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Creating with the Creator: Cooking as a Spiritual Practice

Kate Gorman

Most scholars will readily agree that people who regularly eat home-cooked meals tend to be happier and healthier, but the agreement ends on the answer to the question: how can we find the time and money to cook? Instead of cooking at home, we are relying on convenience foods to fill our tables; this is affecting our relationship to food itself, to our natural surroundings, to others, to ourselves, and most importantly to God. I advocate for home-cooking through a Christian lens: when we cook as Christians, we enter into a spiritual realm where we acknowledge the sacredness of food and its beauty from our Creator—essentially, cooking is a spiritual practice.

WHEN IT COMES TO the topic of home-cooking[1], most scholars will readily agree that people who regularly eat home-cooked meals tend to be happier and healthier. Research has demonstrated that cooking at home typically equates to a healthier diet with a greater vegetable and fruit intake and less reliance on convenience foods and processed foods (Hartmann 126). Cooking has also shown to reduce anxiety and attune us to the present moment (Day 227). Where this agreement usually ends, however, is on the answer to the question: how can we find the time and money to cook? Several studies have been conducted on the barriers that hinder people from home-cooking. Julia Wolfson, researcher from the Department of Health Policy and Management of Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, and her colleagues studied the perceptions of cooking and factors related to home-cooking behavior. They discovered the key barriers to home-cooking: affordability, lack of time, and lack of enjoyment (Wolfson 146). Similarly, Fiona Lavelle, researcher for the Institute for Global Food Security at Queen's University, and her colleagues found the same barriers as well as facilitators to home-cooking in their research. The two main facilitators include the desire to eat for health and well-being and creative inspiration (Lavelle 384). To summarize, while some are convinced that they must find time to cook because they desire to eat for health and well-being, others maintain that cooking simply is not worth the time, money, and effort. Time appears to be the key issue. Recent findings described by Michael Pollan in his essay "Out of the Kitchen, onto the Couch" would question validity of the time barriers of Americans, however. He describes a reduction time of Americans on food preparation to less than thirty minutes per day, while at the same time Americans who "don't have time to cook" spend an hour watching TV shows on Food Network (Wirzba 190). The problem here may not be time after all. It may be lack of effort.

The decline in home-cooking in America is something that should not ignored. Obesity rates will only continue to rise as people are becoming reliant on convenience and ultra- processed ready-made foods. Fewer people have the skills to prepare foods from raw ingredients (Lavelle 384). In his article "The Joy of Cooking," Joseph Campisi, Professor of Philosophy at Marist College, acknowledges that this reliance on convenience foods has "affected our relationship to food itself, to our natural surroundings, to others, and to our own selves" (414). People desire meals that are easy and fast, whether it means popping something in the microwave or waiting in the drive through line.

In hopes of sparking interest in home-cooking, members of the Slow Food Movement[2] (SFM) have tried to draw others to the quiet material pleasures beyond the gustatory ones that arise from eating: the tactile pleasures of cooking. They believe that there is a "personal satisfaction one may feel in baking bread" that ultimately contributes to "a life of long lasting enjoyment" (Campisi 416). The

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[1] There is much debate on what defines *home-cooking*. Perceptions range from all scratch cooking to anything made at home—even frozen macaroni and cheese (Wolfson 150). For the sake of this paper, home-cooking involves preparing and creating meals with basic, raw ingredients.

[2] The Slow Food Movement (SFM) began in 1986 by Carlo Petrini who was haunted by the appearance of countless fast food restaurants in Italy. The SFM articulates three main principles of what food should be: good (tasty), clean (environmentally sustainable), and fair (socially sustainable) (Petrini 93).

movement's purpose is to slow down our fast-paced lives in order to have a deeper appreciation for our world, its food, and its farmers.

While this movement may spark some interest in people and holds some truths, there is an even stronger religious appeal of home-cooking and eating that the Slow Food Movement neglects, specifically Christian appeal. Before their differences are named, their similarities must be addressed. Like the SFM, Christians seek to slow down their lives and be present. Many of them also understand that food is more than fuel. Likewise, Christians care for the environment and their neighbors. The difference lies in what is at the core of these beliefs. For the SFM, the world and the self are at the center. For Christians, God is the center of it all. Christians slow down to be present with the Lord, to stand in awe and wonder of His Creation, and to give Him thanks. Idolizing food and the creation of it can be an issue of the SFM. Eating and cooking with a Christian mind set seek to glorify God, not man. A theology of cooking from a Christian perspective is necessary in order to call Christians to cook. I would like to present a way to think about cooking from a Christian lens. Cooking holds more than physical and psychological benefits. When we cook as Christians, we enter into a spiritual realm where we acknowledge the sacredness of food and its beauty from our Creator. Essentially, cooking is a spiritual practice.

Food as a Gift

Although not all Christians think alike, it is easy to fall into a mind set where food is secular. Norman Wirzba, Professor of Theology and Ecology at Duke University, and author of *Food and Faith: A Theology of Eating*, considers theologian Fyodor Dostoyevsky's perspective on the possibility of a "spiritually dead" world. It is one in which people "view the world (and our food) as consisting of material entities or varied chemical nutrients." In this view, our world is "essentially bereft of all goodness and beauty" (Dostoyevsky qtd in Wirzba 30). This view easily takes hold as the nature and "pace of much contemporary life [make] it less likely that people will receive the mystery of food or receive it as a precious gift and sign of God's sustaining care" (Wirzba 2). In this fast-paced world, everything is at our fingertips, including food. "Grab and go" meals are hindering our reflection and gratitude for what is before us: God's creation. When we shift our perceptions of "food as fuel" to "food as a gift," we recognize God's blessings for us.

Eating and preparing food is a sacramental act. When we eat sacramentally, we acknowledge that our nourishment in eating has life-giving power from God. In order for food to be considered sacred, we must consider the way God views His Creation. In her essay "The Artist and God," Dorothy Donnelly, a theologian, claims that "everything in this world has a sacred meaning." This is because "God saw that *all* the things he had made were good" (Donnelly 418). This means that every fruit, every vegetable, and every animal that we eat is sacred—God created it. Though we often view the origins of our food as from farm to store to table, the ultimate source is from the very hands of our Creator. Christian environmentalist Paul Tillich also professes the sacramentality of all things. He furthers this idea by adding that "the material element is never arbitrary: the whole sacrament […] is a product of the 'intrinsic power' of the material element and the acts of Divine will" (Pihkala 70). To summarize this, God had a purpose for everything He created; His Creation is an action of sacramental power.

Furthermore, we must exercise food as a sacramental gift with care. Wirzba, urges us to "knowingly, lovingly, skillfully, [and] reverently" eat sacramentally. If we instead eat "ignorantly, greedily, clumsily, destructively, it is a desecration" (1). Too often we eat quickly—without gratitude. Food is much more than a matter of desire, convenience, taste, or fuel: it is a gift of God's grace. The Psalmist urges us to "taste and see that the Lord is good" (Psalm 34:8, ESV). By properly designating our food as a gift from God, we will abandon our inability to be self-sufficient. Our rumbling stomachs daily demonstrate that we "are not self-subsisting gods" (Wirzba 2). We have to rely on God and His Creation to live. Eating can be an intimate and pleasing way in which we acknowledge that it is God who daily blesses us with food.

Partaking in the Beauty of God's Creation

Cooking is an art form. It is a way to celebrate God as the Creator. In order to understand this, we must first recognize God's beautiful Creation for He is worthy to receive "glory, honor and power, for [He] created all things and by [His] will they existed and were created" (Revelation 4:11, ESV). Beauty encompasses us—in the extraordinary and the seemingly mundane. Jerram Barrs, founder and resident scholar of the Francis Schaeffer Institute at Covenant Theological Seminary, discusses the vastness of beauty in his book *Echoes of Eden*. He believes "there is no portion of the world, however minute, that does not exhibit at least some sparks of beauty." In this, it is "impossible" not to be "overwhelmed by the immense weight of glory" (Barrs 13). There is something absolutely breathtaking about God's Creation. How powerful and beautiful is it that

God's divine, invisible hand, created visible things (Hebrews 11:3, ESV). God's handiwork is here to be noticed. Luci Shaw, Christian poet and author, recognizes the beauty of God's Creation and urges readers to pay attention to it in her chapter "Beauty and the Creative Impulse" of *The Christian Imagination*. She insists that "to show indifference to beauty is an insult to its Creator" (Shaw 90). Beauty is often overlooked in the hustle and bustle of our daily lives. We walk around, oblivious to the wonder surrounding us. God's Creation should not be overlooked. Acknowledging and valuing beauty are ways to celebrate His great works. When we eat and cook then, we must see our food as sourced from His Creation.

One may ask *how do we cook for the glory of God?* The answer to this question begins with understanding that God created us to be artists. We were made to bear God's image (Genesis 1:27 ESV). We therefore have the ability to imagine and create like God has the power to. Some may be quick to point out that cooking will then cause us to value ourselves and our own abilities in what we create over God. Donnelly acknowledges the French novelist and art theorist, André Malraux's perspective on "creative power." To him, "creative power" produces "self-determination" and creates a "superior man" (Malarux qtd. in Donnelly 415). Here, glory for a creation is given to man, not to God. This is not how we should view our artistry as cooks nor is it how God intends us to use our creative capacities. As Barrs explains, we are not made to be creators of beauty but "sub-creators following after [our] Creator. The God who made all things made us to exercise dominion under him over this good creation" (99). Barrs describes the values of a true artist: "the true artist values something more than self. The true artist holds up a mirror to what God has made" (38). Instead of using our creative capacities to find power and marvel at our own artistry, we must employ our creative capacities to be disciples. When we cook as disciples, all glory of our creation extends to God, not to man. So, to answer the question, I will apply Christian scholar and editor of *The Christian Imagination*, Leland Ryken's words from his chapter "Thinking Christianly About Literature" to cooking. We can cook to glorify God "[b]y enjoying the beauty that human creativity has produced and recognizing God as the ultimate source of this beauty and creativity" (27). When we cook, we produce new meals with ingredients from our Creator. In this, we must not neglect God as the source of our new creation of food. Though stirred, kneaded, and baked into a new form, all of the ingredients within a meal are of God's. Our work is created on the basis of the great works He has already created—this is something to be celebrated.

Cooking: A Spiritual Exercise

With acknowledging food as sacramental and appreciating the beauty in God's Creation, cooking becomes a spiritual exercise. It is an exercise that allows us to be present with God's love. Cooking slows down our busy lives. Wirzba characterizes eating as a spiritual exercise in his book: "[Eating]," he writes, gives us "the opportunity to see, receive, and taste the world with spiritual depth" (29). Thus far, Christian conversation about food has focused on eating. Eating as a spiritual exercise can be applied to cooking. When we prepare meals, we can fall more deeply in the presence of God. Cooking can quiet our minds and open our hearts to receive and experience His Holy Presence. When we cook, we can pay more attention to many ingredients sourced from God's Creation. Each ingredient holds much detail. Barrs urges us to take a closer view of the facets: "If we look under a microscope at anything God has made to see it in all its detail, we will discover that the more we see, the more amazing is his creative genius. A closer view enables us to see new and unimagined beauties and infinitesimally tiny wonders" (14). We, as cooks, can pay attention to the smell, the tensions, the tastes, the textures, the lines, and the shapes of our food and marvel at His wondrous handiwork. From early on in the Bible, small details mattered. God called His people to partake in the preparation of food with specific, extensive guidelines. This is seen in Exodus 12 as God gives Moses precise instructions for how the people of Israel are to cook the Passover meal and smear the blood of the lamb on the door posts: "Then they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they eat it. They shall eat the flesh that night, roasted on the fire; with unleavened bread and bitter herbs they shall eat" (Exodus 12:7-8 ESV). The cooking of the lamb was a spiritual exercise of the Israelites that saved them from Pharaoh's wrath. The meal signified God's wonderful presence, power, and promise to keep them safe. When Jewish people prepare the Passover meal, it serves as a reminder of God's covenant with them. So too, when we prepare a meal, it should be a reminder of God's commitment to us. When we are reminded of God's commitment to us, the process of cooking becomes more meaningful; it is no longer perceived as a chore. Cooking as a spiritual exercise brings us into the presence of God and we get a taste of His love and care for us.

There is much spiritual involvement in cooking. Cooking fixes our eyes on God as the Creator of all things and our hearts are filled with great joy and gratitude. If we continue to eat without acknowledging and thanking God,

we are taking His Creation for granted. When we rely on convenience foods, we are not experiencing the beauty of His handiwork nor our calling to be artists of His Creation. While there is a strong religious motivation for home-cooking, the reality is that even with the spiritual lens, some people simply do not enjoy cooking and are not willing to put in the time and effort. One of the participants in Lavelle's study on cooking perceptions highlights this view: "[Cooking from scratch] is a lot of time and effort and if you're already hungry and you're standing there smelling the food and stuff, that's a nightmare so if it can't be prepped and cooked within 30 to 40 minutes I won't bother and it's the same at weekends" (Participant 2 qtd. by Lavelle 387). Though I concede that this participant's view on home-cooking is relatable to many people, I still insist that perspectives have the potential to change if they consider and more importantly *practice* cooking as a spiritual exercise. I am not aware of any research on how the Christian perspective of cooking can change people's habits and perceptions. A study on this may draw more interest and spark families to cook at home. In examining this, it is necessary that participants are not only informed of how cooking can be a spiritual exercise, but they also must practice the exercise for themselves. Only here, can we demonstrate impact of cooking with a spiritual focus. By viewing and practicing cooking in a spiritual light, we will grow deeper in our relationship with our Heavenly Father. We will use cooking as a time to commune with Him, to create from His Creation, to admire His beauty within our food, and to give thanks for the food that nourishes and blesses us. While some may still argue that they do not have the time to cook, I would challenge these people to consider their daily habits and ask them: "are you willing to *make* time to honor and glorify the Lord?" Maybe time spent watching Food Network can be replaced with time in our own kitchens, cooking and communing alongside our Heavenly Father. "Bless the Lord, O my soul! […] You cause the grass to grow for the livestock and plants for man to cultivate, that he may bring forth food from the earth and wine to gladden the heart of man, oil to make his face shine and bread to strengthen man's heart" (Psalm 104:14-15, ESV).

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No More Nuts: Implementing School Policies Preventing the Presence of Peanuts

Emily Vogel

Thousands of children go to school every day facing an unexpected potential killer that's only about the size of a penny: the peanut. Unfortunately, even though it is known that the presence of peanuts in schools may create a significant and even life-threatening health risk for severely allergic children, many schools fail to enact and enforce peanut policies. Because of how vital peanut policies can be for children severely allergic to peanuts, I argue that schools should be peanut-free to help protect these children while at school and help them avoid the possible anxiety or bullying that comes with some of the other solutions schools propose.

Ammaria Johnson, a 7-year-old girl attending Hopkins Elementary School in 2012, suddenly developed hives, stopped breathing, and died shortly after recess where she consumed "a peanut" given to her "by another child unaware of her allergy" (abcnews.com). Journalist Katie Moisse from abcnews.com goes on to say that the school could have saved Johnson's life by having an EpiPen, a device which helps lessen the effects of a severe allergic reaction, on hand, but it had no measures available to save Johnson (abcnews.com). The tragedy of her death sparks questions about whether or not schools should have peanut regulations. Some scholars argue that schools that do not have sufficient procedures in place to help children with severe allergies are allowing these students exposure daily to the possibility of their deaths. In 2014 a "food allergy discrimination case" rose to the Third U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals and drew new attention to food allergies in schools ("3rd Circuit"). The case involved T.F., a kindergartner allergic to tree nuts, and his parents, who argued that the school had not taken enough measures to protect their child from his allergen (T.F. Et Al v. Fox Chapel 2 and "3rd Circuit"). Cases like T.F.'s and the story of Johnson's death show us the severity of nut allergies and the lack of policies and preparation that schools have in place for emergencies that may arise.

Although many schools agree that food allergies are prevalent and serious among children, they often fail to implement policies or measures to help. Severe allergies should be taken seriously in schools because they pose a significant and sometimes even life-threatening risk to the child with an allergy. Peanut allergy is the third most common estimated food allergy among children and infants in North America, and insufficient procedures and school policies are plaguing these children's education (Scott H. Sicherer, "Food Allergy" S117). Some schools who are responding in the forefront of this issue are taking precautions such as making their schools peanut-free in order to accommodate for those affected by peanut allergies. These initiatives protect the students at risk of anaphylactic attacks, which can cause a child to be unable to breath, swallow, or even pass away when coming in contact with their allergen. Other schools have tried alternate solutions such as the peanut-free table or partially peanut-free school zones, but in place of eliminating the child's exposure to their allergen, they have subjected them to being segregated from the other children and, in some cases, even bullied due to their health concerns (T.F. Et Al v. Fox Chapel 6). Due to the severity of this problem, I argue that schools should be peanut-free in order to accommodate students with severe peanut allergies because of the life-threatening health risks posed to the student, as well as to avoid subjecting them to the humiliation of their peers by being segregated from the class in partially peanut-free or peanut-table-only schools.

