partial Defeaters' and the Epistemology of Disagreement." *The Philosophical Quarterly* 60, no. 239 (2010): 355–72.
- . "Religious Belief and the Epistemology of Disagreement." *Philosophy Compass* 5, no. 8 (2010): 712–24.
- Tien, David W. "Warranted Neo-Confucian Belief: Religious Pluralism and the Affections in the Epistemologies of Wang Yangming (1472-1529) and Alvin Plantinga." *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 55, no. 1 (2004): 31–55.
- Titelbaum, Michael. "Rationality's Fixed Point (Or: In Defense of Right Reason)." *Oxford Studies in Epistemology* 5 (2015): 253–94.
- Tsering, Geshe Tashi. *The Four Noble Truths: The Foundation of Buddhist Thought: Volume 1*. Somerville, MA: Wisdom Publications, 2005.
- Turkman, Erkan and Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī. *The Essence of Rumi's Masnevi, Including His Life and Works*. Konya: Enis Booksellers, 1992.
- Tyāgīśānanda, Swāmi. *Śvetāśvataropaniṣad*. Myslapore: Sri Ramakrishna Math, 1949.
- The Upaniṣads*. Edited and translated by Valeria J. Roebuck. London: Penguin Books, 2003.
- van Inwagen, Peter. "We're Right. They're Wrong." In *Disagreement*, edited by Richard Feldman and Ted Warfield, 10–28. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.
- Vidyarthi, Pandeya Brahmeshvar. *Early Indian Religious Thought: A Study in the Sources of Indian Theism with Special Reference to Ramanuja*. Oriental Publishers & Distributors: New Delhi, 1976.

- Vijñāna Bhikṣu. *The Yogasara-Sangraha of Vijñāna Bhikṣu*. Translated by Gaṅgānātha Jha. Bombay: The Bombay Theosophical Fund, 1894.
- von Mises, Richard. *Probability, Statistics, and Truth*. New York: Dover, 1957.
- Wang, Robin R. *Yinyang: The Way of Heaven and Earth in Chinese Thought and Culture*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012.
- Wielenberg, Erik J. "Divine Deception." In *Skeptical Theism: New Essays*, edited by Trent Dougherty and Justin P. McBrayer, 236–49. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014.
- Westerhoff, Jan. *Nāgārjuna's Madhyamaka: A Philosophical Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.
- Westerhoff, Jan. "The No-Thesis View." *Pointing at the Moon: Buddhism, Logic, Analytic Philosophy*, edited by Mario D'Amato, Jay L. Garfield, and Tom J. Tillemans, 23–39. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.
- . "Nāgārjuna." *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Spring 2017 Edition. Spring 2017 Edition) Edited by Edward N. Zalta. Accessed July 25, 2018. <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2017/entries/nagarjuna>.
- Wehr, Hans. *A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic*, edited by J. Milton Cowan, 3rd Edition. Ithaca, Spoken Language Services, 1976.
- Wood, Allen W. *Kant*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2005.
- Xing, Wen. "Early Daoist Thought in Excavated Bamboo Slips." In *Dao Companion to Daoist Philosophy*, edited by Xiaogan Liu, Dao Companions to Chinese Philosophy, 101–26. New York and London: Springer, 2015.
- Yāmunācārya. *Yāmuna's Āgama Prāmāṇyam, or The Treatise on the Validity of Pañcarātra*. Translated by J. A. B. van Buitenen. Ramanuja Research Society: Basavangudi, Bangalore, 1971.
- Yasien, Mohamed. *Fitrah: The Islamic Conception of Human Nature*. London: Ta-Ha Publishers, Ltd., 1996.
- Zhuangzi. *Zhuangzi: The Essential Writings, with Selections from the Traditional Commentaries*. Translated by Brook Ziporyn. Indianapolis: Hackett, 2009.
- Zimmer, Heinrich. *Philosophies of India*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1951.
- Ziporyn, Brook. *The Penumbra Unbound: The Neo-Taoist Philosophy of Guo Xiang*. New York: State University of New York Press, 2003.
- . "Guo Xiang: The Self-So and the Repudiation-Cum-Reaffirmation of Deliberate Action and Knowledge." In *Dao Companion to Daoist Philosophy*, edited by Xiaogan Liu, Dao Companions to Chinese Philosophy, 397–423. New York and London: Springer, 2015.

Index

- Advaita Vedānta*:
the Argument Schema applied to, 90–91;
the Dependency Thesis in, 73, 79–80;
the Design Thesis in, 77, 79–80, 85;
and design plans, 77, 78, 79, 80;
the Immediacy Thesis in, 79–80, 85;
and the proper function condition, 76, 78, 79, 80, 85;
naturalism of, 78, 80, 85;
the truth-aimed condition in, 77, 78, 80.
See also classical Indian philosophy, terms and concepts in; Śaṅkara
- Ahmad, Absar, 221, 228–29
- Ali, Maulana Muhammad, 228, 231, 232, 233
- Ali, Zain, 234
- Allan, Sarah, 184, 185, 186, 187
- Alston, William, 200, 201, 202;
and doxastic practices, 200–201;
and externalism, 200–201
- Ames, Roger, 173
- Aquinas, Thomas:
beliefs, self-evident and evident to the senses, 5;
on design plans in Classical Theism, 125–26;
and divine conceptualism, 134n38;
divine simplicity, 166;
essence, or nature, definition of, 24n13;
the Fifth Way, 40–41;
on God’s aseity, 133n17;
on God’s mode of knowing, 134n39, 166;
solution to the problem of evil, 246
argument against the existence of an actual infinite, 125–26
argument schematic for thinking that there are multiple extensions of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model, 61
- Aristotle, 14;
virtue ethics, 35.
See also Neo-Aristotelian Ethical Naturalism
- Armstrong, David, 30
- Asad, Muhammad, 239
- atheism, 13, 30, 35
- Aurobindo, Sri, 95n78
- Audi, Robert:
and moral intuitionism, 57n46;
and reasonableness, 278, 279
- Augustine:
an Augustinian model of knowledge of God, 250;

- on knowledge of infinity, 249, 254n79;
 on mathematical knowledge, 249;
 and meta-level requirements on knowledge, 248–50;
 on the *sensus divinitatis*, 249–50
- Baehr, Jason, 280
- Baldwin, Erik, 230, 231, 234
- Becker, Rabbi Moshe, 211
- Bentham, Jeremy, 47
- Bartley, Christopher, 68–69, 97, 101, 102, 103, 111n21
- Beilby, James, 67
- Bergmann, Michael:
 and commonsense naturalism, 42;
 his definition of metaphysical naturalism, 30;
 his discussion of and replies to standard objections to Plantingian religious epistemology, 12–14;
 on naturalism and nonpropositional evidence, 270;
 “Rational Religious Belief without Arguments,” 12
- Bhatt, S. R., 108
- Black, Deborah, 225
- Boyce, Kenny, 17, 19, 20
- Brahman, 76, 77, 115;
 the fundamental reality of, 71;
 identical with *Ātman*, 68, 74, 78, 100;
Nirguṇa Brahman (*Brahman* without qualities), 73, 74, 75, 78, 80, 82, 90, 103;
 not identical with *Ātman*, 98, 100;
Saguṇa Brahman (*Brahman* with qualities) 74, 111;
 and theistic personalism, 97–98, 99, 100
- Brent, James O. P., 166
- the Buddha (Siddhartha Guatama), 139, 140, 141, 142;
 biography of, 137–38
- Buddhism:
anatman, the doctrine of, 139;
Bodhisattvas, 142;
Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta, 138;
dukkha, 139, 140, 141;
The Eight-Fold Path, 139, 140–41, 142;
The Four Noble Truths, 138–39, 140, 142;
karma, 137;
Mahāyāna Buddhism, 141–42;
 naturalism of, 149;
nirvāṇa, 140, 141, 142, 147;
Pāli Canon, 141;
Prajñāpāramitā Sūtras (or the *Perfection of Wisdom Sūtras*) 141–42;
praṭītya-samutpāda (the doctrine of dependent origination), 139;
 and the proper function condition, 149–50;
 Pure Land, 142;
samsāra, 137, 139, 140, 141, 147;
Theravāda Buddhism, 141, 142;
Yogacāra Buddhism, 142.
 See also the Buddha (Siddhartha Guatama); *Mādhyamika* Buddhism; Nāgārjuna
- Calvin, John, 4, 5, 21, 63;
The Institutes of the Christian Religion, 63
- Carsun, Chang, 162
- The Case of Plantinga and his Comrades, 261–66, 267
- Chakravarti, Pulinbihari, 82, 83, 94n62
- Chan, Wing-Tsit, 175, 176, 178
- Chinese, ancient religion of the:
Di or *Shangdi*, 169, 170;
 the *Great Commentary*, 156;
 the *I Ching* (or *the Book of Changes*), 156, 157;
Tian (heaven) 170, 171, 172, 184;
xin (heart/mind), 159, 182
- Ching, Julia, 183, 184
- Christian, Rose Ann, 67, 76, 81, 259
- Clark, Kelly James, 155, 167–74