While some scholars may dispute the urgency to rid our schools of peanuts because of the mere amount of "accidental exposures" to peanuts at schools, it is important to keep in mind that any life-threatening reaction is something that schools should be very cautious about and accommodating for (Elissa M. Abrams and Wade Watson "Yes" 750). Elissa M. Abrams and Wade Watson also find "in a questionnaire of 252 children with peanut allergy, there were 35 accidental exposures, of which only 1 occurred at school" (750 citing Yu JW et al.). This evidence

suggests that accidental exposure to peanuts is rare, so removing peanuts from schools may not make a significant difference. But, it is important to note that later in the quote above, we find out that "only 20% of these children attended schools that permitted peanut" which, I argue, is the reason for the low number of reactions (750 citing Yu JW et al.). Alongside the argument of few accidental reactions in schools, another argument is that peanut-free policies do not work because they are hard to enforce. However, it is not difficult to get parents and children to comply as shown in Devi K. Banerjee's et al.'s article, "Peanut-free Guidelines Reduce School Lunch Peanut Contents" (980). Banerjee et al. looked at the presence of peanuts in schools that implemented peanut-free guidelines (PFG) and non-PFG schools for "awareness of and adherence to" PFG guidelines (980). Lunches were checked, and it was shown in PFG schools that "over 80% of parents" knew it wasn't allowed, and out of 861 students, only 5 of them came to school with peanuts present in their lunch. Compared to non-PFG schools where 84 out of 845 students brought peanuts of some sort for lunch, this result is impressive and shows parental compliance and awareness (Banerjee et al. 980-982).

Peanuts have a presence in schools that extends beyond where you would assume them to be, and this leads to significant health risks for the children allergic to them. Schools need to be peanut-free to accommodate for this. We should ensure the safety of our children at school (warrant). Not only are peanuts in the lunchroom found in peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, snacks, and trail mixes, but they also are carried into classrooms by carriers, such as the unwashed hands of children, and are found in the classroom in craft projects (Abrams and Watson "No" 751 and Sicherer et al. "The US Peanut" 563). Because of this significant amount of peanut exposure, children with severe allergies are not safe going to a school where they are exposed often and, in some cases, even daily, to their allergen. This poses a significant risk to their health, allowed and even heightened by the schools, that cannot be ignored. In fact, 61% of all allergic reaction "episodes" to peanuts or tree nuts happened when "the school supplied the food" which shows school's lack of urgency to accommodate severe known food allergies (Sicherer et al. 562). Allowing peanuts in schools poses a significant health risk to those severely allergic to them, and many schools are underprepared to handle the significant risk that they have helped to create.

There are different levels of allergic reactions to peanuts that range in severity for both triggers and symptoms, and "peanuts are a frequent cause of food allergy and the most common cause of fatal food-induced anaphylaxis in the U.S." (Fred D. Finkelman 783). Anaphylaxis is a life-threatening reaction that can involve the "constriction of airways, swelling of the throat that makes it difficult to breathe, a severe drop in blood pressure (shock), rapid pulse, dizziness, lightheadedness or loss of consciousness" and is "a medical emergency that requires treatment with an epinephrine (adrenaline) injector… and a trip to the emergency room" (mayoclinic.org). Depending on the severity of their allergy, some children can react to peanuts just from inhalation or touch as shown by a study by the US Peanut and Tree Nut Allergy Registry. The results of this study showed that 60% of reactions from peanuts or tree nuts were induced from ingesting the nut, leaving the other 40% to be from either "isolated skin contact" or "possible inhalation" (Sicherer et al. 561). When children with allergies so severe that they can react without even consciously touching their substance are exposed to peanuts in the classroom, a concern is raised. Young children are especially at risk due to poor handwashing and lack of understanding for their medical condition (Abrams and Watson "No" 751). A child with severe peanut allergies can have a severe or even life-threatening reaction just by a situation as simple as another child eating a peanut butter sandwich, not washing their hands and then touching a toy. If the child with severe allergies then later touched the same toy, they could react to their allergen (Abrams and Watson "No" 751 and Sicherer "The US Peanut" 562). Citing TT Perry et al. and WT Watson et al., Abrams and Watson ("No") explain the risk of improper cleaning for children with severe allergies: "in addition, peanut allergen is very robust in the environment. While it has been clearly demonstrated that cleaning easily removes peanut allergen, without any cleaning, detectable [peanut allergen] was present on a table surface for 110 days. There is concern about whether there is an adequate work force to adhere to this cleaning guideline in real life in schools" (Abrams and Watson "No" 751). When peanuts are allowed in schools, children can be unknowingly exposed to their allergen from inhalation, ingestion, or skin contact, and could plunge into anaphylaxis because of the presence of their allergen that the school has subjected them to.

Some scholars like Abrams and Watson who wrote a second article titled "Should Peanuts be Allowed in Schools? Yes.," argue in their article that peanuts should be allowed in schools (contrary to the point made in their article "No.") because reactions not involving ingestion produce less significant effects (750). They explain that "in

a study in which 30 children with serious peanut allergy were exposed to peanut butter, either by contact with intact skin or inhalation, there were no systemic reactions" (Abrams and Watson "Yes" 750 citing SJ Simonte et al.). Although this may be a valid idea, a study by the US Peanut and Tree Nut Allergy Registry disproves this point. They found that "non-ingestion reactions were strongly associated with craft projects in which peanut butter was used," and that "in the 4 episodes during which an adult was certain no ingestion or contact occurred, one reaction developed when a child was within a foot of a peanut butter fondue (eye symptoms, hives), two took place when the child was at a table where peanut butter bird feeders were being made (hives/hives and wheeze), and one occurred when the child was within 2 feet of 15 children eating peanut butter crackers (hives and wheeze)" (Sicherer et al. 562). This shows that, indeed, serious reactions can happen through exposure without ingestion (Sicherer et al. 562). It is important to keep in mind that "children in the first 2 years of school should not be left responsible for their own safety, as they rely on adults to guide them in all other aspects of their day-to-day well-being" (Abrams and Watson, "No" 751). Young children with peanut-allergies should not be exposed unknowingly to their allergen even if they are exposed through methods other than inhalation. Even though the risk may be lower for older children who are more equipped to be able to recognize their allergen, there is still a liability for schools to ensure the safety of all children in the 'safe' environment that schools are trying to provide. Situations such as "parents [repainting] classroom walls after peanut science projects in fear of residual peanut particles" show the urgency of this issue, and that allowing peanuts in schools is not a decision that we should make without considering the consequences (Barbara Hagenbaugh Reuters qtd. in Plicka).

In looking at American schools today, it is apparent that schools are not well-equipped to handle allergies and that they should be required to train staff to execute an action plan in case of emergency to protect their students. Schools should be prepared when they have significant issues, and in order to do this, they need to have trained staff (warrant). Many schools have insufficient information about allergies and little to no protocol put in place to handle these situations, as noted by both Abrams and Watson ("No" 751) and Sicherer et al. ("The US Peanut" 564). The US Peanut and Tree Nut Allergy Registry found that "there was a nurse on location for only 23% of reactions" to either peanuts or tree nuts (Sicherer et al 561) . It was shown that 36% of US schools only have 1 staff member

"trained in anaphylaxis recognition" even though food allergies are not an uncommon health concern for children (Abrams and Watson "No" 751). This shows the lack of ability for schools to respond to a life-threatening condition that likely could happen to students in their school. There is a "systematic lack of school preparedness" (Abrams and Watson "No" 751) and no universal policy in place for how schools should handle severe allergies--something that needs to be considered and implemented in the future to help students. It is important for schools to consider making substantial changes to their policies "because improper food allergy management practices or a school's refusal to accommodate severe food allergies creates a risk of death for severely allergic children" (Aubree Walton 329). By waiting to act on this issue, schools are not only endangering children at risk, but they are also endangering themselves to the possibility of being sued for their prior policies (or lack thereof).

A major concern for parents opposed to peanut-free schools is the "slippery slope" idea that these 'bans' will lead to more food-based regulations which would lead to less freedom for the majority and that it is a burden for the families not affected (Sicherer et al "The US Peanut" 564). Although it is very important to keep in mind the rights of the majority, freedom for everyone comes at a cost. The majority will have to weigh their consciousness of sending another child into life-threatening anaphylaxis induced by the peanut butter sandwich they packed in their child's lunch against how badly their own child needed a peanut butter sandwich. Is a specific lunch preference so important that parents should be willing to put another child into a life-threatening state in order to ensure freedom of choice? The question raised is a concern that those arguing the slippery slope theory have to consider.

Finally, peanuts should be banned from US schools because children with severe allergies should be protected under the law like they have a disability (Plicka 89 and Walton 318). As noted in the article "Mr. Peanut goes to Court" by Marie Plicka, in 1986, the Department of Transportation (DOT) "declared peanut allergy a 'disability' under the Air Carrier Access Act" and the "DOT created 'peanut free zones' or 'buffer zones' where peanuts would not be served on commercial air flights in order to protect passengers who notified the airline in advance of their documented allergy to peanuts" (Plicka 87 citing Kathleen Doheny). Unfortunately, Plicka notes, enforcement of these "buffer zones" was difficult due to limited funding, but this can serve as an example of a group that took initiative to help protect those with severe allergies in

public spaces by declaring their allergy as a "disability" (87). There are many arguments brought up by Plicka in "Mr. Peanut goes to Court" that explain why the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) should include severe food allergies as a disability (89). In Plicka's article, she explains that a person is considered disabled under the ADA if they have "a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities" (92). The "Department of Justice for Title II and Title III define physical or mental impairment as "any physiological disorder or condition, cosmetic disfigurement, or anatomical loss affecting one or more of the following body systems: Neurological, musculoskeletal, special sense organs, respiratory…" (Plicka 93-94). The respiratory system can be substantially impacted from severe food allergies, and one could also argue that eating is substantially limited as a "major life activity" due to food allergies (Plicka 94). There have been cases such as the Land v. Baptist Med. Ctr. "in which a mother of a child who suffers from peanut allergy filed suit against a day care center for not accommodating her child's allergy. In this case, the mother alleged that her daughter suffered a physical impairment that substantially limited her daughter's major life activities of eating and breathing" (Plicka 100). It was "determined that the child's peanut allergy was in fact a physical impairment as defined under the ADA and that eating and breathing both constitute major life activities; however, the majority found that the child's physical impairment did not substantially limit her ability to eat or breathe. Thus, she was not disabled under the ADA" (Plicka 100). Even though the child in this case wasn't deemed 'disabled' the court made substantial progress in recognizing breathing and eating as major life activities and that her allergy "was in fact a physical impairment" (Plicka 100). Plicka reminds us that "courts have stated that the determination of whether an individual has a disability is not necessarily based on the name or diagnosis of the impairment the person has, but rather on the effect of the impairment [which] may be disabling for a particular individual but not others" (Plicka 102 citing *Darian*), which means that having a severely allergic child labeled 'disabled' under the ADA is not out of reach.

The court case of T.F. vs. Fox Chapel Area School District mentioned above shows that parents are responding to schools' lack of policy, even if it means bringing it to court. The case involves T.F., who was severely allergic to tree-nuts, and his parents, who filed charges against the Fox Chapel Area School District on the claim that "Fox Chapel Area School District…failed to provide a Free

Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) and discriminated against them in violation of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title 15 of the Pennsylvania Code, and the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act" (T.F. Et AL. v. Fox Chapel 1). The main complaint was that the "defendant was 'deliberately indifferent' to T.F.'s needs in the following particulars: (1) Defendant failed to provide student with sufficient accommodation to address his allegedly life-threatening tree nut allergy" along with a few other complaints specific to his situation (1). Although the plaintiff did not win this case due to a lack of verifiable evidence and documentation, it still helps raise concerns of how and if schools should be required to put in place restrictions or protocol to help these children.

Schools that do not decide between making their schools peanut-free or allowing peanuts entirely often implement a 'compromising' solution: the peanut-free table. Scholars such as Bartnikas et al. have studied this idea and show that it may help reduce "epinephrine administration" (Bartnikas et al. 465). This solution that allows the allergic-child to sit at their own lunch table, intending to lessen their exposure to peanuts, does show some results in helping reduce the administration of Epinephrine (commonly known as the substance that makes up the Epi-pen) (Bartnikas et al. 465). Peanut free tables lower the administration rate, explain Bartnikas et al., while policies restricting peanuts brought from home, peanut-free classrooms, or not serving them at all in schools had "no effect on epinephrine administration rates" (467). Although this may seem like a good solution to help reduce peanut exposure, I argue that it is not a sufficient solution for schools because it does not try to eliminate the problem; it just tries to lessen the allergens the child is exposed to.

Even though the peanut-free table may look like a good compromise on paper, when implemented, it can be more of a hazard than one would expect. Therefore, I argue for completely banning peanuts in schools as opposed to 'halfway' solutions. From a legal standpoint, if we assume that we consider severe allergies a disability like discussed above, the peanut-free table could cause legal ramifications. One of the other complaints from the defendant in the T.F. versus Fox Chapel Area School District was that T.F. was "isolated and segregated against…at a separate small desk to eat his lunch in the cafeteria" (T.F. Et Al v. Fox Chapel 2). When a person is considered disabled, Title II of the ADA says that they cannot "by reason of such disability, be excluded from participation or be denied the benefits of services, programs, or activities of a public entity or be subjected to

discrimination by any such entity" (Plicka 94). Title III also prohibits "1) denial of participation 2) participation that results in unequal benefit or 3) participation that results in a different or separate benefit" (as cited in "Mr. Peanut Goes to Court" 95 by Plicka). This would go against one of schools' major ideas to 'compromise'-- the peanut-free table-- because it segregates the child from his or her peers, as shown in T.F.'s case, along with other children who have been segregated due to their allergy. There are also emotional and social side-effects to the peanut free table. In T.F.'s case, it was announced that "T.F. was not returning to school based upon the lunch-room seating, as well as unspecified teasing and bullying" (T.F. Et Al v. Fox Chapel 25) through an email to Fox Chapel and "plaintiffs claim that T.F. was teased and bullied, that he experienced anxiety as a result of the seating arrangement" (6). Peanut-free tables provide social ostracization for students with allergies, and they also fail to completely eliminate the presence of peanut allergens from schools.

Schools should be peanut-free because this policy helps accommodate and protect children with severe allergies from their allergen and from the potential humiliation by their peers that partially peanut-free or peanut-table-only schools can induce. Although it is important to note that it would be an enormous task to completely eliminate pea-nuts from schools and that "no ban can be policed com-pletely" (Abrams and Watson "No" 751), policy changes are something for schools to consider to help make their environments as safe as possible for all children, without forgetting that children with food allergies could be considered 'disabled' due to their severe health concerns (Plicka 95 and Walton 321). As school administrations consider whether or not to make their schools peanut-free zones, it is important for them to remember the case of Ammaria Johnson whose school's lack of procedures led to her death after she interacted with her allergen on school property and to note that if the school would have had proper procedures in place, they likely could have saved her life. By making policy changes, they can help save lives of children allergic to peanuts in the future.

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A Vital Interplay: Heroism and Christian Conscience in the World War II Poetry of Dorothy L. Sayers

Bryn Warner

Dorothy L. Sayers's poetry is often overlooked in the body of her writing. While referenced in surveys of Sayers's wartime writing, a fuller analysis reveals the importance of her poems as they embody a unique wrestling with the moral implications of World War II. Building on Barbara Reynold's discussion of the heroic and Christian in Sayer's wartime writing, Warner analyzes the tension between these two values systems in Sayers's poems "The English War" and "Target Area." Exploring the friction between the nobility to fight and the cost of the conflict animates the stirring images of these poems and paints a fuller picture of the complex currents of Sayers's response to the war.

DOROTHY L. SAYERS had gained popularity as a mystery writer in the 1930s, but as World War II loomed, her writing took a different course. Sayers herself describes the war as a metaphorical bomb, causing one to ask what they will believe (qtd. in Hone, 96). She harnessed the war's revealing power in her writing, penetrating with her pen in new forms the issues of the hurting world around her. Several scholars surveying Sayers's writing have touched on her treatment of the deep, moral implications of the war. Janice Brown, throughout *The Seven Deadly Sins in the Work of Dorothy L. Sayers*, sees these vivid moral themes pervading Sayers's entire writing career, continuing on long past her detective novels. Taking this one step further, Suzanne Bray in her chapter, "Resisting Theological Error as a Means of Political Salvation," addresses Sayers's World War Two poetry. Interpreting Sayers's poems as a resistance to humanism, Bray claims Sayers saw the cause of the war as a blind faith in humanity that overlooks the presence of original sin (88). These scholars see Sayers mobilizing the war in her writing to explore and test fundamental assumptions about human nature and ethical action.