- classical Indian philosophy in the
 Orthodox *darśanas*, important
 terms and concepts in:
āgama (testimony), 115, 132n9;
Ātman, 68, 71, 74, 98, 99, 104, 114;
Ātman is *Brahman*, 68, 71, 74, 102;
The Bhagavad Gītā, 73, 97, 101;
The Brahma Sūtra, 63;
doṣa (defect), 69, 121;
guṇa, *guṇas* (epistemic excellences),
 69, 81, 82;
jñāna (knowledge), 115;
karma, 68, 104, 118, 119, 127, 128,
 129;
māyā (illusion, ignorance), 74, 75,
 81, 102, 103;
pramā (knowledge, veridical
 cognition, or veridical
 presentational experience), 68;
pramāṇa (that by which true
 cognition is arrived at), 68, 69,
 70, 71, 72, 103, 114, 115, 116,
 123;
The R̥gveda, 98;
śakti (epistemic capacity), 69;
saṃnyāsīn (renunciate), 99, 114, 138;
samsāra, 68, 118, 119, 127;
The Vedas, 68, 72, 74, 76, 77, 78, 80,
 92, 99, 104, 108, 113, 115, 120,
 122, 123, 129, 130, 132n9.
See also Brahman; darśanas;
pramāṇa; Upaniṣads
- Christian, Rose Ann, 67, 76, 259
 Churchland, Patricia, 43, 48
 Churchland, Paul, 47
 classical theism, 125, 166
 cognitive luck, 18
 Colebrooke, Henry Thomas, 82, 94n62
 comparative and global philosophy, xi,
 xii, 262
- Confucianism:
 the *Analects*, 172, 173;
de (virtue), 161, 172;
 The Dependency Thesis in, 174;
 The Design Thesis in, 174;
 The *Doctrine of the Mean*, 173;
 The Immediacy Thesis in, 173;
lei, 158;
li, 157, 163, 164, 165, 167;
 Mengzi (Mencius), 159;
 naturalism of, 167;
 on the possibility of a Confucian
 extension of the standard
 Aquinas/Calvin model, 164–74;
 Shangdi, 169, 170;
qi, 157, 163;
ren, 161;
xin (heart-mind), 159;
yin and *yang*, 175, 184;
yinyang matrix, 158. *See also* Neo-
 Confucianism; Yangming, Wang
 Confucius. *See* Kongzi
- Craig, William Lane, 55n16, 125
 creation, 63, 74, 98, 101, 104, 126, 203,
 221;
 in Chinese religion, myths of, 169;
 in Classical Islam, 221, 228;
 emanationism, 64, 221;
 ex nihilo, 63, 64, 124, 126;
 in Judaism, 197, 203;
 the Neo-Confucian and Daoist notion
 that there has no creator, 176,
 177, 180–83;
 T'ai-yi / Taiyi personal creator of the
 world, 183–84, 185, 186
- creedal statements, 62–63;
 the core teachings of Christianity,
 21;
 the core teachings of Confucius, 161;
 the core teachings of Daoism,
 175–76;
 The Four Noble Truths, Buddhism,
 138–39;
 The five-fold difference, *Mādhva*
Vedānta, 117;
 The Five Pillars, Islam, 219;
 the Madhyamaka Creed, Buddhism,
 143;
 the *Prameya Śloka*, *Mādhva*
Vedānta, 116–17;
The Thirteen Principles, Judaism,
 197

- Crisp, Thomas, 23, 52–54;
 Crisp's argument against naturalistic metaphysics, 52, 53
- The Da Vinci Code*, 241
- Dao* (Tao), 157, 158, 161, 180, 182, 183;
 absolute, 175;
 ineffable, 175, 179;
 ontological ground and origin of all things, 175;
 personal creator God, 184, 185, 186;
 transcendent, 175;
 a word for absence (of source, substance, creator, etc.), 177
- Daoism (Taoism):
 The *Daodejing*, 174, 175, 176, 177, 179, 185;
de (virtue), 175, 176, 177, 182;
 Laozi (Lao Tzu), 174;
 philosophical and religious Daoism, 183, 185;
 on the possibility of a Daoist extension of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model, 186;
sheng, 185, 186;
 The *Taiyi Sheng Shui / Da Yi Sheng Shui* (or "*The Great One Gives Birth to the Waters*"), 184;
 T'ai-yi / Taiyi (Great One), 183, 184, 185;
 Theistic Daoism, 183–86;
qi, 185;
 the *Zhuangzi*, 176, 179, 180, 181, 182. *See also* *Dao*; Neo-Daoism; *Zhuangzi* (Zhuang Zhou)
- darśanas* (vision or way of seeing), 68. *See also* *Advaita Vedānta*; *Mādhva Vedānta*; *Mīmāṃsā*; *Nyāya*; *Sāṃkhya*; *Vaiśeṣika*; *Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta*; *Yoga*.
- The Darwinian Requirement, 29, 45, 46, 49, 50, 52
- Davidson, Donald, 17;
 his Swampman example, 16–17
- defeaters, epistemic, 15;
 actual defeaters, 238, 244;
 believed defeaters, 241, 242;
 defeater-defeaters, 228, 242, 268, 276, 277;
 defeater deflectors, 271, 28n71;
 doxastic defeaters, 270;
 internal rationality defeater, 129, 280;
 intrinsic defeater-defeaters, 277;
 mental state defeaters, 241;
 misleading defeaters, 242;
 the less than optimistic partial defeater response, 275;
 the optimistic partial defeater response, 274–75;
 partial defeaters, 267, 272–76;
 non-propositional defeater deflectors, 42;
 propositional defeaters, 241;
 subjective defeaters, 234, 237, 242;
 undercutting and undermining defeaters, 15
- deism, 50
- Dennett, Daniel:
 Dennett's definition of naturalism, 47;
 on mind, intentionality, and meaning, 47, 48;
 and moral rights as pragmatic nonsense, 47;
 Supermanism, 8, 11
- DeRose, Keith, 8
- Descartes, Rene, 6, 14, 246;
cogito ergo sum, 5;
 on incorrigible belief, 5
- determinism, 48, 128
- Devanandan, Paul, 75
- Devitt, Michael, 30
- divine deception:
 the general problem of, 245;
 in Judaism and Christianity, 245–46
- EAAN. *See* the Evolutionary Argument Against Naturalism (EAAN)

- Empiricus, Sextus, 144, 180
 epistemic defeasibility, 95n85
 epistemic peers, 262, 267
 epistemic possibility, 260
 epistemic seemings, 5, 41, 247, 265, 266, 271
 epistemology of disagreement, 266–67;
 the conciliatory view, or the equal weight view, 267;
 disagreement between epistemic peers, 13, 267, 271–73;
 the skeptical response, 267–69;
 the steadfast view, 267–69.
See also epistemic peers
 evidence, 13, 14, 19, 32, 50, 51, 93n21, 95n85, 205, 228, 238, 242, 280;
 and apprehension, 119;
 available evidence, 269;
 bi-level evidentialism, 276–78;
 and classical foundationalism, 5–6, 8, 200;
 experiential evidence, 12;
 first-order (object level) evidence, 273, 274;
 higher-order (second-level) evidence, 273, 274, 276, 277;
 historical and historical-textual evidence, 169, 170, 172, 174, 184, 185, 247;
 and internal rationality, 15;
 non-propositional, 42, 86, 270, 272;
 propositional, 4, 211, 212, 226, 227, 243, 245, 270, 276, 277;
 publicly sharable, 262, 263;
 total evidence, 42, 273, 274, 275
 evolution, 15, 18;
 in *Daoism*, 176;
 Darwinian evolution, 29, 43, 47, 51;
 and natural selection, 30, 38, 43, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 54, 55n19, 57n54, 86, 270;
 neo-Darwinian, 46, 53;
 non-theistic, 31, 32, 56n42;
 theistic, 50;
 in *Sāṃkhya*, 83, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89
 the evolutionary argument against metaphysical beliefs, 51–52
 the evolutionary argument against naturalism (EAN), 13–14, 41–42, 270
 Fales, Evan, 43, 44, 46, 47
 Al-Fārābī, 221
 Al-Fawzan, Sheik Saleh, 235
 Feldman, Richard, 267
 Feser, Edward, 40–41
 Fisher, Cass:
 on Jewish doxastic practices, 200–202
 Fodor, Jerry, 43, 45, 46
 Foot, Philippa:
 her account of natural goodness, 36;
 Foot's argument for proper functionalism, 37–38, 39;
 on natural functions, 35–36;
 on natural norms, 36–37, 40
 Foundationalism, 5–4, 200;
 Plantinga's argument against classical foundationalism, 6;
 strong, or classical, foundationalism, 5, 8;
 weak foundationalism, 5
 Fraser, Chris, 158–59
 free will, 48, 51
 free will defense, 261
 Frykenberg, Robert E., 92n4

 the Gambling Demon scenario, 18–19
 Ganeri, Martin, 111n21
 Gaon, Saadya, 203;
 his listing of properly basic beliefs, 205–6
 Garfield, Jay, 143, 145, 146
 generic theism, 267, 268
 Gerson, Levi Ben (Gersonides), 208
 Ghamidi, Javed Ahmad, 229
 Al-Ghāzālī, 221, 223, 227, 231, 232
 Graham, Peter, 32, 55n19
 the Great Pumpkin, 8, 11, 12, 24n30

- Hacker-Wright, John:
 on Phillipa Foot and natural norms
 and proper function, 36–37.
See also Neo-Aristotelian Ethical
 Naturalism.
- Hadot, Pierre, 200
- Hall, David, 173
- Harrison, Victoria, 74, 81, 85, 145, 147
- Helm, Paul, 249
- Heschel, Abraham, 203, 204
- Hoonhout, Michael A., 130
- Hudson, Hud, 245, 246
- Hume, David, 39, 56n43, 144
- Inada, Kenneth K., 143
- Internalism, 69, 76;
 the Internalist Requirement, 69–70
- Isherwood, Christopher, 74
- Islam:
 Abraham, 218;
 the Argument Schema applied to,
 247–48;
 and basic belief in God, 228–29;
 the battle of Badr, 236, 238, 239,
 240;
 creation and emanationism, 221;
 the Dependency Thesis in, 220–21;
 the Design Thesis in, 221–28;
 and doubt, 222–23, 226, 27;
 faith, 229–30;
 first-order cognition ('*aql*¹'), 222,
 223;
fiṭrah, 250n2;
 the five pillars, 219;
 Gabriel, 218, 233;
 the General and the soldiers case,
 242–43;
 God's attributes, 219;
 Islamic belief, 230–31;
 the Immediacy Thesis in, 228–29;
 the Islamic analogue of the Internal
 Instigation of the Holy Spirit
 Thesis, 231, 232–33;
 the Islamic analogue of the Scriptural
 Revelation Thesis, 231, 233–34;
 the Islamic design plan, 221–28;
 the Islamic extension of the standard
 Aquinas/Calvin model, 229–34;
 Jesus in, 218;
makr, 234, 235, 237, 253n51;
 meta-level, or second-order,
 cognition ('*aql*²'), 222, 223;
 The meta-level cognition
 requirement in, 223, 248;
 Muhammad, 218, 219, 223, 233,
 236, 240, 241;
 a potential defeater for Islamic
 belief, 234–37; replies, 237–44;
 the problem of divine deception in,
 234–37, 242–44;
 and the proper function condition,
 227;
 propositional evidence for the
 existence of God is obligatory,
 226;
qalb (spiritual perception), 222, 223,
 224, 228, 232;
 the *Qur'an*, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221,
 226, 228, 230, 232, 232, 234, 235,
 236, 237, 238, 240, 242, 243,
 244;
 reflective Muslims, 226, 234, 237,
 238, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244,
 245;
 and Reformed Epistemology, 227;
 second-order knowledge of God,
 224;
tafsīr (Qur'anic exegesis), 237, 238,
 240, 242, 245;
 the truth-aimed condition in, 245,
 259;
wahy (revelation, inspiration), 232,
 233, 234
- Ivanhoe, Philip J., 176, 180
- Jackson, Frank, 213n7
- Judaism:
 Abraham (Abram), 167, 196, 246,
 247;
 the argument schema applied to, 213;