Barbara Reynolds, biographer and friend of Sayers, similarly describes a consciousness of human sin running through Sayers's wartime writing, yet she perceives this awareness running alongside another perspective and preoccupying theme in Sayer's writing: the romantically heroic. Reynolds interprets Sayers's writing from this period through the lens of two separate, but interconnected strands of thought that weave their way through Sayers' approach to the war: the "Athos" and the "Christian." Athos is a character in *The Three Musketeers*, which Sayers deeply loved as a child. It represents all that is bold, courageous,

noble, resolute, and daring. It takes a romanticized view of war, one that stirs hearts to valorous action, emboldening a nation's spirit and giving it something to fight for. The Christian approach to the war comes from the orthodox Christian worldview Sayers held that recognizes the fallenness of all men and that all are in need of redemption.

Reynolds' contention that Sayers' writing interacts with both romanticized and sober perspectives of the war illuminates the contrast between two of her poems, "The English War" and "Target Area," one written at the start of the war and the other at its end. While both strands are always present in Sayers' writing, her poetry exemplifies the balance shifting by the end of the war to an emphasis on the "Christian" lens, tempering the "Athos." The interplay of these two strands on Sayers's poetry reveal how Sayers wrestled with the morality of war through her writing. When seen as embodying both a romantic and a conscientious perspective, Sayers's poetry, though often overlooked, provides a strong, poignant statement that we should view our personal responsibility when engaged in such a war through both the lens of the nobleness to fight and the cost of the conflict.

"The English War" published in September of 1940 typifies the strand of Sayer's heroic aspirations and ideals about the war that Reynolds describes. It is a charge to rediscover heroism in the necessity of a dire situation. Written for the anniversary of the declaration of war, it celebrates the conflict as awakening a noble, resolute spirit in the English people. It begins with radical boldness:

Praise God, now, for an English war—
 The grey tide and the sullen coast,
The menace of the of the urgent hour,

The single island, like a tower,
    Ringed with an angry host (1-5).
Sayers' constructs a daring statement by choosing to praise God not only for its dire odds, but for the war itself. "Europe, like a prison door, clangs" in line 20, leaving a resounding, empty echo Sayers crafts by cutting off the word "shut," as England is left alone. Yet, in the poem she asserts that England's dangers beat out a heroism to fight and not a despair, using the metaphor of a sword forged on the anvil of fear in line 40. In "English War," Sayers looks at the panorama of the war around her in the same way she writes about Dunkirk in 1940. She writes, "There are few songs of victory, and no songs of unopposed victory…The most moving war-poems are made about valiant rear-guard actions…It has been our privilege to witness a stranger thing than ever poets sang…" (qtd. in Hone, 114). In expressing this romantically resolute "Athos" strand in "The English War," Sayers suggests that heroic belief was what was needed as England faced her own last stand.

In order to show the potential for rediscovering heroism, Sayers evokes the past. Throughout "The English War," she glorifies past heroism, showing that the same heroism can be taken up by men in the present, concluding: "Send us, O God, the will and power / To do as we have done before; / The men that ride the sea and air / Are the same men their fathers were" (41-45). Her connection to chivalric defenders of old echoes earlier writing. In *Peredur*, an Arthurian poem she wrote in 1912, a young boy hears whispers about his father and brothers and feels a stirring in his heart over the word "knight," causing him to exclaim: "Some heritage within me lies asleep, / Some heritage of my sire" (121-122). Holding this in the back of her imagination, Sayers as a scholar of Medieval romance saw that heroism needed to be reborn in her own day and age. In "The English War," she connects the British people to age-old adventurers fighting against historic enemies, the sole, remaining defense. Reclaiming the valor of the past is now the responsibility of the present. In "The English War," Sayers puts into action what she wrote to Sir Richard Maconachie of the government's propaganda office in July 1940: "Tell us, if you like, that we are gods, heroes, buccaneers, bulwarks of liberty, trustees of the nation…for men become what they themselves believe themselves to be" (qtd. in Hone, 115). With this in mind, Sayers recasts the war through the stirring lens of the heroic in "The English War."

Conforming to a chivalric ideal, "The English War" portrays the fight as a just cause that motivates necessary acts of heroism. The responsibility rests on the character of the English people to be the sole defenders of a worthy cause. Peace will never be found through the "dreams" of those "who never feel…The kisses of the curtsying guns / Slavering their streets with steel" (54-55). Rather, there is a "noise that breaks our sleep" and a call to the deep—to real action and adventurous risks (28). Similarly, in a sermon Sayers has the character, Mr. Venables, deliver in the "The Whimsey Papers," she writes that the interwar period was "not peace at all but only an armed truce with evil…the time for peace had gone by" (Brown, 251, 252). The diction of "The English War" reflects this understanding: the English must fight against a "tyrant" to keep the seas and skies from being violated, Europe is looking to England for liberty, and "flying death" and "guns slavering streets" threaten their homes (57-60, 14-15, and 52-55). Her concept of heroism it renders is one of moral right, fighting against those who, as Sayers writes, "honestly believe wrong to be right" (qtd. in Colon, 175). Sayers's article, "Is This He That Should Come?", suggests, as Janice Brown writes, "that the war may not be incompatible with the Christian idea of peace… [Jesus] refused to tolerate hypocrisy and injustice in order to maintain a superficial form of peace" (251). Furthermore, in a letter, Sayers writes of a naivety in "supposing we could abolish wars simply by disproving of them" (qtd. in Bray, 90). In this way, her definition of peace was not the mere absence of conflict, but the total setting of things aright, aligning with the chivalric ideal of a noble fight.

However, there is also a Christian sense of personal conscience in "The English War": a need for decency and the presence of "sly jackals round our table, / Cringing for blood-stained scraps" (47, 49), referring to those who set harsh reparations on Germany after the First World War (Bray 91). In identifying the need for perpetual "vigilance" (56), "The English War" demonstrates a belief in the presence of sin that Suzanne Bray points to. However, its tone and content follows more the heroic ideal of the war and Britain's place in it—the English will enact justice and bring peace. In lines like "But, if another tyrant rise, / Then we shall fight again" (59-60) and "And men who love us not, yet look / To us for liberty" (lines 14-15), the English are enacting the right. The poem acknowledges their flaws, but the wording bursts with optimism that they have the opportunity and are there to set things aright.

Spurring on a heroic perception of the war, "The English War" casts a brave, visionary hope in the midst of the dire situation it portrays. To do so, the poem diffuses the anxiety of the time with humor in the beginning epigraph: "What other race on earth, well aware of its danger, isolated to fight, would utter a great sigh of relief

that all had abandoned it, and say to itself: 'Well, thank goodness for that; now we know where we are?'" Such English humor transitions to a vision for bold heroism that similarly releases the nation from the fear and tension of the war into a call for greater sacrifice, expecting to attain ultimate peace. As she writes in *Begin Here,* her essay on reconstruction after the war, written at its start, "Nobody can wish to minimize the evil wrought by war… but we must not so exaggerate the power of evil as to fall into lethargy and despair" (1). "The English War" displays that Sayers, despite living through the first World War, held belief that a war could potentially shape the character of the current age into something better and spur a greater and truer English identity. It shows optimism for the character the war would produce. In this way, "The English War" mirrors Sayers's views in *Begin Here,* also written in 1940, where she writes: "War is not a final catastrophe. Like every historical event, war is not an end, but a beginning" (qtd. in Hone, 101). The overall tone of "The English War" is a gutsy daring hope in reviving heroism in contrast to trepidation or horror, expecting it to be the birth of a new beginning for England and her people.

In contrast to "The English War"'s portrayal of the war as heroic, renewing a stalwart nobleness and a hopeful, chivalric ideal of a just motivation to fight, "Target Area", written at the end of the war, is a poignant expression of a Christian conscience amidst the war. It humanizes the war and its cost, sees the other side with compassion, and takes responsibility for it, acknowledging personal, human sin. Written in 1944, it reflects a deeper immersion in and an understanding of the suffering of the war, revealing a Christian awareness of personal guilt shared by all. Ann Loades comments in "Dorothy L. Sayers: War and Redemption" that, in writing "Target Area", "imagination gave her eyes to see what mere awareness of the facts would not" (66). By this time, the tides had changed from defense to attack. "Target Area" takes this attack to a personal scale—the bombs are delivered specifically to a single, old woman (Bray, 93). "Did we strike you…?" the poem asks (101). Its images of her possible death are stark: "tossing the soul out through rent ribs or merciful splitting of the skull?" (102-103). As Sayers writes in a letter to Helmut Kuhn in May of 1944:

> We have a sort of top compartment of consciousness in which we keep the feelings of exaltation and revenge and the awful thrill of large-scale destruction; and we are very careful to hang there only caricatures of objectionable storm-troopers and Gestapo agents and what I call "bogey-Germans;" we avoid going down into the basement where we keep the blood and terror and the real people (victims of air raids), because it wouldn't do right now" (qtd. in Bray, 95).

Sayers counteracts these tendencies in her poem. Through her imaginative working of the images of poetry, Sayers challenges the views of those around her and opens their eyes to see the human consequence behind a simple news report.

While "The English War" treats the theme of justice at a distance, "Target Area" brings it penetratingly near, humanizing the war. Sayers narrates the poem in free verse, remembering her old piano teacher now living in Germany who is in the target area of the bombing. The poem begins with images that cast Fraulein Fehmer as a real person before it relates that Fraulein Fehmer agrees with the Nazi party. It internalizes a sense of human dignity, describing Fraulein Fehmer's features as made by "the hand of the potter," portraying this woman as God's own creation (Bray, 93). Similar to the way she describes Fraulein Fehmer, Sayers reflects in *Begin Here,* her vision for society after the war, on how the "realization broke in upon my infant mind that every other person in the world was an I to himself.…how many bitter wrongs have been inflicted on men and women because all of us have taken it for granted and not acted upon that assumption" (qtd. in Colon, 178). She confronts this self-centeredness that causes us to forget the worth of other lives through writing "Target Area." Furthermore, in *Begin Here,* she relates, "I want to make it quite clear that when I say "Man," I mean, not a generalized man. I mean you. I mean me. I mean your grocer, Mr. Brown, and my charwomen Mrs. Smith" (qtd. in Colon, 177). "Target Area" is not a charge to fight against a tyrant as In "The English War," but a recognition of "the despair of the middle classes" (73) in Germany, echoing through images of a grey shawl, who are on the other side and beneath the bombs. Battered by years of the war, Sayers's tone is quieter and less rhythmic and confident. There is not valor, but heartbreak. In long sentences of free verse, she processes her questions. "Target Area" is not a declaration, but a conversation creating intimacy with the subject. In so doing, she humanizes the war.

Little details in the poem add weight to develop a strong human pathos, awaking the reader to the suffering of war. These details bring Fraulein Fehmer to life: the furniture of the room were Fraulein Fehmer lived, her gray shawl, the details of her face. Sayers's diction startles with incongruous metaphors and even understatement and thus casts things initially taken for granted in a new, harsh light. Phrases and images recur throughout to develop meaning.

The "jingle of private harmony" in a practice room creating "jangling discord with the private harmonies of its neighbors" (15-16) becomes the "discord of private harmonies" which "must be resolved in the deafening cataract of calamity" of the war (124-125). The exchange of messages in writing and music is contrasted to the bombs "taking messages" in the closing epigraph. Her details imprint strong images and realizations of the trauma of the war.

In so doing, Sayers as narrator does not keep the war at arm's length from her life. She links herself to these travesties of war in "Target Area" and assumes personal responsibility, aware that she is responsible for the messages sent. Like "English War"'s beginning that sets its tone for noble, stalwart optimism, "Target Area" begins with an epigraph that emphasizes "OUR bombers." Her country and the common people she rallied to the fight in "English War" are now the ones dropping bombs. There is a great shift: here they are characterized, not as swashbuckling heroic defenders, but as the "grim young men in blue uniforms, / professionally laconic, charting over the inter-com, / the soundings of the channel of death" (1-2). At the end of the poem, Sayers writes, "I have filled the bombs, loaded the bomb-racks, built the planes…" (144) and, by the closing refrain, Sayers substitutes "Chopin and the old School Hall," Fraulein Fehmer's old students, for those dropping the bombs. "Target Area" calls Sayers herself, and thus the English people, to take personal responsibility for each act of the war.

With this challenge, however, Sayers never denies the justice of the fight: "Neither of us can stop what is happening now, / nor would if we could" (123-124). "The first to cry "Halt!" utters a cry of defeat, / and makes a breach in the dam, through which the water / floods over the house-tops" (126-128). Sayers asks if Chopin's piece kindles compassion for Poland, but contrasts the melody to the crashing, cacophonous anger of England as the agent: "Did the old, heartbreaking melody cry to you / Poland's agony through the crashing anger of England?" (99-100). Contrasting this to the righteous anger forging a sword in "The English War," here the speaker asks what the anger of England is accomplishing in its cacophony. "Target Area" emphasizes that even the "just" side must be convicted of blood. As the poem concludes, "all men stand convicted of blood / in the High Court, the judge with the accused" (130–131,144). Similarly, Sayers expounds on this sentiment in her broadcast, "The Man of Men," that humankind is "not really free to do, in his own strength, the good he chooses" (qtd. in Bray, 91). The Christian view of the inherent sin nature of humans will always be present. As "Target Area" concludes,

"The solidarity of mankind is a solidarity in guilt, / and all our virtues stand in need of forgiveness, being deadly" (144). Showing through poetic images the human solidarity between Sayers and Fraulein Fehmer, Sayers tempers the heroic by showing that even fighting for justice has the potential to perpetrate injustice: humans are not capable of attaining justice on their own. Displaying the Christian strand of Sayers's thought about the war, "Target Area" shows that is not merely the enemy, but the English themselves who are in need of mercy and forgiveness.

While both poems reflect a sense of conscience and justice in fighting, the emphasis of Sayers's views subtly shift between the writing of the two poems as she wrestles with the tension Reynolds articulates. Her writing softens from the suffering of the war into a more blatant understanding that help must come from outside, beyond human ability. The "Athos" spirit is checked by understanding that "virtues are in need of forgiveness" as well. This shift of emphasis permeates her 1945 play "The Just Vengeance," which culminates her wartime writing. Barbara Reynold writes that in a personal conversation Sayers described it as her masterpiece. Sayers writes in the play's introduction that it is about "man's insufficiency and God's redemption act, set against the backdrop of the current crisis" (qtd. in Brown, 280). Furthermore, she mirrors the concerns of "Target Area" in the main character's complaint and confusion:

> "…We try to do right
> And someone is hurt—very likely the wrong person:
> And if we do wrong, or even if we do nothing,
> It comes to the same end. We drop a bomb
> And condemn a thousand people to sudden death,
> The guiltless along with the guilty. Or if we refuse
> To drop the bomb, and condemn a thousand people
> To lingering death in a concentration camp…
> We have no choice between killing and not killing"
> (qtd. in Bray, 95).

Here is the conundrum that leads to the atoning crucifixion of Christ. For Sayers, the war revealed the desperate need for that atonement. The image of Eve, crying over both Cain and Abel and calling for "A kind of mercy that is not unjust, / A not unmerciful justice" (qtd. in Loads, 45), perfectly summarizes Sayers's concerns as she seeks to balance both the justice that calls to fight and the justice defiled in fighting. Seeing the heroic and Christian strains of thought develop in Sayers's poetry, their interplaying pieces meld into this cry for a just mercy and a merciful justice.

While the call to heroism in "The English War," the "noise that breaks our sleep" (28), can help recover the spirit and identity of her nation, it cannot exist removed

from the personal reality of human sin. The comparison of these strands of thought in Sayers's poems reveals, on the one hand, a dynamic interplay between the courage to fight and a vision of things worth fighting for, and on the other, the empathy for an enemy and the consideration of one's own fallenness. In exploring these strands, Sayers invites us not into despair, but into an understanding of our own incapacity to balance them ourselves, revealing what she calls a drama of Christian doctrine enfolding around us—"this terrifying drama in which God is the victim and the hero" ("Greatest Drama" 5). Through her writing, she makes the drama of doctrine come to life to transpierce the drama of World War II to its core. The poetry of "The English War and "Target Area" beckon with a haunting invitation to explore the tension and interplay between heroism and Christian conscience.

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Translating Age: Does the Critical Period Significantly Affect Second Language Learning Among Adults?

Grace E. Dummitt

Many adults are discouraged in their attempts to learn a second language because of the widely circulated Critical Period Hypothesis. It argues that only children who begin learning a second language before puberty can become fully proficient. However, I examine ways in which scholars have been negligent in exploring factors set apart from age that contribute to performance such as motivation, teaching methods, quality of immersion, among others. I call for a reconsideration of this hypothesis as a rule for language education and its place in societal attitudes towards language learning.

Learning a second language can be helpful in finding a job, learning about the world, or simply relating to others. Unfortunately, many adults hesitate to begin learning a new language because they are told it will be too hard for them as they are no longer in the "critical period" of second language acquisition. The Critical Period Hypothesis postulates that children only have the skills to learn a second language before puberty (L2). In 1959, Wilder Penfield and Lamar Roberts first introduced the Critical Period Hypothesis (CPH) which stated that second language (L2) learning can only occur in the early years of a person's life and once they leave this stage, they can no longer adequately achieve a complete command of the language. This hypothesis was widely popularized in the late 20th century and continues to be examined and challenged by scholars around the world. While there is little doubt that there is a correlation between language acquisition and age, the idea that language ability directly stems from a biological critical period remains to be proven. In fact, it is highly contested. Many criticize the critical period by proposing that only skills like accent and pronunciation are affected by age and that more essential elements of language, like grammar and vocabulary, can actually be picked up more easily by adults than children in some cases (Palea, 2015). Other criticisms focus more on subjectivity and what many scholars neglect in their work in favor of the CPH. After all, there are many other factors that contribute to L2 learning, including motivation, environment, intelligence, approaches to learning, and others that often differ between people of various ages. (Muñoz, 2011). Unfortunately, despite these protestations, the CPH has been very widespread and accepted by the general population, most likely because of the difficulties with language learning that people have personally experienced. The popular acceptance of the hypothesis in textbooks, classrooms, and even academic conferences sharply contradicts the fact that the CPH is still a hotly debated topic among linguists and other members of the academic community.

The aim of this paper will be to challenge this widespread acceptance of the CPH and to show why the CPH is not a significant indicator of success in a second language. I will define what it means to become fluent in a language as well as why the subjectivity of terms like "better learner" or "proficiency" creates a lack of clarity in the works of many proponents of the CPH (Palea, 2015). To show that the critical period cannot indubitably have a significant effect on the ultimate acquisition of a second language I will point out the negligence that other scholars have shown by refusing to examine important factors apart from age when they are trying to indicate that the critical period is a significant hindrance to adult L2 learners. The critical period is further disproven by the way that adult L2 learners are able to obtain grammar and vocabulary levels sufficient to communicate with native speakers.

Critical period researchers often refuse to examine important factors like motivation, environment, intelligence, approaches to learning and others that differ between people of certain ages. These factors often develop alongside age and cause researchers to put too much faith in only the age factors because they see a correlation between age and ability. When arguing that the critical period is a pivotal time for language learning, many scholars cite the example of Genie, a severely neglected and abused girl who was kept inside all her life and was not

allowed to make noise. When she was found around the age of puberty, she had not learned to speak and was extremely underdeveloped. Although she made significant progress in language learning under the influence of teachers, Genie never mastered basic grammatical structures, instead using only disjointed words in an attempt to communicate meaning (Curtiss, 1977). Genie's case, however compelling, cannot be extended to apply to all cases of L1 or L2 acquisition because of its extremity, uniqueness, and difficulty of duplication. It has also been speculated that Genie may have had difficulty acquiring language because of other reasons related to her situation. For example, because of her severe abuse, Genie most likely suffered damage to her cognitive development and psychological well-being that hindered her ability to learn language. Language learning always involves a myriad of factors which is why it is impossible for proponents of the to critical period to definitively say that age alone impacts acquisition.

Alene Moyer, a professor at the University of Maryland who specializes in second language phonological acquisition, posits in her article "Ultimate Attainment in L2 Phonology: The Critical Factors of Age, Motivation, and Instruction" that the methodology used in many studies has been largely ignorant of important variables. She argues that socio-psychological factors, extent of exposure to a second language, motivation, self-perception, and instruction should also be examined alongside age. The focus of the article is a study that challenges the CPH and examines the German speech of participants who also were affected by many of these other factors. The 24 participants were all instructors at the University of Texas at Austin and were tested on their pronunciation skills. While all participants were well outside of the critical period, the ages that they began learning German varied. The study found that the other factors, especially intonation training had a correlation with the subjects' success (Moyer, 1999). Therefore, it was not simply the subject's age that affected their ability to learn, as the CPH assumes, but many other factors that contributed to their learning as well.

In a 2001 study of 61 Spanish-speaking immigrants to the United States, David Birdsong and Michelle Molis found a modest amount of native-like fluency among adult learners. However, their examination of other factors yielded the discovery that L1 and L2 pairings (such as English and Spanish versus English and Japanese), as well as the amount of L2 use, played a substantial role in the success of learners (Birdsong & Molis, 2001). For example, studies have shown that when in immersion environments, children almost always use the second language more than

adults (LLanes, 2010). Many children who are new immigrants to the United States are constantly surrounded by English and being forced to use it in school and elsewhere. They are unashamed to use this new language despite any mistakes they may make at first and soon surpass their parents who are most likely still speaking their native language at home. In this case, L2 use differs between the two age groups, so naturally, we see a difference in their resulting abilities. As stated by two leading scholars, Singleton and Muñoz, in the ongoing conversation of criticisms of the CPH, the "age of L2 onset [is] typically regarded as the crucial variable and other linguistic and contextual variables [are] often insufficiently taken into account," creating a "narrow scope of much research in this area" (Muñoz & Singleton, 2011). For this reason, we cannot conclude that the CPH is a significant indicator of success in a second language because the only examines one's age rather than all of the factors that develop alongside a maturing individual or are present for other reasons.

One of the most problematic areas in critical period research is the lack of definition given to terms such as "fluency," "proficiency," and "better learner." Without a clear definition of these ideas, we are left to wonder why it is that children that began L2 learning within the critical period are said to have stronger proficiency than those who begin L2 learning as adults if adults can still communicate well. Not even native speakers pass fluency tests with 100% accuracy, and grammatical and pronunciation inconsistencies are widespread among native speakers. In a popular study, J.S. Johnson and E.L. Newport, scholars from the University of Illinois, examined 46 native Korean and Chinese speakers ages 3-39 who had lived in the United States for 3-26 years. The study tested their proficiency in English. The results gave evidence that the earlier the person came to the U.S., the stronger their English proficiency was. The study's goal was to test whether or not the critical period exists and if it can be used to determine whether or not an individual will be successful in second language acquisition. Although the study supported this conclusion, there were also noticeable exceptions where late learners also had unexpectedly mastered English grammar structures. (Johnson & Newport, 1989). However, the real problem with this study was that it lacked a clear definition of proficiency and assumed that sounding like a native speaker was the goal of L2 learning. Some of the younger learners may have grasped some syntax concepts more readily than some adult learners, but does that mean they are more "proficient" as the study claims? And if they usually are, why does that mean they should be deemed

"better learners" than adults? Why should native-like proficiency be the yardstick for measuring learners? Simply, there are other factors at play regarding ability in learning a second language. Also, as will be discussed later, there is much evidence supporting the opposite conclusion of Newport and Johnson -- that age of onset does not have a significant effect on second language ability.

But let us examine the words often used to measure language learners. "Fluency," often synonymous with "proficiency," is defined by Dictionary.com as the ability "to speak and write quickly or easily in a given language." Furthermore, Kaponen and Riggenbach, two scholars add that "language is motion" as indicated by its definitions in other languages. For example, in German and Russian, the word "fluently" is translated as "runningly [sic]" and in Finnish it means "in a flowing or liquid manner" (Kaponen & Riggenbach, 2000). In English, the word "fluent" comes from the Latin word *fluentem* meaning "to flow." So being fluent only requires a certain ease of movement from word to word and in no way requires the speaker to never make a single grammatical mistake. We should not equate being fluent with being indistinguishable from native speakers because they constantly bend and break the rules of grammar and pronunciation.

Another factor often cited to endorse the Critical Period Hypothesis is accent. A 2009 study considered the accent "proficiency" levels of Spanish/Swedish bilinguals whose second language was Swedish. The study examined speakers who began L2 acquisition at ages 1-47 and claimed their speaking skills to be practically native-like. The subjects were examined by native Swedish speakers and many of the learners who began before age 12 (the supposed end of the CP) were perceived as native speaker and a minority of the learners who began after 12 were perceived as native speakers (but there were some). The surprising finding of this study was that after this listening portion with native speakers, the participants were tested extensively on their linguistic performance (accent) and most of the subjects who began learning *within* the critical period did *not* pass these tests (Abrahamsson & Hyltenstam, 2009). Abrahamsson and Hyltenstam show that native-like fluency in regards to accent is less achieved by learners who begin within the critical period than was previously thought.

Regardless, why are a native-like accent and perfect grammar the benchmarks for determining whether or not someone is "fluent" in a second language? There is absolutely "no intrinsic reason why the L2 user's attainment should be the same as that of a monolingual native speaker"

(Singleton & Muñoz, 2011, pg. 11). After all, widespread languages like English have vastly different-sounding accents and dialects. An individual's accent merely indicates to the listener where they are from. Therefore, if it is not a hindrance to true communication, it should not be used as an indicator of fluency. That would be like an American using accent as a reason to say that Australians are not fluent in English when, of course, English is probably their first language. Instead of using native-like language levels to measure speakers' abilities in a second language, we should examine whether or not they can communicate with others in that language. After all, the goal of second language learning is not to become indistinguishable from a native speaker but to be understood.

In terms of the differences we *do* see in some studies between adult learners and child learners, these should not be used to say that any individual is a "better learner" than another. Lucia-Larissa Palea, a well-known researcher in the linguistics field, discusses how generalizations should not be made about whether or not someone is a better learner than another because every situation is different. She states:

> There is a common general belief that young persons are better language learners than adults, based on the fact that they gain easier mastery of a second language. However, many researchers dispute this assumption by questioning the concept of *better learner*. If we are to consider the speed of learning, no actual advantages have been found for young learners but rather for adults. Another variable involved could also be the type of learning task, as it can be over the cognitive capacity of young people (Palea, 2015).

Every individual has different levels of motivation, intelligence, circumstances, and resources when it comes to learning a second language.

But for the sake of argument, let us say that native-like fluency is an appropriate measure of success in a second language. The central ideas of the Critical Period Hypothesis claim that learning a language later in life is problematic because only prepubescent children can fully acquire a second language (Lenneberg, 1967). Therefore, if even one post-critical period L2 learner showed native-like fluency, then it would be sufficient to reject the CPH (Long, 1990). This very occurrence has shown up again and again in studies (Johnson & Newport, 1989) (Abrahamsson & Hyltenstam, 2009). So although these studies may have found evidence to support the CPH, the emergence of exceptions and the lack of consideration of other factors are more than enough to disprove the hypothesis.

In summary, many scholars have shown a neglect of important factors set apart from age when trying to show that the critical period is a significant hindrance to adult L2 learners. In light of this and evidence that shows the way that adult L2 learners are able to obtain grammar and vocabulary levels sufficient to communicate with native speakers, I have concluded that the critical period does not have a significant effect on the ultimate acquisition of a second language and should therefore not be widely accepted in the academic and educational spheres. For many adults, this so-called critical period seems a daunting obstacle to language learning, but my hope is that these findings will encourage them to keep trying. After all, "mastering a language is a difficult and complicated task at any stage in life, commonly requiring years of practice" (Strid, 2016). More significantly, these findings may contribute to the way we approach learning and teaching language. We know that adults learn language much differently than children, but we still need studies that can help us pinpoint what exactly is different and how we can use those differences to change the way we teach language to adults.

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The Local Food Movement and Food Miles: Why Local Food Activists Should Focus on the Emotional Effects Before the Environmental Effects

Natalie Lovvoll

A controversial issue in the past decade has been whether eating locally is more or less energy efficient than buying from a conventional grocer. Over time, the majority of scholars have come to the agreement that it cannot be concluded that buying local food is always better for the environment and because of this discovery, there is a new conversation: what are the valuable strengths of the local food movement and why should consumers buy local? I argue that the main reason 21st-century consumers should buy local food is because of the positive effect it will have on their personal relationships, sense of place, and thus, their emotional wellbeing. This issue is significant because although the environmental benefits of buying local food are weak, there are many other strengths of buying locally that should be recognized and activists should continue to promote the local food movement.

IN RECENT DISCUSSIONS of the benefits of eating local food, a controversial issue in the past decade has been whether eating locally is more or less energy efficient than buying from a conventional grocer. (SC) Over time, many scholars have come to the agreement that it cannot be concluded that buying local food is always better for the environment. Those who affirm the wide-spread argument that there is not sufficient evidence that eating locally is necessarily more sustainable come from the fields of environmental science, rural development, and economics. While this consensus is apparent among the majority of the scholars, there are some researchers, such as Patrik Mouron, as well as many uninformed local food activists who claim that there are environmental benefits (SQ). Due to this controversy, a new scholarly discussion has begun about the other benefits of eating locally, since the environmental benefit of local food appears to be insufficient (DC). Within this conversation is also a new study about local food as a social movement and how it has gained such popularity apart from the environmental draw. Main contributors in this discourse community are scholars who study sociology and anthropology. In the words of Laura B. DeLind, the local food movement is "a process that must certainly involve food [but] also involves the cultivation of a civic "we-ness." Ultimately, this is what gives (or should give)… the local food system definition and holding power" (DeLind 279). In sum, then, the issue is ultimately about what effect local food has on consumers. Because of statistical evidence alongside the research of scholars such as Patrick Mundler and George Criner, it can be established that eating local food does not have a significant effect on the sustainability of the food system. The position of scholars such as Amory Starr, Laura B. DeLind, Ian Werkheiser and Samantha Noll's position seems more convincing that there is a greater need for one to look at the more apparent benefits of local food such as the positive effect it has on human emotions. This issue is significant because although the environmental benefits of buying local food are weak, there are many other strengths of buying locally that should be recognized, the emotional benefits being the most important as local food is often misused as a status symbol (C/B). Therefore, I argue that while there are other draws to the "local food movement," the main reason 21st-century consumers should buy local food is because of the positive effect it will have on their emotions and lifestyle (S/C).

The local food movement was sparked by activists who desired to decrease their ecological footprint, but recent research shows that the transportation of food does not have a substantial impact on the overall energy efficiency of a food system. Therefore, the environmental effects should not be our primary reason for eating local food, and greater attention should be given to other facets. An important term in this debate is "food miles," which is the measurement of the fuel used to transport food from producer to consumer (Mundler 77). While reducing food miles is a valuable desire, it is quite insignificant in comparison to the energy that is created during the production of the food, such as the fuel used to irrigate, produce fertilizer and run farm equipment. In terms of the ecological footprint for food production, (which measures the impact humans have on the environment in terms of land,) the GHG emissions associated with the production phase, contributes 83% of the average U.S. carbon footprint for food consumption (Weber 3508). A study on the proportion

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of energy used in the production and transportation by the total food system process presents similar results. The state of Oregon's Department of Environmental Quality, conducted by Martin Heller, found that food transportation is only 14% of the total energy used, while the stages that occur before transportation (agricultural production, processing, packaging) make up 44% of the total energy use (Heller 1). These statistics indicate that in comparison to food production, food transportation has a negligible effect on the overall energy efficiency; thus, one must consider other assets of the local food movement. The work of Mundler and Criner align with these statistics and the two scholars also argue that food transportation has a very small impact in comparison to the total energy costs of a food system. Mundler and Criner write that using food miles as an indicator of sustainability "is restrictive and… scientifically unwise," and rather argue that the sustainability of the food system "must be studied in its entirety and cannot be reduced only to the extent of food miles or even energy consumption" (Mundler 81). Despite the preconception that much of the conventional food system is less energy efficient than local farms, it is critical to acknowledge that local food is not more sustainable simply because of the decrease of energy spent in transportation. Unfortunately, a closer look at statistics and studies reveals that this decrease does not have a strong effect on the overall food system and thus should not be the main reason one buys locally.

In addition to the minor impact that transportation and food miles have on the food system, there is evidence that the sustainability of buying local food is dependent on the consumer traveling a very short distance. A common misconception of local food buyers is that local food is always more sustainable as the distance from farm to plate decreases with the decision to buy from a local source. While it is guaranteed that choosing local food will decrease the number of food miles, the benefits of this only apply if the consumer is close to the source of local food, which is unrealistic for many. Coley compares the carbon emissions of a customer driving to pick up local, organic produce to getting produce delivered to your house by a conventional grocer's supply system. He finds that if the distance of a customer's round trip to buy their local produce is more than 6.7 km (approximately four miles), then their carbon emissions are greater than the emissions from the conventional system which involves "cold storage, packing, transport to a regional hub and final transport to customer's doorstep" (Coley 150). This research is telling as it applies to both customers that receive their produce through a doorstep delivery method and those that go to the grocery store and drive back to their home with their groceries—as both entail this final step of driving additional miles to get the food at home (Coley 150). Coley's research presents that yes, local food *can* be sustainable, but this is not the case for all. The efficiency of local food is not applicable to the majority of buyers, and as a result, local food cannot be claimed to be more energy efficient. In agreement with Coley are Gareth Edward Jones and his colleagues, whose research suggests that "it is currently impossible to state categorically whether or not local food systems emit fewer GHGs than non-local food systems" (Jones 270). Again, food miles are posed as a poor indicator of the sustainability of a food system and prompt a deeper investigation of the benefits of local food.