- biographies of Abraham and Moses, 196;
 the Dependency Thesis in, 197, 207;
 the development of Hebrew monotheism, Kelly James Clark on 167–68;
El, 167, 168;
 the Design Thesis in, 197, 207, 209;
 the Immediacy Thesis in, 204, 207;
 The Jewish analogue of the Internal Instigation of the Holy Spirit Thesis, 208;
 The Jewish analogue of the Scriptural Revelation Thesis, 197, 208;
 the Jewish extension of the standard Aquinas/Calvin model, 209–10;
 Moses, 196, 197;
 and the need for propositional evidence for the existence of God, 205, 211;
 the obedience requirement, 210–12;
 and the proper function condition, 206–7, 209;
 and reformed epistemology, 208;
 Sarah (Sarai), 196;
 the *Thirteen Principles*, 197–98;
 the *Torah* (the first five books of the *Tanakh*, or the *Pentateuch*) 195–96, 198, 199, 203, 205, 209, 210, 211, 212;
 the truth-aimed condition in, 199, 200;
 Yaweh, 167, 168.
See also Maimonides, Moses
- Kant, Immanuel, 74–75, 95n35, 145, 146, 246
 Kapila, 72, 89;
 biography of, 81.
See also *Sāṃkhya*
- Kellner, Shaykh Nuh Ha Him, 227
 Kelly, Thomas, 269, 273
 Kellner, Menachem Marc, 208–9
 Al-Kindi, 124, 221
 King, Richard, 154n46
 the KK Thesis, 69
 Kongzi (Confucius), 159, 160, 167, 171, 172, 173, 174;
 biography of, 161;
 and the rectification of names, 160.
See also Confucianism
- Law, Stephen, 43, 44, 46, 47. *See also* XX pills
- Lebens, Samuel, 198–99;
 make-belief, 198–99;
 three theses of Jewish Belief, 198
- Lee, Yong-yun, 185
- Leibniz, Gottfried Wilhelm, 5
- Levin, Michael:
 his account of proper function, 33–34
- Lewis, David, 20, 49
- Lieter, Brian, 30
- Linville, Mark, 47, 48
- Littlejohn, Ronnie, 157, 163, 179
- Locke, John, 5, 14
- Mādhva (Madhvācārya):
 biography of, 113–14;
Brahma Sūtra Bhāṣya, 114;
 direct realism, his theory of perception, 119
- Mādhva Vedānta* (or *Dvaita Vedānta*):
 and *a priori* knowledge (*svarupajñāna*) of Viṣṇu, 116;
 and *anu-pramāṇa*, 115–16;
 the *aparoksajñāna* faculty, 119, 123;
 the Argument Schema applied to, 131–32;
 that the conditional love of Viṣṇu provides a potential defeater for *Mādhva Vedānta* belief, 127–29;
Mādhva Vedānta replies to the objection, 129–30;
 the content of *Mādhva Vedānta* belief, 116–20;
 the Dependency Thesis in, 117, 118, 121;
 design plans, 121–22, 126–27;

- the Design Thesis in, 121;
and direct intuitive knowledge
(*aparokṣajñāna*) of Viṣṇu, 116;
the five-fold difference (*pañca-
bheda*), 117, 118;
the Immediacy Thesis in, 122;
jñāna, types of, 116, 119, 122, 123;
karma, 118, 127, 128, 129;
and *kevala-pramāṇas*, 115–16;
Lakṣmi, or Śrī, (Viṣṇu's consort),
115, 127;
The *Mādhva Vedānta* analogue of
the Internal Inspiration Thesis,
122, 123;
The *Mādhva Vedānta* analogue of
the Scriptural Revelation Thesis,
122;
Mādhva Vedānta and Plantingian
religious epistemology, 120–22;
māyā (the will of the Lord), 114;
mokṣa, 114, 118, 119, 123, 127;
The Prameya Śloka, 63;
samsāra, 118, 119, 127;
and testimonial knowledge
(*manovṛtti-jñāna*) of Viṣṇu, 116;
and theological determinism and
moral responsibility, 128;
the truth-aimed condition in, 126
MacIntyre, Alasdair, 35
Mādhyamika Buddhism:
the Argument Schema applied to,
150–51;
cannot account for Plantinga's theory
of warrant, 150;
conventional and inherent existence
explained and contrasted, 145;
the Dependency Thesis in, 149;
the Design Thesis in, 149;
karma, 137, 139, 140–41;
the *Mādhyamika* creed, 143;
Prāsaṅgika-Mādhyamaka, 147;
and the proper function condition,
149;
Śūnyatā (emptiness, empty of being),
139, 145, 146, 148, 149;
the truth-aimed condition in,
149–50;
ultimate truth, 146.
See also Nāgārjuna
Maimonides, Moses, 197, 203, 212;
on properly basic beliefs, 205–6;
on the noetic effects of sin, 207;
and proper function, 207
Martin, Michael, 10
Matheson, Jonathon, 270, 271
Maududi, Syed Abul Ala, 230, 231
māyā, 71, 106
McNabb, Tyler Dalton, 17
Michael, Thomas, 185
Millikan, Ruth, 31, 32, 55n19
Mīmāṃsā, 68, 72, 73, 98
mokṣa (or *moksha*), 68;
in *Advaita Vedānta*, 75;
in *Mādhva Vedānta*, 118, 119, 123,
127;
in *Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta*, 99, 100,
114
Moon, Andrew, 19, 20
Morris, Thomas V., 130
Moore, G. E., 30
Nāgārjuna:
biography of, 142;
epistemology, 148, 149;
Mūlamadhyamakakārikā (or the
*Fundamental Verses on the
Middle Way*), 142, 146, 148;
similarities between Nāgārjuna and
Kant, 145–47;
similarities between Nāgārjuna and
Śāṅkara, 148
natural theology, 22–23, 277–78
naturalism, 29–30, 35;
Tom Crisp on naturalistic
metaphysics and abduction, 52;
Daniel Dennett's definition of
naturalism, 47;
the epistemological consequences of
metaphysical naturalism, Michael
Rea on, 49;