While the majority of scholars argue that local food is not consistently more sustainable than conventional food, Mouron and other researchers such as Stadig who take the LCA approach (Life Cycle Assessment) to local food oppose this generality due to research results (Mouron 114). The LCA approach considers both the energy flowing in and out of the food system and all the stages of the food chain. In terms of local food studies, LCA studies are distinct because they look at the energy that is used before and after the transportation stage (Jones 267). LCA analyses such as Mouron's often contradict with the claim that the environmental benefits of local food are insignificant and this is because the LCA approach is limited and cannot be used to argue that local food is advantageous for the environment. In Mouron's study comparing the energy efficiency of local apples and the apples produced to be sold at a conventional grocery store, he found that the local apples were more energy efficient as the overall use of CO_2 emissions was lower. Although his research suggests that local food does have an environmental benefit and is energy efficient, Mouron fails to consider that these benefits have limits to how one measures this efficiency, in his case the LCA approach. He reports that this was the result of local farmers "keeping the inputs of machinery, pesticides, and fertilizers low," in comparison to conventional producers (Mouron 114). It is important to note that his research also is confined in the way that it only focuses on the efficiency of growing apples and does not provide evidence for the efficiency of any other type of produce. Mouron's results aligned with those of Stadig who found that producing apples in New Zealand and shipping them to Sweden used more energy than producing the apples in Sweden despite the fact that apple production is significantly more efficient in New Zealand (Jones 267). Despite the validity of this

research, it is also limited to those who evaluate local food with the LCA approach and not other analyses. Likewise, the LCA approach is dependent on the food that is being produced and the energy efficiency of local apples cannot be assumed to be true of other foods. Because of this, food miles remain to be a weak indicator of sustainability as these results have limits. Therefore, it remains evident that local food activists and consumers should place a higher value on the other strengths of local food—such as its emotional effects.

While there is a lack of evidence to confirm the positive environmental effects of local food, there is evidence that buying local food is an enjoyable experience due to the "we-ness" it creates (DeLind 279). When one buys from a local farmer, it is likely that there will be face-to-face interaction and that the producer and the consumer will connect socially. Amory Starr, a sociologist, analyzes the local food movement and claims that one of the primary reasons for its popularity is the feeling of community and relationships it creates. She writes that through the local food movement "Food is transformed from a commodity to a pleasure made possible by human relationships" (Starr 484). When one buys locally, they connect with the seller, and the food that they cook and eat is given a location and a producer (Starr 484.). The food they buy is no longer just items they paid for from the grocery store, but the product of the hard work of the local food seller who provided for them in that way. This often enriches conversations around the table and one's sense of place as they are eating something that was grown in a place that they are familiar with and by a human whom they have encountered (Starr 484). While it is true that human labor is also necessary for the production of conventional food, buyers do not experience an in-person exchange and thus lose this emotional benefit. When one buys local food, he or she feels more socially connected as they are often talking to the humans that grow their food or to other buyers. Simply by knowing the source of the food on their plate, consumers feel more connected to their area and to humanity as a whole, and this acts as one of the main reasons why eating local food is enjoyable.

Due to the positive emotional effect that buying local food has, there is also an increase in consumers' quality of life—as they often view their "grocery trip" as an experience and not something to be checked off a to-do list. When writing about the experience of buying local food, Starr emphasizes, "not only do most participants willingly inconvenience themselves but also they do so with deepening joy and increasingly significant effects" (Starr 487).

Despite the fact that local food is generally more expensive and difficult to obtain, people continue to buy local food due to the enriching experience it provides (Starr 487). In the non-fiction book, *No Impact Man*, author Colin Beavan attempts to live without creating any waste for a year in New York City, and as a result, he eats local foods. It is important to note that this book was intended for a popular audience, yet Beavan's reflection of his local food experience highlights the ongoing conversation scholars take part in—that local food is emotionally enriching. He writes how he hosted a local-food party and "whole conversations revolved around who got what where and how they adapted the recipes according to what they could find" and also about his appreciation for the farmers that provide his food (Beavan 182). Despite Beavan's primary position as an environmentalist, he continuously acknowledges and values the emotional benefits that eating local food has, and this emphasizes its importance. Due to the positive experience local food creates, one's lifestyle will be enhanced as it allows room for richer relationships with not only who you buy from but those you eat with.

The emotional benefits of the local food are also important because the movement needs to gain popularity for the right reasons, and joining to take part in a trend or to make a political statement will not reap benefits for all members of society. Ian Werkheiser and Samantha Noll share their interpretation of the local food movement as one with three sub-movements- the individual-focused sub-movement, the systems-focused sub-movement, and the community-focused sub-movement (Werkheiser 200). The individual-focused sub-movement includes numerous personal reasons why one would eat local food, such as health reasons or to support local farmers (203). The systems focused sub-movement represents activists who eat local food because they want to change how our food system operates and see a change in societal values (206). While all these sub-movements have benefits, they can also be obstructed and thus, Werkheiser and Noll argue that "the community-focused sub-movement that has the most potential to radically transform the global food system" (Werkheiser 200). This is because the "place building," that local food provides often stirs a sense of belonging and dignity, which has a significant effect on how humans view themselves and the rest of the world (DeLind). Buyers should fill their fridges and pantries with local products simply because of its relational and emotional function. One's decision to eat locally allows them to connect with the place they are located (resulting in a greater appreciation of his or her home) and, thus, an improved outlook on life.

DeLind also analyzes the numerous reasons why people join the movement and argues that the emotional benefits should be more widely recognized. Often, consumers use local food as a status symbol—to identify either as an environmentalist, follow a health trend or show their political affiliation (DeLind 273). In *No Impact Man*, Beavan confronts this negative attribute of liberal environmentalists and writes how he once was "a member of that class of liberals who allowed themselves to glide by on way too few political gestures and lifestyle concessions and then spent the rest of their energy feeling superior to other people who supposedly don't do as much" (Beavan 16). His personal reflection shows the harm that often comes from one using local food and other sustainable practices to create a certain image. DeLind also argues that this is negative and disapproves of how activists are "shifting local food (as a concept and a social movement) away from the deeper concerns of equity, citizenship, place-building" (DeLind 273). Thus, when we evaluate the other main reasons people join the local food movement, it is evident that of these reasons, the emotional benefits should receive greater attention as they will help society rather than lead humans towards superficiality and stagnation.

The emotional benefits should be at the forefront of the local food movement due to the insufficiency of food miles as an indicator of sustainability and its positive impact on one's own lifestyle and society as a whole. Acknowledging these benefits is the beginning of humans living lives that are more fulfilling and emotionally rich. Local food may not be the avenue to reducing greenhouse gases and decreasing our energy use, but it has the ability to connect strangers and bring a sense of unity and place. Further research is needed to evaluate how these emotional benefits affect different people groups and communities and how informed activists value the emotional benefits of local food in comparison to other facets. Additionally, further research should be done to determine the best way to measure the energy efficiency of local food systems because, as the Life Cycle Assessment approach shows, this leads to inconclusive results and the study of "food miles," is not fully utilized. Yet, it is important to recall that the local food movement does not necessarily need to overlap with environmental discussion. As DeLind wrote, the local food movement "proceeds from the [false] assumption that without them [environmentalists] as full partners, the movement cannot be sustained in any felt, practiced, or committed way." The abundance of positive emotional effects that one can gain from eating local food should encourage consumers to continue their support of local food even if its environmental benefits are questionable.

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A Theology of Atrocities: the Role of the Caliphate in the Islamic State's Crimes Against Iraqi Citizens

Christian Rothrock

The recent territorial defeat of the terrorist organization known as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) necessitates a rigorous inspection of what motivated and structured the group's activities, particularly its tendency to commit mass atrocities against inhabitants of areas local to the group's operations. Some scholars have identified ISIL's adherence to ultra-conservative Islamist theology as the cause of this tendency, while others have credited it to ISIL's identity as both a regime and a terrorist organization. Rothrock affirms the former, yet contends that scholars who hold theology responsible are too general in their claims; rather than blaming ultra-conservative Islamism as a whole, Rothrock proposes that the Islamic State's implementation of specifically the theology of the new caliphate is the primary factor in its perpetration of atrocities against local, specifically Iraqi, citizens. Once ISIL's motivations are fully understood, the international community will be capable of anticipating and countering the attacks of terror organizations with similar ideologies and tendencies, making a comprehensive investigation of ISIL's rationale critical to global security.

At the time of this writing, the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) is on the brink of territorial defeat. The group's territory, previously spanning vast areas of Syria and Iraq, has been reduced to the single Syrian town of Baghouz, which is currently under siege by the U.S.-backed Syrian Democratic Forces (Reuters). The end of ISIL's regime invites scholars around the world to attempt to understand what drove the group to terrorize Iraqi civilians, in the interest of providing the international community with the necessary information to peremptorily identify and destroy groups that display similar tendencies to ISIL before they commit atrocities. Ahmed Hashim of Nanyang Technological University notes in *Middle East Policy* that the current leader of ISIL, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, formulated the group's strategy based on lessons learned from Al Qaeda's failures, leading to a focus on local savagery in Muslim countries (75). Characterizing ISIL and Al Qaeda for the United States Military, sociologist Paul Kamolnick cites four factors that distinguished ISIL from Al Qaeda, including "a belief in the necessity of immediately reestablishing the Islamic Caliphate" (53). Although scholars such as Hashim and Kamolnick have proposed many potential reasons for ISIL's genocidal tendencies, they have yet to satisfactorily acknowledge the degree to which ISIL's caliphate theology affected the group's activities. In contrast to Kamolnick's claim, the Islamic State's implementation of its theology of the new caliphate is not only a contributing factor to its variance from Al Qaeda, but the primary factor in its perpetration of atrocities against local civilians that Al Qaeda generally avoided. This paper will demonstrate the primacy of caliphate theology in motivating ISIL's activities by contrasting ISIL's theology of the new caliphate with Al Qaeda's, in order to examine ISIL's divergence from traditional Islamist terrorist organizations and thus better understand ISIL as its own entity.

A decided lack of consensus exists in the scholarly community regarding what causes the perpetration of terroristic atrocities, and scholars have identified a vast array of possible sources as the defining cause. For example, Christopher Dean, Associate Fellow of the British Psychological Society, claims that terroristic behavior is a product of misplaced social or individual identity. Terrorist groups and individuals commit violent acts because they identify themselves as superior to their victims, or because of over-identification, which occurs when individuals solely identify with only one, in this case extremist, facet of their lives (283). Badi Hasisi and Ami Pedahzur of Israel's University of Haifa support the relative deprivation theory, which claims that when certain groups feel entitled to a specific level of economic well-being, but do not achieve that level, these groups eventually blame the political establishment for this divergence. These groups then express their dissatisfaction by committing acts of terroristic violence; thus, economic and political factors are the primary cause of terrorism (68).

The diversity of these studies demonstrates that there is not a conclusive answer to the question of what causes terrorist atrocities: the true cause is probably a mix of political, sociological and economic factors. Thus, because of this issue's complexity, to claim that terrorists commit atrocities due to a single cause would be an oversimplification; instead, scholars must examine the extent to which one factor, among many, influences terrorist behavior. Accordingly, one can hold the influence of a single factor

to be of greater magnitude than other factors without denying their potential validity. Although the theories of Dean and Hasisi and Pedahzur undoubtedly contributed to ISIL's behavior, they are not the primary reason for ISIL's atrocities.

Although ISIL differed from Al Qaeda in its implementation of caliphate theology, both groups held the establishment of the caliphate as a primary goal, which fundamentally influenced their operations. The caliph is the direct, authoritative successor of Muhammad, the spiritual and material head of Islam; the caliphate is a physical land under the caliph's rule where Islamic law is upheld and the Islamic world lives together, unified into a single state. In his analysis of the geographical implications of the rhetoric produced by the group's leaders, Joseph Hobbs, professor of geology at the University of Missouri, discovered that Al Qaeda envisioned the caliphate "as both a historic and a future entity, both a geographical one (occupying a vast empire) and political one (ruled by rightly guided caliphs). [Osama] Bin Laden has spoken frequently of [Al Qaeda's] goal of reestablishing the caliphate" (311). In other words, Al Qaeda prioritized the creation of a geographical space ruled by a divinely inspired caliph. ISIL's fixation on this same concept is more commonly known because in June of 2014, the group declared its conquered territory in Iraq and Syria to be the new caliphate, with Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi as the new caliph (Bradley). In ISIL's official magazine, *Dabiq*, the group declared that it had achieved its own version of Al Qaeda's vision, with a geographical territory under a caliph who promised to restore justice to the worldwide Islamic community (6). Accordingly, it is clear that both ISIL and Al Qaeda desired to establish the new caliphate.

Yet, although they both sought the caliphate, ISIL and Al Qaeda had two extremely different methods of implementing it. As Kamolnick examines in depth, this difference in implementation is because ISIL adhered to, and Al Qaeda diverged from, the variant, ultra-conservative strain of Islamic theology known as Wahhabism (10-11). Wahhabism originated in the 18th century, and gained notoriety because of its extreme emphasis on public confession of absolute faith in Allah. Wahhabism grounded this absolute faith in the uncompromising belief that Allah was the only true God; thus, adherents of Wahhabism regarded all those who did not believe in Allah as enemies, guilty of blasphemy. Moreover, these adherents regarded all those who did believe in Allah, yet deviated from Wahhabism's strict definition of monotheism, as internal enemies to the Islamic faith, blasphemers within the midst of the faithful

who the faithful must root out and destroy (6-8). Kamolnick claims that followers of Wahhabism saw such internal enemies as the ultimate danger to Islam:

> For followers of al-Wahhab… the genuine, abiding, and eternally greatest threat is this internal enemy, this nearest enemy. At best, it is the one who claims Islam, but who is either a pretender (the hypocrite), or an innovator (*bida)* (the heretic). At worst, it is a Muslim apostate (*murtadd)* who willfully, with complete knowledge, publicly disavows essential tenets of [monotheism] as conceptualized by al-Wahhab and, if unrepentant, is guilty of Islam's greatest sin: apostasy (*ridda*). (10)

Kamolnick goes on to explain that Al Qaeda's leadership largely rejected Wahhabism because it promoted violence against fellow Muslims, a step Al Qaeda was largely unwilling to take at that point (20-21). Instead, Al Qaeda would focus on attacking Islam's external enemies until it could turn its attention to the internal (27,28). ISIL's early leadership, however, adhered to Wahhabism, which, more than any other factor, distinguished ISIL from Al Qaeda and fostered ISIL's obsession with exterminating those they deemed to be apostates (72). Thus, Al Qaeda and ISIL differed in their implementation of the new caliphate because they decided to attack different targets based on their acceptance or rejection of Wahhabism, Al Qaeda targeting what it perceived as Islam's external enemies, ISIL targeting the internal.

Accordingly, Al Qaeda attacked targets in the West to liberate Muslim lands from foreign, primarily American, occupation (29). It would accomplish this by attacking the United States to the point of provoking, as Kamolnick states, "a state of economic exhaustion and ultimate collapse" (32). Presumably, this collapse would force the United States to end its involvement in the Middle East. Hobbs relates Kamolnick's claim to Al Qaeda's goal of establishing the new caliphate when he states, "In a substantial body of rhetoric… [Al Qaeda] has fashioned an explicit geographical rationale and goal for its campaign: to drive American and allied interests from Muslim lands and to effectively establish a new caliphate in them" (322). Clearly, Al Qaeda was interested in attacking the United States for the purpose of creating the new caliphate in liberated Muslim lands.