- natural selection and dispositions to believe naturalism, 50;
 naturalism and the evolutionary argument against metaphysical beliefs, 51–52;
 neo-Aristotelian ethical naturalism, 35–38.
See also the evolutionary argument against naturalism
- Neander, Karen, 31, 32
- neo-Confucianism, 161, 162–64;
 the Dependency Thesis in, 164;
 the Design Thesis in, 164, 165;
li, 163, 164, 165;
liangzhi, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 174, 186, 187;
 no intentional creator God in, 162, 164–67;
 proper function, 165;
qi, 163.
See also Yangming, Wang
- Neo-Daoism:
de, 176, 177;
 Guo Xiang, 176, 177, 176–77, 178;
 no intentional creator God in, 177, 178;
 proprietary *dao*, 176, 177;
 the self-transformation of things, 177, 178;
wu-wei, 178
- Nielson, Kai, 47
- Nyāya*:
 apparent versus genuine certification, 93n21;
 apperceptive cognition in, 70;
 certification, 68, 71;
 and epistemic fallibilism, 69;
 and externalism, 69;
 meta-cognitive awareness in, 70;
 and proper functionalism, 69
- Origen, 124
- Ibn Paquda, Rabbi Bahya, 210–211
- Peckham, John, 130
- Peterson, John, 125
- phenomenal conservatism, 266, 271
- Phillips, Stephen, 68, 69, 71, 93n21, 115
- Philo, 124
- Plantinga, Alvin:
 argument against classical foundationalism, 6;
 on the failure of arguments for the existence of God, 4;
God and Other Minds, 3, 4;
God, Freedom, and Evil, 7;
 on his apparent reassessment of the merits of theistic arguments, 7–8;
 “Is Belief in God Properly Basic?,” 6;
Knowledge and Christian Belief, 7–8;
Knowledge of God, 38;
The Nature of Necessity, 7;
 “The Reformed Objection to Natural Theology,” 4–5;
 “Reason and Belief in God,” 5–6;
 the religious experiences of, 261, 281n9;
 “Two Dozen (or so) Theistic Arguments,” 7;
Warrant and Proper Function, 38, 43;
Warranted Christian Belief, 9, 20.
See also Plantingian religious epistemology; Plantingian religious epistemology, objections to; reformed epistemology
- Plantingian religious epistemology, 1;
 Adam and Eve, 31–32, 34;
 belief in God grounded in characteristic experiences, 6;
 belief in God is properly basic, 4, 5, 6;
 Christian belief, the content of, 21;
 the defeater-defeater requirement, 276;
 the Dependency Thesis, 22;
 design plan, defined, 9, 97;
 design plans, extrinsic, not intrinsic, 26n79;

- the Design Thesis, 22;
- the extended Aquinas/Calvin model, 21–22;
- faith, 21;
- Hitler-like madman and the mutant non-Aryan, the case of, 32, 34;
- the Immediacy Thesis, 22;
- the Internal inspiration of the Holy Spirit, 21;
- the Internal Inspiration of the Holy Spirit Thesis, 22;
- Joe and the purported robot-bird, the case of, 70–71;
- model, definition of, 20;
- the no-defeater condition, 276;
- Paul and the tiger, a new perspective, 49–50;
- Paul and the tiger, Plantinga’s case of, 43, 44, 46;
- the proper function condition, 16, 17, 19, 271;
- reformed epistemology, 1–6, 59;
- the Scriptural Revelation Thesis, 22;
- the *sensus divinitatis* (or sense of divinity), 13, 21, 25n52, 119, 123, 203, 229, 249, 270;
- the standard Aquinas/Calvin model, 20–21, 22;
- theistic belief, the content of, 20;
- the truth aimed condition, 77, 78, 80, 259;
- warrant, 15–16.
- See also* proper functionalism
- Plantingian religious epistemology, objections to:
 - the Evidentialist objection, 3–4;
 - the Great Pumpkin objection, 8–9, 10, 24n30;
 - the lack of parity objection, 12;
 - Michael Bergmann’s response, 13;
 - the multiple viable extensions objection, 260–63;
 - the pandora’s box objection, 258–59;
 - the religious disagreement objection, 13–14;
 - that religious experience must be interpreted to be meaningful, 12;
 - that sinfulness doesn’t adequately explain nonbelief, 13;
 - the Son of Great Pumpkin objection, 10–11;
 - supermanism, 8, 11;
 - the wandering nomad objection, 44, 45, 46–47
- Plantingian religious epistemology, responses to objections:
 - the classic Plantingian response to religious disagreement (The Steadfast View), 269–72;
 - to the Great Pumpkin Objection, 7–8;
 - to the Son of Great Pumpkin Objection, 11–12;
 - to supermanism, 11;
 - to the Voodooist objection, 9, 10
- pramāṇa* (“that by which veridical cognition is arrived at”), 68;
- list of *pramāṇas* in the orthodox *darśanas*, 72
- probability, 21, 16, 41, 42, 45, 86;
 - objective probability, 53, 84, 209, 269, 270, 271;
 - prior probability, 195
- proper functionalism, 14–16;
 - external rationality, 14, 15;
 - internal rationality, 14, 15;
 - neo-Aristotelian naturalist accounts of, 35–38;
 - no adequate naturalistic account of, 38, 42;
 - non-evolutionary accounts and non-theistic accounts of, 32–34;
 - non-theistic evolutionary accounts of, 33–32;
- Plantinga’s proper function analysis of warrant, 15–16;
- proper function, the concept elucidated, 14
- Quine, W. V. O., 29–30
- Qutb, Seyyid, 238, 239