In contrast, although ISIL received major publicity for its international crimes, such as the November 2015 Paris attacks, ISIL conducted the majority of its attacks against residents of areas within or local to the boundaries of the group's caliphate. Statistics from the Global Terrorism

Database reveal that between May of 2013 and December of 2017, ISIL, not including the activity of the many affiliated groups around the globe that have pledged allegiance to ISIL's agenda, conducted 2,196 attacks against private citizens in Iraq (Pie chart of ISIL). From September of 2001 to December of 2017, Al Qaeda and all affiliated groups conducted only 242 such attacks in the entire world (Pie Chart of Al-Qaida). Miriam Müller's interpretation of a statement given by ISIL's caliph, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, helps to explain the reason for ISIL's myriad attacks. Upon announcing the establishment of the new caliphate, al-Baghdadi gave this speech: "So, rush Muslims and gather around your [caliph], so that you may return as you once were for ages, kings of the earth, and knights of war. . . O soldiers of the Islamic State, Allah (the Exalted) ordered us with [holy war] and. . . we announced the [Caliphate] in compliance with the order of Allah" (qtd. in Müller). Müller, a professor of Political Theory at Leuphana University, interprets this speech with the statement, "'Fierce battles' and acts of violence in general are presented as the only feasible way to realize the [caliphate] depicted as both Allah's will and promise" (452). In other words, according to Müller, ISIL believed that in order to obtain the caliphate in its most perfect version, violence was necessary. This justification of violence in the name of establishing the caliphate, paired with ISIL's adherence to Wahhabism, explains the Global Terrorism Database's record of ISIL's numerous attacks in Iraq: ISIL sought to establish the caliphate through violence directed primarily against the internal enemies of Islam, or those people it deemed to be heretics who lived in close proximity to the caliphate. The reports of three of ISIL's atrocities, despite revealing only a fraction of ISIL's crimes against Iraqi innocents and civilians, make this clear in two respects.

To briefly summarize the reports before explaining what they reveal, after storming the town of Hit, Iraq, home to a tribe of Sunni Muslims called the Albu Nimr, ISIL murdered 322 captive Albu Nimr men, women and children in a series of executions in late October and early November of 2014 (Sadik and Almasy). In August of 2014, ISIL conquered the town of Sinjar, Iraq, displacing thousands of a minority group called the Yazidis; dozens of elderly and juvenile Yazidis died of exposure as a result, and ISIL killed an additional 500 Yazidi men (Smith-Spark). In May and June of 2017, ISIL massacred at least 231 civilians attempting to flee from violence in the ISIL stronghold of Mosul, Iraq, which it conquered in 2014 (Elwazer and Masters).

Firstly, these reports display that ISIL conquered local territory. This is clearly attributable to the group's theology of the caliphate because ISIL declared its territory to be the new caliphate (Bradley), implying that ISIL conquered territory for that very purpose. Furthermore, conquering the surrounding regions was a logical application of ISIL's goal of establishing the caliphate through targeting the internal enemy, because, as previously mentioned, ISIL could better apply the principles of Wahhabism by rooting out local heretics and dissidents if it assumed a governmental status over them. Moreover, the reports clearly illustrate that ISIL's conquest of Iraqi villages is what caused ISIL to commit atrocities against the inhabitants; note that in each report, ISIL committed mass murder against civilians residing in the group's own territory. Such mass murder was only made possible because ISIL took possession of the town, displaced some residents and killed others on a whim, such as the Albu Nimr families. Obviously such behaviour is historically typical of conquerors, yet ISIL would not have been motivated to conquer if not for the group's caliphate theology. A useful contrast to ISIL in this respect is Al Qaeda: as previously discussed, Al Qaeda, although it once held the title as the world's premier Islamist terror organization, was disinterested in conquering local villages to establish the caliphate because it was not primarily concerned with Islam's internal enemies (Kamolnick 27,28). This illustrates that conquering local villages is not an activity inherent to Islamist terrorism, and, if it is occurring, must be caused by a distinctive quality in the perpetrators. The distinctive quality in ISIL is its application of Wahhabism to its establishment of the caliphate. Thus, conquering local territory in the name of the caliphate precipitated ISIL to wage war against its perceived enemies, the local Iraqi population.

Secondly, ISIL's theology of the new caliphate exacerbated the violent behavior typical of conquerors by necessitating the use of violence in the caliphate's establishment, as previously demonstrated by Müller's analysis of al-Baghdadi's speech. This, too, can be credited directly to ISIL's specific theology of the caliphate, because many caliphate theologies are fundamentally peaceful in nature, such as the one suggested by Vernie Liebl, Middle East Desk Officer in the United States Marine Corps' Center for Advanced Operational Culture Learning, in *Middle Eastern Studies* (387-388). Liebl proposes that a new caliph could be selected from the lineage of historical caliphs, rather than self-appointed through conquest, stating, "there exists now in the Muslim world legitimate caliphal bloodlines; organizational and economic foundations; and potentially legal authority to restore the caliphate today. All that is needed is the will" (388). Accordingly, ISIL's specific approach to the

caliphate, rather than caliphate theology in general, necessitated and encouraged violence against the Iraqi population. In these two respects, the reports demonstrate that ISIL's theology of the caliphate was the primary motivation for the group's atrocities against Iraqi citizens.

Although up to this point his analysis was critical to properly exposit ISIL's theology of the caliphate, at this point Kamolnick raises a deeply flawed objection to the assertion that ISIL's caliphate theology was primarily responsible for the group's atrocities. He claims that crediting caliphate theology as the motivating factor behind ISIL's perpetration, and Al Qaeda's avoidance, of atrocities against Iraqis is inaccurate, because the theological and ideological differences between the groups are not limited to varying implementations of the caliphate, but encompass the majority of the concepts of Wahhabism. These concepts include the absolute condemnation of accepting help, even basic necessities, from the occupiers of Muslim lands, the total denunciation of Christians and Jews despite their shared religious history with Muslims, and the severe suppression of women (91-93). In other words, the acceptance of Wahhabism, not caliphate theology, is the driving force behind ISIL's variance from Al Qaeda. Kamolnick grants that a key doctrine of ISIL's brand of Wahhabism is a focus on the caliphate, yet he depicts this not as the primary, but one of the many, driving forces of the group's perpetration of these sorts of atrocities (53-54). So, is Kamolnick correct in stating that ISIL's perpetration of atrocities was due to the entirety of the group's religious paradigm, rather than just the theology of the caliphate?

To properly answer this question, Kamolnick must be acknowledged for the insightfulness of his claims. He is correct in asserting that the fundamental differences distinguishing ISIL and Al Qaeda are far more complex and extensive than just the groups' caliphate theology. Yet Kamolnick's central claim that ISIL's obsession with Wahhabism motivated the group's atrocities against innocents in Iraq misses the point. ISIL's brand of terroristic atrocities against local citizens might appear to be due to the doctrines of Wahhabism, but in practical terms, these atrocities were entirely enabled and motivated by ISIL's theology of, and identity as, the caliphate. Müller, examining ISIL's function as both a regime and a terrorist group, concurs with this assessment by referencing Haroro Ingram, a senior research fellow with George Washington University's Program on Extremism, stating,

"The proclamation of the caliphate and the creation of organizational structures in the areas controlled by [ISIL] are the key elements of a narrative (Ingram, 2016) that legitimates its violent actions against its declared enemies and direct adversaries outside these areas, but also internally against its own 'populace'" (445).

In other words, ISIL used its governmental status to justify attacking the people living within the group's conquered territory in the name of the new caliphate. Müller is detailing the momentous importance of the caliphate to ISIL's perpetration of atrocities against local civilians, something Kamolnick critically underestimates; ISIL's atrocities were enabled by, and committed in the name of, the caliphate. Once again, Kamolnick is partially correct: Wahhabism and religious fundamentalism did significantly influence ISIL's implementation of the caliphate. Once ISIL established a regime, the group forcibly imposed Wahhabism upon the inhabitants of its caliphate, exhibited through violent acts against people ISIL deemed to be heretics. Yet, despite Wahhabism's indisputable influence on ISIL, the caliphate encompassed Wahhabism, allowing it to be expressed; Wahhabism did not encompass the caliphate. Thus, Kamolnick is incorrect.

To conclude, the primary reason that ISIL was motivated and enabled to perpetrate atrocities against Iraqi citizens, something Al Qaeda predominantly avoided, was ISIL's incorporation and implementation of the fundamentalist doctrine of Wahhabism in its theology of the new caliphate. If the world's governments want to end the suffering of innocents at the hands of terrorist organizations, they must understand the motivation and operation of such organizations in order to prevent and thwart the perpetration of future atrocities. Understanding how group's similar to ISIL justify atrocities with the theology of the new caliphate is a critical component in this effort. Multiple Islamist terrorist groups around the globe have pledged allegiance to the Islamic State, such as The Islamic State in West Africa, formerly known as Boko Haram, and the Ansar al-Sharia; as affiliates of ISIL, they share ISIL's extreme ideologies of implementing the caliphate. Accordingly, researchers should continue to investigate how theology and ideology affect the behavior of terrorists, particularly regarding the Islamic State; Müller and Kamolnick have initiated this conversation, and it should be pursued for the sake of the victims of ISIL's atrocities, until theologies and ideologies that inspire atrocities can be identified and countered before violence occurs.

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Is Deer Hunting Effective at Reducing Deer-Related Car Accidents?

Michael J. Vieceli

With over a million deer-related car accidents in the U.S. each year, it is disputed whether deer hunting effectively reduces deer-related car accidents or exacerbates them. The disparity between the evidence presented from both sides of the issue can be better understood by using county data instead of statewide data to reveal the possibility that the areas with the most deer-related car accidents do not experience much hunting. The results of this research support the argument that deer hunting is effective at reducing deer-related car accidents and may be of interest to communities that experience many deer-related car accidents.

Deer-related car accidents are a major problem in the United States. According to State Farm, between July 1, 2011 and June 30, 2012 there were an estimated 1.23 million deer-related car accidents, costing an estimated $4 billion in damage. The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) also estimates that these accidents are responsible for about 200 deaths annually nationwide (Deer and Car Collisions Cause 200 Deaths). As people develop areas further into deer country, it is inevitable that the number of deer incidents will increase. Also, with a smaller predator population than in previous times, deer have undergone overpopulation. Because of these factors, it is undisputed that people need to be active in reducing the deer population and be proactive about avoiding car accidents with deer.

One such method of reducing the deer population, and hence the number of deer-related car accidents, is to harvest a portion of the deer population through hunting. Beloved by many sportspeople, deer hunting is a favorite pastime around the country, and hunting as a social and environmental responsibility adds another level of satisfaction. There is a lot of evidence to suggest that hunting is indeed an effective means of achieving this. However, there are also many people who oppose hunting for a variety of reasons. Whether they believe that hunting is ethical or not, there is reasonable evidence that would support their claim that hunting is not effective at reducing deer-related car accidents.

Deer hunting has been shown to be effective at reducing deer-related damage to human property in local communities. During a seven-year period, Kilpatrick and LaBonte conducted a study in the Mumford Cove community in Groton, Connecticut, where a local deer hunt with special regulations was conducted in order to reduce deer-related property damage, the spread of Lyme's disease, and the possibility of vehicular collisions with deer. The residents were surveyed before and after the hunt, which revealed that after the hunt deer sightings had significantly decreased, the opinion on the deer population generally shifted from being too high to fine as it is, and more people supported the hunt afterwards than before due to its efficacy (Kilpatrick and LaBonte).

Deer hunting has also been shown to reduce the movement of deer. On an 1861-ha property in Oklahoma, a controlled hunt was conducted by Little et al. with varying degrees of hunting intensity. Deer movement and relative displacement were high at the beginning of the study but decreased over time for every category. This is due to the deer becoming aware of the risk of hunters, with smaller movement and displacement decreasing their chance of an encounter. The most striking result from this study is that even though it was also breeding season, during which deer move around more, the risk of being hunted outweighed their desire to breed. This would suggest that hunting reduces the movement of deer, which decreases the likelihood of deer running across roads (Little et al.).

While there is ample evidence to suggest that hunting is an effective means of reducing deer-related car accidents, there is also strong evidence that would suggest the contrary. According to Erie Insurance, years of deer-related car accident data show that the two days of the year with the greatest amount of deer-related car accidents are opening day of deer hunting season and the first Saturday of deer hunting season. Missouri Insurance Information Service claims that hunting is a major factor in the amount of

deer-car related accidents (Deer-Car Collisions Increase During Hunting Season). According to the University of Illinois Extension Office, most deer-car related accidents occur from October to December, which is during deer hunting season (Living with Wildlife in Illinois). This pattern holds true for many other states as well. According to this evidence, deer hunting does not reduce deer-related car accidents, but rather increases them. This could be because the increased number of hunters in the woods and gunshots spook the deer out of the woods and into traffic.

On the one hand, various studies have shown that deer hunting is effective at reducing deer-related car accidents. On the other hand, statistics from insurance companies and states show that most deer-related car accidents occur during hunting season, which would suggest that hunting is counterproductive to reducing deer-related car accidents. Both sides present compelling arguments, and neither is clearly superior to the other. Also, neither directly refute the other's claims, but only uses its own claims to take a stance on hunting as a means to reduce deer-related car accidents. This raises the question, "Why is there such a disparity between the different evidence?"

I do not think that the different evidence necessarily must be contradictory. For example, both the claims made by Erie Insurance and Little et al. acknowledge that deer activity is high at the beginning of hunting season. However, Little et al. suggests that hunting reduces deer movement as the season progresses while Erie Insurance claims the number of deer-related car accidents during this time is high throughout the whole hunting season. There are many different factors that play into deer-related car accidents that can help explain this disparity. The most probable reason for this disparity is that the majority of deer involved in car accidents do not face much hunting intensity, allowing breeding season to be the deer's dominating motive, causing them to move more and get in more accidents. To support this claim, I will perform statistical tests of correlation to show that most deer-related car accidents happen in areas with high human populations, and then I will show that it is not likely that these areas experience much deer hunting.

It is necessary to know where the deer-related car accidents are happening. Looking at statewide data alone does not reveal much about the conditions of the locations of the accidents, such as how much traffic goes through the areas, if the locations are wooded or developed, or if there is a lot of deer hunting near the areas. By looking at smaller areas with known geographical characteristics, the factors that cause deer-related car accidents can more easily be determined. In addition, the smaller areas can be compared with one another in order to show correlations between different factors.

Two factors that might be correlated are an area's human population and the number of deer-related car accidents. Statistical data of deer-related car accidents by county were taken from the Minnesota Department of Public Safety from 2017 (2017 Deer/Motor) and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation from 2013 (2013 Wisconsin Traffic) and were compared to county census data from their respective states (Population Data), (List of Counties). Due to an order of magnitude difference in the total number of deer-related car accidents in Minnesota vs. Wisconsin, the two state's data were not combined. Since the number of fatalities and injuries were comparable between the two states, it is likely that they define deer-related car accidents differently. Also, it is assumed that within each state that correlation between deer-related car accidents and population is unaffected by the way deer-related car accidents are defined. That is to say, it is not the exact relationship between the two factors being considered, but rather the strength of the correlation between the two factors.

Deer-related car accidents by county was evaluated as a function of county population, and correlation coefficients r and coefficients of determination r^2 were determined. Fig. 1 and Fig. 2, shown below, display the data for each state with a least-squares regression method used to fit linear models to the data.
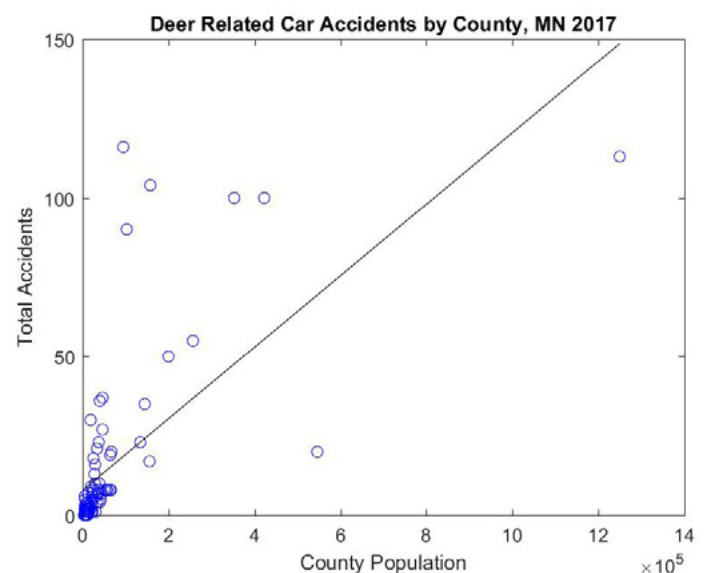

Fig 1.
Deer-related card accidents by county as a function of county population for Minnesota in 2017. A least-squares regression method was used to fit the linear model to the data.
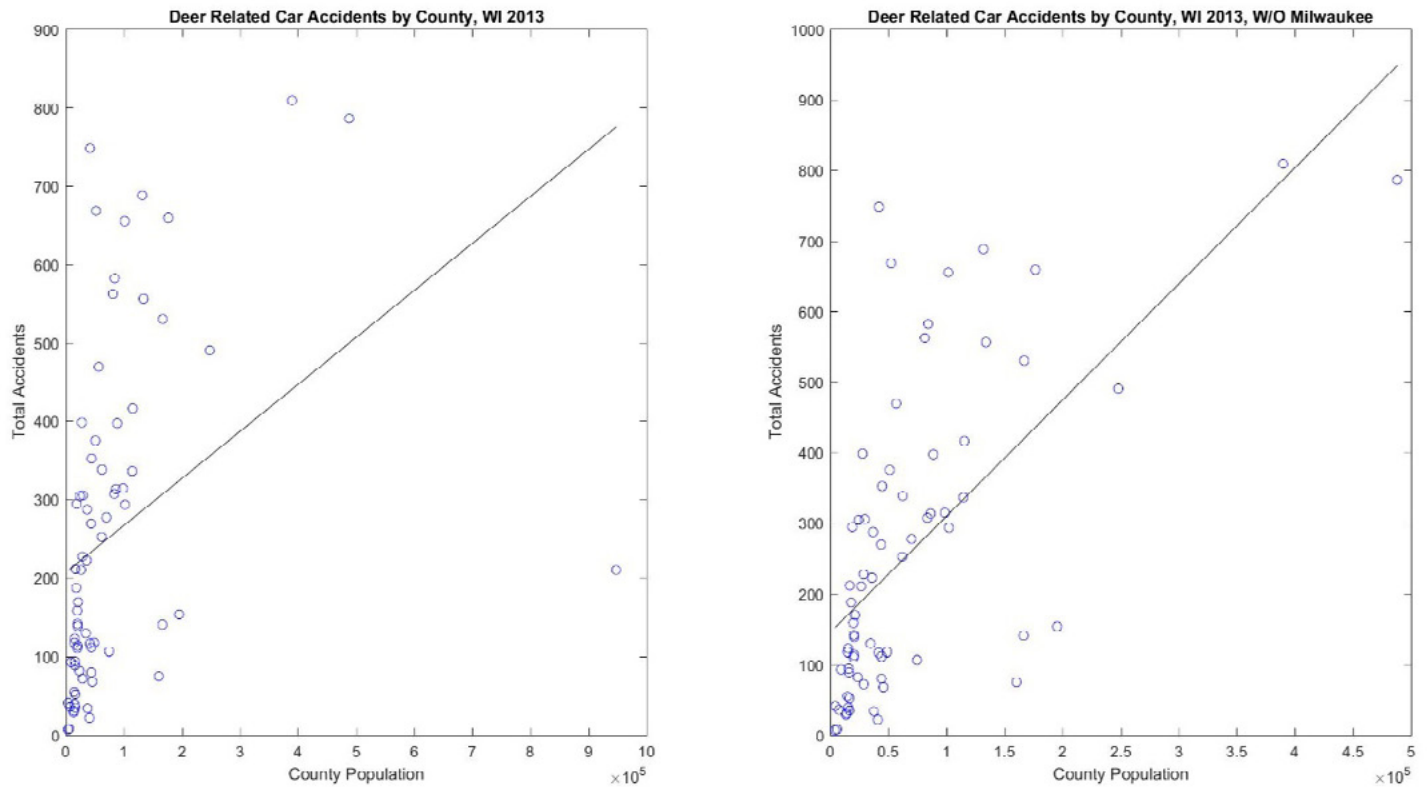
Fig. 2
Deer-related card accidents by county as a function of county population for Wisconsin in 2013. A least-squares regression method was used to fit the linear model to the data. Milwaukee County is an evident outlier (bottom right point on the left plot) and is justifiably omitted because it is a highly populated, small, industrial county. The figure on the right does not include Milwaukee County.

All the plots show a positive correlation. For Minnesota, the correlation coefficient r was determined to be and the coefficient of determination r^2 was determined to be . Using a significance threshold of $\alpha=0.05$, the p-value is $P < 0.001$, which shows that there is a statistically significant correlation between the number of deer-related car accidents by county and county populations. For Wisconsin, $r=0.374$ and $r^2=0.140$, with $P=0.0012$. This is statistically significant; however, the coefficient of determination shows that the correlation is not very strong. However, Milwaukee County is an evident outlier in the data, having fewer deer-related car accidents than would be predicted by the model. Milwaukee County is not very large, only occupying 241 square miles of land, and is a very industrial area, which may be significant reasons for why it is an outlier. Omitting Milwaukee County results in $r=0.635$ and $r^2=0.404$, with $P < 0.001$. This is statistically significant, and the correlation has greater strength, comparable to the results from the Minnesota data.

These results have big implications. The statistically significant correlations reveal that human population plays a large factor in how many deer-related car accidents there are. Intuitively, the more people who drive in a given area, the higher the probability that a deer gets hit by a car. Also, drivers often swerve to try to avoid deer. The more drivers there are on the road, the higher the probability that a swerving driver will collide with another vehicle. These ultimately show that it is not appropriate to make any conclusions concerning deer-related car accidents using state data as a whole. It is important to remember though that there must also be sizeable deer populations too, which for many places in Minnesota and Wisconsin, there are.

Not only do the correlations show that human population size is a significant factor in the amount of deer-related car accidents, it also reveals the type of area most deer-related car accidents occur. Since the majority of deer-related car accidents happen in counties with larger populations, it also means that they occur in more developed areas. However, deer still need natural, wooded areas, so they are more likely to be in the suburbs and outwards from the urban areas they surround. This is confirmed by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, which says that most deer-related car accidents occur on rural roads in exurban areas (2016 Wisconsin Safety), which are areas just beyond the suburbs that have a large population that is generally wealthy.

The exurbs are an environment in which there is a large human population and more habitable areas for deer. There may well be some deer hunting grounds near these areas. However, it is likely that in such highly populated areas that hunting may not be allowed or at least be very regulated. If there is hunting, the areas may not be very large. For example, deer permit zone 601 in Minnesota, which includes many of the counties with the most deer-related car accidents in the state, contains 1,625 square miles of land but only 23 square miles of land for public hunting, which does not include private land and the occasional special hunt (Deer Permit Area 601 Hunting Information), such as the one described in the study by Kilpatrick and LaBonte.

If most deer populations behave like the ones in the controlled hunt conducted by Little et al., then hunting may reduce the movements of deer, having a stronger influence on the deer than breeding season. However, in the absence of hunting, breeding season will be the strongest driving factor and cause them to move more, resulting in more deer-related car accidents. If this is the case, then the disparity between hunting being effective at reducing deer-related car accidents and most deer-related car accidents occurring during hunting season might be explained by most deer-related car accidents happening in areas that do not have much hunting.

There are a few things to consider with this hypothesis. In citing deer permit zone 601 as an example, it should also be known that 3,195 deer were harvested there during the 2017 deer hunting season (Deer Permit Area 601 Hunting Information). However, it is difficult to know what percentage of the local deer population this is, because the deer population is often quantified by how many deer were harvested. Deer population density also plays a big factor. Although 3,195 deer were harvested, these are from a relatively small amount of land within the entire deer permit zone (1.4%, not including private land or areas with special hunts). It is likely that the majority of the exurban areas in this zone are not immediately near hunting areas. These areas probably do benefit from population reduction of migrating deer, but not necessarily the movement reduction that may be caused by hunting pressure.

In order to resolve this ambiguity of whether most of the deer in car accidents encounter hunting pressure, a future study could record how far away the accidents are from the nearest deer hunting lands in each county and the distance distribution could be analyzed. A distribution with most accidents happening near deer hunting lands and decreasing accidents with distance would contradict my claim, while other distributions would not. This study could also address the claim that most deer-related car accidents occur on the opening day of deer hunting season and the first Saturday of deer hunting season. While this is not necessarily contradictory with the research from Little et al., who found that deer movement was higher at the beginning of the hunt, knowing the proximity of these deer-related car accidents to deer hunting lands would provide much insight.

The results of this research should be of interest to towns with high deer populations, especially exurban communities, having high human populations, high deer populations, and plenty of habitable areas for deer. Special hunts, such as the one described in the study by Kilpatrick and LaBonte, could be conducted to reduce the number of deer-related accidents in their communities. With highly trained hunters and extra regulations, a local hunt could be a safe method of making the roads safer for drivers. This research should also be of interest to the state government and insurance companies, who want to make sure their citizens and clients, respectively, are safe.

In conclusion, the disparity between evidence that deer hunting is effective at reducing deer-related car accidents and most deer-related car accidents can be explained by the fact that most deer-related car accidents happen in areas without much hunting intensity. State data from Minnesota and Wisconsin show that there are statistically significant correlations between county population and the number of deer-related car accidents in each county for each state. This suggests that human population plays a big factor in the number of deer-related car accidents. It also shows that most deer-related car accidents happen in more populated areas, with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation saying that most of these accidents happen in the exurbs. Because of the high human population in the exurbs that make hunting these areas unlikely and the small area of hunting lands in the most populated counties, it is unlikely that the deer in these areas experience much hunting intensity. This allows the breeding season the be the dominant factor that influences the movement of deer, which motivates them to move more, increasing their chances of getting in a car accident. Exurban communities could consider special hunts to reduce local deer-related car accidents.

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Jameson Critical Essay Contest Winners

The Jameson Critical Essay Contest awards prizes to outstanding undergraduate academic essays that are written from a distinctly Christian perspective. Submissions are accepted from students in all academic divisions. Faculty judges selected the following essays for Jameson Critical Essay awards in 2018-2019.

Denying and Becoming: A Defense of Kierkegaard's *Works of Love*

Laura Howard

A perennial concern with Kierkegaard's Works of Love *is that its condemnation of preferential love is incoherent, inhibits the proper formation of self and of special relationships (i.e. friendships, romantic relationships), or both. In this essay, I argue that (1) Kierkegaard coherently rejects selfishness while allowing for and encouraging special relationships to exist, and (2) understanding love as a double movement (like that of faith described in Kierkegaard's* Fear and Trembling*) is essential to understanding this basic claim. This essay thus draws upon and goes beyond previous analyses of Kierkegaard's work, demonstrating how the double movement can be used to understand neighbor love as all at once selfless, involving the kind of preference necessary for special relationships, and positively forming the one who loves her neighbor.*

Søren Kierkegaard's *Works of Love*[1] has long been accused of recommending a conception of love unlivable in some way—by ignoring crucial bodily realities, presenting an impossible ideal, failing to be coherent, or some combination of the three.[2] One perennial concern is that his account of love[3] demeans meaningful human relationships. For Kierkegaard, Christian love must be conceived of as a duty, rid of any preference for one person or another, and condemnatory of erotic love and friendship (*WL*, 55, 45). Thus, in his recommendation to "let love for the neighbor be the sanctifying element" in one's romantic relationships and friendships, he appears to contradict himself (*WL*, 62).

The last half-century of scholarship has witnessed renewed interest in *WL* and these problems associated with it.[4] Much recent conversation engages with the landmark work of M. Jamie Ferreira, whose commentary seeks to address whether Kierkegaard's understanding of becoming a self in *WL* "only allows concern for others or whether it requires it" (2001, 7). In defense of the latter interpretation, Ferreira emphasizes Kierkegaard's identification of the human need to love and of Christianity's teaching about proper self-love as necessary for neighbor love.

With Kierkegaard, she identifies one form of selfish self-love as passionate preference, a "reactive" attitude which disposes of the beloved when one does not get what one wants (Ferreira 2001, 37). This preference is self-oriented, "secretly self-love" (*WL*, 19). Conversely, to love others properly is to "apprehend people as equals" and relate to them through self-denial (Ferreira 2001, 45). For Ferreira, this requires allowing the nature of one's relationship to be determined by others' needs rather than by one's self-oriented desires. This "seek[ing] nothing at all for oneself" strips relationships of selfishness (Ferreira 2001, 153). While Kierkegaard's ethic requires "at least a generalized benevolence" toward all, that benevolence will "in some cases… be enriched by warmth, emotion, and intimacy" (Ferreira 2001, 160). These phenomena are results of preference, which the command to love allows unless it "undermine[s] the impartiality that consists in not excluding anyone from our responsibility to [love]" (Ferreira 2001, 260). Thus "preferential love can be sharply contrasted *conceptually* with nonpreferential love," but "they can coincide materially" (Ferreira 2001, 45). "The goal is," at least in some

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[1] Hereafter referred to as *WL*.

[2] See, most notably, Theodor W. Adorno, "On Kierkegaard's Doctrine of Love," in *Studies in Philosophy and Social Science*, vol. 8, 1939, 413–29; Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics IV/2*, ed. G. W. Bromily and T. F. Torrance (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1958); Knud Ejler Løgstrup, *The Ethical Demand*, eds. Hans Fink and Alasdair MacIntyre (Notre Dame, Ind.: Notre Dame University Press, 1997). More recently, see Peter George, "Something Anti-Social about *Works of Love*," in *Kierkegaard: The Self in Society*, eds. George Pattison and Steven Shakespeare (London: Macmillan, 1998), 70–81.

[3] That is, for Kierkegaard, real love, neighbor love, *Kjerlighed*. See *WL*, 25.

[4] For just a few examples consider: David J. Gouwens, "Chapter 6," in *Kierkegaard as Religious Thinker* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966); Sylvia I. Walsh, "Forming the Heart: The Role of Love in Kierkegaard's Thought," in *The Grammar of the Heart*, ed. Richard H. Bell (New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1988), 234–56; Gene Fendt, *Works of Love? Reflections on Works of Love* (Potomac, MD: Scripta Humanistica, 1989); Bruce H. Kirmmse, "Chapter 19," in *Kierkegaard in Golden Age Denmark* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990); Paul Müller, *Kierkegaard's "Works of Love": Christian Ethics and the Maieutic Ideal*, ed. and trans. C. Stephen Evans and Jan Evans (Copenhagen: Reitzel, 1993); Sylvia Walsh Perkins, "Kierkegaard's

Philosophy of Love," in *The Nature and Pursuit of Love*, ed. David Goicoechea (New York, NY: Prometheus Books, 1995), 167–79; Robert L. Perkins, ed., *International Kierkegaard Commentary 16: Works of Love* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1999).

cases, "to preserve love for the neighbor in erotic love and friendship" (Ferreira 2001, 45).

In a pair of articles in 2008 and 2010, Sharon Krishek challenges the adequacy of Ferreira's response to the problem of preferentiality in WL. Though Krishek believes Ferreira interprets Kierkegaard correctly, she also thinks the idea of selfless preferential love is incoherent. To her, Kierkegaard's condemnation of selfishness includes condemnation of self-focused concerns essential to any kind of preference and to any kind of special relationship (i.e. friendship, romantic relationship); preferential love and neighbor love cannot "coincide materially" as Ferreira suggests (Ferreira 2001, 45). If neighbor love excludes these important self-focused concerns wrapped up in preference, neighbor love cannot be recommended as the only proper and valuable form of love. For Krishek, then, neighbor love must be understood as only one work of love, that of self-denial, alongside preferential love, which is self-affirmation. Neighbor love is not love itself, as Kierkegaard and Ferreira see it, and self-focused concerns should be given up only to be followed by a purified return to them. Krishek here proposes reading *Fear and Trembling*[5] to find a Kierkegaardian way around the insufficiencies of WL, appropriating the double movement of faith to describe how a resignation and return to self could be possible.[6]

Going beyond both analyses, in this essay I argue that Kierkegaard coherently rejects selfishness while allowing for and encouraging special relationships to exist. Further, understanding love as a double movement is essential to understanding this basic claim. I begin by presenting Krishek's position more fully. I validate her concerns with Ferreira's treatment before highlighting where I believe Krishek's thinking goes wrong, considering also instances

in which Ferreira's insights lend resources for correcting Krishek's mistakes. I conclude by demonstrating how the double movement of faith in *FT* can be used to understand neighbor love as all at once selfless, involving preference, and positively forming the one who loves her neighbor.

1: Krishek's Kierkegaardian Amendment to *Works of Love*

In her 2008, 2010, and 2014 articles, Krishek indicates that she agrees with Ferreira's interpretation of Kierkegaard's account of neighbor love but, unlike Ferreira, does not champion that account without amendment. She takes this position because she understands the demands of neighbor love and preferential love as contradictory and preferential love as essential to having meaningful relationships, such as friendships or romantic relationships.

Krishek reminds her reader that Kierkegaard establishes Christian love as "the duty to love the neighbor, *any neighbor*, as one loves oneself" and preferential love as "the love directed at *one special neighbor* who, by virtue of preference, has a different status than all the other neighbors" (2008, 596, emphasis Krishek's). Implicit in these definitions, Krishek perceives, is that neighbor love is essentially equalizing, demanding equal and identical responses to all people. Preferential love, on the other hand, is essentially exclusive. Defined in this way, neighbor love and preferential love are necessarily at odds with one another. This tension is only amplified when one notices Kierkegaard's insistence that neighbor love "is self-denial's love, … [which] drives out all preferential love just as it drives out all self-love" (*WL*, 55). Ferreira is wrong in her estimation that Kierkegaard's warnings against preferential love are merely "warnings against exclusion" (2008, 603)— preferential love and neighbor love are incompatible.