- Radhakrishnan, Sarvepalli, 73, 102, 118, 119
- Rahula, Walpola, 139
- Rāmānuja:
avidya, 104;
 biography of, 99;
 that *Brahman* is complex, 100–101;
 that *Brahman* is creator of the world and its inner-controller, 101;
 that *Brahman* is personal, 99, 100–102 ;
 critic of natural theology, 108;
 that individuals (*jīva*) aren't strictly identical to but are modes of *Brahman*, 102;
 his interpretation of *Ātman* is *Brahman*, 100, 101–2, 103;
karma, 104;
māyā, 104, 106;
 his metaphysical and epistemological realism, 104, 106;
prakṛti (identified with *māyā*), 104;
puruṣa (identified with Viṣṇu), 98;
The Sri Bhāṣya, 108
- Rea, Michael, 49
- reformed epistemology. *See* Plantingian religious epistemology
- Reid, Thomas, 14, 202, 203
- religious experience, including mystical and enlightenment experiences, 13–14, 262, 268;
 in *Advaita Vedānta*, 75, 76, 78;
 in Buddhism, 138, 140;
 in Christianity, 6, 20, 21;
 in Confucianism, 171, 172, 173;
 in Daoism, 182;
 in Islam, 227, 242;
 in Judaism, 200, 201;
 in *Madhyamaka* Buddhism, 147;
 in *Mādhva Vedānta*, 116, 119, 122;
 in *Sāṃkhya*, 83, 84;
 in *Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta*, 108–9;
 in *Yoga*, 75, 84
- Ricour, Paul, 200
- Roberst, Robert C., 279, 284n47
- Rosenzweig, Franz, 202
- Rošker, Jana, 158, 159, 161
- Rūmī, Jalāl ad-Dīn Muhammad, 227
- Ruse, Michael, 47, 48
- Ibn-Rushd (Averroes), 221
- Ryle, Gilbert, 180
- sākṣī*, 89
- Śaṅkara (Sankara, Śaṅkarācārya):
 awareness of and engagement with theistic strands of *Vedānta*, 98, 99;
 biography of, 73;
Brahma-sūtra bhāṣya, 63;
 the conventional and ultimate reality distinction, 74;
 conventional belief and knowledge, 149;
 epistemology, 76–81;
 internalist and externalistic components of Śaṅkara's epistemology, 76–77;
 and introspective awareness of *Brahman*, 76;
 and knowledge of *Brahman* by means of testimony, from the Vedas and gurus, 77–78;
māyā and false belief, 74;
mokṣa, 75;
 his non-dualism (*Ātman* is *Brahman*), 74, 75, 102;
 similarities between Śaṅkara and Kant, 75, 93n35;
 similarities between Śaṅkara and Nāgārjuna, 148;
 on yogic practices and achieving *mokṣa*, 75
- Sāṃkhya:
 arguments for *Sāṃkhya*, 82;
 classical *Sāṃkhya*, 89–90;
 and the Design Thesis, 77, 80–81;
 the evolutionary argument against *Sāṃkhya*, 87;
 evolutionary processes in, 83;

- and the Junkyard Aircraft Example, 86;
mokṣa, 84;
prakṛti (primordial matter), 81, 82, 83, 84, 87, 88, 89;
 and the preconditions for warrant, 85;
 and the proper function condition, 84–85;
puruṣa (pure consciousness), 81, 82, 83, 84, 87, 88, 89;
The Sāṃkhya Kārikā, 82, 84;
 and the truth-aimed condition, 77, 85–87, 106;
 Vijñāna Bhikṣu and theistic branches of *Sāṃkhya*, 89–90;
 and the XX pills example, 87–88.
See also Kapila
- Sarma, Depak, 115, 117, 133n17
- Satprakashananda, Swami, 119–20
- Sartre, Jean-Paul, 39–40, 57n44
- Ibn Sina (Avicenna):
 on certitude, 225;
 on God's necessary existence, 227
- Searle, John, 48
- Shanbhag, D. N., 117
- Sharif, M. M., 220, 221
- Sharma, B. N. K., 117, 126, 127, 128, 129, 132n8
- Siderits, Mark, 146
- Skeptical Theism, 245, 246
- Slingerhand, Edward, 178
- Solveitchik, Rabbi Joseph, 204–5;
 critic of natural theology, 204
- Sosa, Ernest, 16, 17;
 his account Non-Evolutionary and Non-Theistic Accounts of Proper Function, 33;
 on safety and truth-tracking, 33, 55n25;
 virtue condition, 33
- Stace, W. T., 30
- śūnyatā*, 145, 147
- the standard interpretation of sense perception, 12
- Sudduth, Michael, 241
- Swampman, 16–17, 18, 19;
 Billy, 19;
 and Gettier cases, 17, 18;
 Swampbaby, 17;
 SwampBilly, 18, 20;
 SwampZork, 19, 20;
 Zork, 19, 20
- Swinburne, Richard, 7–8
- Taylor, James, 19, 20
- Ibn Taymiyyah, 229, 232, 233
- Thune, Michael, 272–73, 274, 275
- traditional (or classical) theism, 11
- Tien, David, 155, 163, 164, 165, 167, 174
- Upaniṣads*, 68, 73, 74, 76, 98, 101, 102, 115, 120, 122, 123, 129–30;
Chāndogya Upaniṣad, 74;
Kauṣītakī Upaniṣad, 128;
Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad, 104, 108
- Vaiṣṇava*, 97–98, 99
- van Buitenen, J. A. B., 132n9
- Vedānta*. *See* *Advaita Vedānta*, *Dvaita Vedānta* (Mādhva Vedānta), and *Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta*
- Vaiśeṣika*, 68, 72
- Vidyardhi, Pandeya, 133n28
- Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta*:
 the argument schematic applied to *Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta*, 109–10;
Brahman as efficient cause and material cause of the world, 99, 107;
 the Dependency Thesis in, 107;
 design plans and the problem of actual infinities, 105, 106;
 the Design Thesis in, 107;
 the Immediacy Thesis in, 107, 108;
jīva (persons) coeternal with *Brahman*, 118, 121, 124, 131;
jīva (persons) modes of the divine substance of *Brahman*, 105;

- jīva* (persons) not strictly identical to Brahman, 99, 102, 117;
karma, 104;
 and the preconditions of warrant, 106–7;
 and the proper function condition, 103–6;
 properly basic knowledge of *Viṣṇu*, 108–9;
 and the truth-aimed condition, 106, 109;
 the *Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta* analogue of the Internal Inspiration of the Holy Spirit Thesis, 108–9;
 the *Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta* analogue of the Scriptural Revelation Thesis, 108–9
- virtue epistemology, 278–80;
 reasonableness, 278, 279, 280
- Viṣṇu*:
 all other beings are dependent on *Viṣṇu*, 118, 121, 126;
 and aseity 133n17;
 creator of the universe, 98, 117, 120, 126;
 design plan, whether and in what sense *Viṣṇu* has one, 105;
 epistemically basic knowledge of, 108, 122;
 his fully independent reality (non-dependent existence of), 117, 118, 126;
 inner controller, 98, 128;
 intuitive knowledge of, 116, 123;
 knowledge, that he has the highest degree of (*Īśvara-jñāna*), 115;
 perfect and supreme being, 98, 116, 117, 121, 127;
 personal deity, 97;
 loves people conditionally, 257;
 Mādhva, avatar of, 114;
mokṣa, achieved only by the grace of *Viṣṇu*, 123;
 testimonial knowledge of, 115, 122
- Vyasatirtha, Sri, 116
- Wang, Robin, 157–58
- Wielenberg, Erik, 247
- Westerhoff, 146–47, 148, 152n27, 153n38
- Wilson, E. O., 47
- The Withholding Principle, 13–14
- Wittgenstein, Ludwig, 144, 146, 173
- Wood, W. Jay, 279, 284n47
- Xing, Wen, 185
- Yangming, Wang, 162, 163–64
- Yasien, Mohammed, 221
- Yoga*, 72, 73, 75, 84, 89;
bhakti yoga, 97, 119, 123, 132n1;
jñāna-yoga, 119;
karma-yoga, 119
- Zhongkun, Liu, 181, 186, 187
- Zhuangzi (Zhuang Tzu), 160, 176, 177;
 and natural knowledge of *Dao*, 181–83, 187;
 and skepticism, 179–81
- Zimmer, Heinrich, 75, 83
- Ziporyn, Brook, 177

About the Authors

Erik Baldwin received his PhD at Purdue University. He has published various articles on philosophy of religion, epistemology, ethics, Islamic, and Asian philosophy in journals such as *Forum Philosophicum*, *The International Journal of Philosophy and Theology*, *Journal of Social Sciences*, *Open Theology*, *Philosophia Christi*, and *Religious Studies*. His book *Fully Informed Reasonable Disagreement and Tradition Based Perspectivalism* published in 2016. He currently teaches at Indiana University, Northwest. He has previously taught at Purdue University and The University of Notre Dame, where he was a Visiting Graduate Student Fellow and Research Visitor at the Center for Philosophy of Religion. He lives with his family in South Bend, Indiana.

Tyler Dalton McNabb received his PhD at the University of Glasgow. He has published various articles in premier philosophy of religion journals such as *Religious Studies*, *Philosophia Christi*, *The Heythrop Journal*, and *The International Journal of Philosophy and Theology*. Tyler currently resides with his family in Houston where he is an assistant professor of philosophy at Houston Baptist University.