Krishek understands Kierkegaard's delineation between preferential love and neighbor love as coming from his wish to leave no room for selfishness in his conception of Christian love. She infers "that Kierkegaard considers ['feelings, drives, inclinations, and passions … the powers of immediacy' (*WL*, 25)] to constitute the selfishness that distinguishes between preferential love and neighborly love because they are concerned exclusively with the self and its gratification" (Krishek 2008, 597). Krishek identifies preference as "the *essential element* … in special loves" (2008, 604, emphasis Krishek's). If Kierkegaard took his own claims seriously, preferential love could under no circumstances be commended. And yet, Krishek observes, "it is clear that Kierkegaard wishes to affirm the special relationships we all have in our lives"

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[5] Hereafter referred to as *FT*.

[6] For a consideration of Krishek's proposal, see John Lippitt, "Kierkegaard and the Problem of Special Relationships: Ferreira, Krishek and the 'God Filter,'" *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 72, no. 3 (December 2012): 177–97. Lippitt there attempts to demonstrate that Krishek's concerns are invalid. In his view, it is possible for preferential love to be purified, to become neighbor love, by passing through what he calls the 'God filter,' a theoretical strainer ridding preferential love of any self-serving aspects. Lippitt's solution fails to address Krishek's identification of neighbor love and preferential love as utterly different and incompatible. Since I seek to engage this problem of apparent incompatibility head-on, and Lippitt avoids addressing the problem, seeing it as a non-issue, I do not to consider Lippitt's work in the body of this essay. For Krishek's response to Lippitt, in which she maintains that the problems she identifies in *WL* are present and that her solution incorporating ideas from *FT* sufficiently addresses them, see Sharon Krishek, "In Defence of a Faith-like Model of Love: A Reply to John Lippitt's 'Kierkegaard and the Problem of Special Relationships: Ferreira, Krishek, and the "God Filter,"'" *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 75, no. 2 (April 2014): 155–66.

(2008, 600). Ferreira and Kierkegaard have both, then, failed to see the irreconcilable tension in simultaneously affirming a commitment to neighbor love as the only love and to special relationships as commendable in certain circumstances.

Not only is Kierkegaard's view of neighbor love incoherent, its radical call for self-denial is detrimental to the person practicing it. Ferreira and Krishek read Kierkegaard as identifying two possible kinds of self-love: proper self-love and selfish self-love. But Krishek suggests that there are three kinds of self-love. First, there is self-love (a), which is "indeed 'at odds with the good of the other': using the other as a means for one's selfish satisfaction or acting toward achieving one's own good regardless of the effect it has on the other" (Krishek 2008, 598). Second, there is self-love (b), which she terms "proper unqualified self-love" and describes as a limited kind of self-love "understood in terms of respect and wishing one's well-being" in a disembodied sense of the word (Krishek 2008, 599). Third, there is self-love (c), "proper unqualified self-love," which entails "fulfilling one's own 'self-focused' concerns as long as they are *not* 'at odds with the good of the other'" (Krishek 2008, 599).

Krishek claims self-love (b), which she takes to be the love referred to by the commandment and recommended by Kierkegaard, does not permit preference and therefore "allows only for a partial self" (2008, 601). Consequently, Kierkegaard's praise of self-love (b) is an unfortunate result of his "conflat[ion] [of] preferentiality with selfishness" (Krishek 2010, 17). Krishek advocates for going beyond self-love (b) to self-love (c) since the latter involves the unqualified self-affirmation intrinsic to special relationships while still avoiding selfishness as she understands it.[7]

For Krishek, special relationships are inherently preferential, by their very definition attentive to those wants overlooked by self-love (b). "The demand to love in the *same* [neighborly] way … leave[s] no real room for the (existing) differences between preferential and non-preferential loves" (Krishek 2008, 606, emphasis Krishek's). This does not "do justice to our experience," Krishek thinks, that special relationships involve a qualitatively different love than do non-preferential relationships (2014, 160).

Krishek maintains that special relationships obviously differ from non-preferential relationships in the way in which we treat people in those respective relationships. Ferreira maintains that this difference does not imply

preference, but Krishek contends preference cannot be separated from action in the way Ferreira suggests (Krishek 2008, 607). "*Choice is essentially connected with preference*;" to choose is to prefer (Krishek 2008, 609). Additionally, special relationships are not, as Ferreira insists, formed "in accordance with the needs of the neighbour who is loved" as a mere outpouring of one's recognition that the other person is one's neighbor (Krishek 2010, 15). Special relationships are instead a reflection of one's own needs as well as one's own "desires, inclinations, and preferences" (Krishek 2010, 16).

For these reasons, Krishek argues that neighbor love cannot "be the ground for special loves" (2008, 612). That Ferreira neglects special loves in her unreserved affirmation of Kierkegaard's account of love leads to her failure to "address adequately the problem of preferential love" (Krishek 2010, 16). In response to this failure, Krishek proposes an amendment to Kierkegaard's account of love inspired by Kierkegaard's *Fear and Trembling*.

To do this, Krishek reminds her reader of Kierkegaard's premise that something is a work of love when it is done in an attitude of self-denial. Krishek, in contrast, proposes that something is a work of love when it is done in the same double movement in which faith is done (2010, 7). In conjunction with this idea, Krishek recommends understanding that love is not itself neighborly or based on self-denial. Rather, love (*Kjerlighed*) can be understood in terms of caring, and caring, so long as it takes the form of the double movement of faith, can be manifest through the work of neighbor love, the work of preferential love, or some other kind of work of love.[8] She appeals to experience: Can your marriage or best friendship really be explained solely by your recognition of your spouse or best friend as neighbor? Is it not that something other than the affirmation of the other's intrinsic worth is at play in these circumstances?

For these reasons, Krishek seeks to amend Kierkegaard's account of love by turning to his earlier work *Fear and Trembling*. Quoting Robert M. Adams, she notes that "[t]he portrait of the knight of faith … can be seen as one of a number of attempts Kierkegaard made to understand, or imagine, how devotion to God could coexist with

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[7] Krishek makes it clear that her definition of selfishness differs from that of Kierkegaard, but she never explicitly defines the term for herself. One can certainly infer, however, that her definition would leave room for concerns that are both self-focused and truly loving in regard to one's neighbor.

[8] Krishek here reminds the reader that Kierkegaard's stated purpose in *WL* is to consider works of love rather than love itself: "They are Christian deliberations, therefore not about love but about works of love" (*WL*, 3). She argues that if the focus of the book is neighbor love, the reader should consider that neighbor love is a work of love rather than love itself. She leaves open the possibility for works of love beside those of neighbor love and preferential love but stops short of suggesting what any of these additional kinds of works might be.

pursuit and enjoyment of finite goods" (Krishek 2010, 13-14). *FT* is the perfect text to which to turn because it includes a model for how two apparently contradictory attitudes, namely resignation and faith, can coexist.

Krishek points out the similarities between self-denial and the first movement of faith, namely, an attitude of resignation. In her view, the knight of resignation "submits himself, and his worldly desire, to the will of God" (Krishek 2010, 9). The knight "*keeps desiring* the object of his renunciation," all the while "wholeheartedly accepting the impossibility of fulfilling [his desire]" (Krishek 2010, 9, emphasis Krishek's). In both self-denial and resignation, a person surrenders something of great import. In the case of Abraham, this is his son; in the case of someone attempting to love her neighbor, this might be allowing the other's needs to trump one's own desires in the way one acts. Krishek likens an affirmation of oneself to the second movement of faith. Just as Abraham's son is returned to him, so the person who loves another person is able to return to herself in a purified manner. The person who performs the second movement "receives back the same thing he is renouncing, without in any way cancelling his renunciation" (Krishek 2010, 12, emphasis Krishek's). Thus "unqualified, proper self-love (self-love [c]) as well as the preferential loves based on it are the clearest manifestation of the second movement, of an unrestricted affirmation of finitude" (Krishek 2008, 614).

Because, in Krishek's model, neighbor love and preferential love are two different kinds or works of love, and the double movement is the manner in which love must be performed in order to perform true love, a work of neighbor love must be performed in the double movement, as must a work of preferential love. By Krishek's lights, a work of neighbor love involves movements of both self-denial and self-affirmation. So, too, with a work of preferential love. The second movement in a work of neighbor love would be "expressed precisely in the tender compassion implied by this attitude, in *my emotional involvement* in this situation (of encountering the neighbor)" (Krishek 2008, 615, emphasis Krishek's). The second movement in a work of preferential love would be "expressed in a feeling that in addition to the neighbor-love element in it includes sensitivity to the special preferences and inclinations of the self who loves" (Krishek 2008, 616). In this understanding, neighbor love must be "directed at everybody equally," so that one recognizes every other person as her neighbor, and yet there is room for the work of preferential love to be done in addition to the work of neighbor love in relationships in which one has preferences (Krishek 2008, 616). In

fact, neighbor love "is like the ground floor of any love …. However, when it comes to preferential relationships, other layers of emotional and practical dispositions—unique to such relationships—are added to the basic layer of neighbourly love, giving it its distinct flavor" (Krishek 2014, 164).

In this way, Krishek believes self-denial's love is dethroned from its inappropriate place as the highest form of love while still maintaining, with Ferreira and Kierkegaard, that self-denial is "crucial to the way one should love" whether that way of loving be neighborly or preferential (Krishek 2014, 161). Where Kierkegaard in *WL* "gives priority to the movement of resignation, and allows for only a partial, hesitant return to finitude" (2008, 614), Krishek provides for the possibility of the affirmation of self and of preferences even as self-denial is continually performed: "One renounces oneself (one's will, one's desires, one's worldly attachments and preferences) and at the same time affirms oneself: namely, gains a new—humble and trusting—hold on oneself" (2010, 18). And while in Kierkegaard's account one must worry "how the same love can be both equal (when it is directed at every neighbour) and preferential (when it is directed at an intimate, closer neighbour)," in Krishek's account, "we do not have to face such a problem: after all, we are not talking about the *same* love" but "two *different* expressions of (the primordial power of) love; two *works* of love" (2010, 20, emphasis Krishek's). Neighbor love understood as a work of love to be performed in a double movement of self-denial and affirmation does not pose the same "threat to the distinctiveness and value of preferential love" that *WL*'s picture of neighbor love does (Krishek 2014, 156).

2: A DEFENSE OF *WORKS OF LOVE*

Both Ferreira's and Krishek's accounts of *WL* have strengths, but so too do they each miss pieces of the puzzle crucial for understanding the full virtue of Kierkegaard's account. They are, as I see it, in desperate need of additional insights, both from one another and Kierkegaard's text. In this last section of my essay, I briefly evaluate each of their accounts and conclude by offering my own suggestion for how to understand Kierkegaard's account of the relationship between neighbor and preferential love. To begin, I raise two issues with Krishek's account.

First, Krishek continually affirms that preference is tied to choice: "*choice is essentially connected with preference*" (2014, 156). But how exactly does choice connect to preference? The answer depends on what preference is, something she addresses in a footnote in her 2010 article:

What does making preferences mean? To prefer person x over another person y has at least three meanings: 1. To consider x as better and more valuable than y; 2. To choose x over y in contexts where choosing is a natural part of our life (I choose one person to become my close friend and not the other; I commit myself to only one man whom I choose as my romantic beloved and not to that man or to the other); 3. To choose x over y in situations where the need to make a hierarchy is forced upon us. Namely, since we are limited in time, money, and other material and spiritual assets, we cannot provide everything to everybody and we need to choose whom we prefer to help (or even simply be with) at every given moment of our life. Now, of these three meanings of preference only the first is negative and needs to be unequivocally rooted out from any expression of love. However, Kierkegaard does not seem to distinguish between a 'bad' preference and a 'good' (or morally neutral) one, and he denounces preferentiality altogether (Krishek 2010, 15).

Krishek rejects this first meaning of preference but says the second and third accounts needn't be excluded (as Kierkegaard seems to) from a definition of proper love. In reality, however, Kierkegaard does not reject these second and third meanings. Krishek herself acknowledges Kierkegaard's affirmation of special relationships and of human limitation as playing a role in what it means to perform a work of neighbor love. But where Krishek understands this affirmation as contradicting his denouncement of preference, Kierkegaard's unequivocal rejection of preference is a rejection of the first sense alone. It is clear from his treatment of special relationships that he does indeed expect and exhort his reader to enter into special relationships with particular people, which of course requires preference in the third and second senses. He might disagree with Krishek about *why* a person would make the choice described in the second meaning of preference (Ferreira, at least, would insist that these choices ought to be made by taking into account the needs of the other rather than one's own desires) but he would affirm that choosing x over y must indeed take place in human relationships. This choice needn't conflict with genuine neighbor love as long as it is not motivated by preference, i.e., performing works of love for my friend *because* she is especially likable.

Second, I think Krishek is wrong to conceive of neighbor and preferential love as separate works of love. Krishek claims they need to be understood as separate works of love because their natures are contradictory; one love cannot be both equalizing and exclusive. If they are separate works of

love, the tension between them is no longer a problem; they are performed distinctly. The problem with this conception is that it seems Krishek has only eliminated the tension between neighbor love and preferential love on one level. She still contends that one should perform works of neighbor love and of preferential love simultaneously toward those with whom one is in special relationship. Krishek has not eliminated the problem of how a person could treat her beloved in both equalizing and exclusive ways. And if a work of neighbor love involves both self-denial and self-affirmation, as Krishek describes, it is not clear that we need the category of a work of preferential love. Much of Krishek's insistence that we hold onto preferential love has to do with ensuring that selves are not swallowed up by acts of pure self-denial.

Ferreira's account, while not attempting to provide a model for the coexistence of neighbor love and preferential love as Krishek's does, offers resources for thinking through some of what the latter is missing. Key to her explanation of *WL* is the idea that human beings have an intrinsic and deep "craving" or need to love others (Ferreira 2001, 26).[9] Additionally, Ferreira asserts that self-denial is to realize the truth about who we are in light of who God is. She writes that this discovery is twofold: "you can do nothing (without God) and you can do everything (with God)" (Ferreira 2001, 233). Only with God's help, while one understands that one is capable of nothing on one's own, can a person "do everything" or really *anything* "*for the other*" (Ferreira 2001, 234, emphasis Ferreira's). These ideas harmonize with Krishek's suggestion that neighbor love should be understood as involving both self-denial and self-affirmation. Though Krishek thinks she diverges from Kierkegaard in holding this view, in reality she is in full agreement with him. As Kierkegaard puts it, "the truly loving person … makes himself by self-denial" (*WL*, 269). Ferreira thus helps us understand how it could be that neighbor love necessarily involves self-affirmation.

Ferreira also draws attention to the importance of Kierkegaard's claim that passionate preference is to be condemned because of its reactive nature. Kierkegaard *is* concerned about the tendency of preference to make comparisons, but he seems equally, if not more, concerned about the tendency of preference-based love to cease as soon as their partner offends, hurts, or disowns them. In

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[9] I find it important that Ferreira and Kierkegaard refer to this need of love to express itself as a "craving" because while need does not necessarily imply desire, craving does—and not just an intellectual or emotional desire, but a *bodily* desire. This wording helps my case that neighbor love is not so exclusive of one's human, fleshy, and material desires after all.

fact, he sees the reactive nature of passionate preference as impinging on a person's ability to be free and independent.[10] Krishek overlooks this essential difference between the love that Kierkegaard condemns and the love that Kierkegaard extols. Any preferential love that could be commended would have to overcome not only the problem of exclusivity but also the problem of fallibility. With Kierkegaard's affirmation of special relationships in mind, I suspect his condemnation of preference is more about the fallibility of preference untouched by Christianity; his condemnation of preference cannot be about an appreciation of the particularities of our neighbors.

Lastly, Ferreira helpfully argues that combatting selfishness *does* require allowing the nature of one's relationships to be determined by the needs of other people rather than by one's self-oriented desires. This is especially clear when one considers Kierkegaard's assertion that "to help another person to love God is to love another person" (*WL*, 107). In approaching every person, the Christian should consider not "How can I fulfill my desires involving this person?" but "How can I help this person to love God?" Hopefully, of course, one's genuine desire for the other person is that he grows in love for God. Ferreira also highlights this quote to remind us that human desires are not in and of themselves detrimental to love: "Christianity is no more scandalized by a drive human beings have indeed not given to themselves than it has wanted to forbid people to eat and drink" (*WL*, 52). She remarks, Christianity wants "to guarantee that our drives and preferences will not be the force that dictates our responsibility to others" (Ferreira 2001, 238). The Christian ought to act according to what it means to love others, regardless of whether or not she has desires conflicting with that course of action. The desires, hopefully, will follow.

For these reasons, I believe Ferreira is right to suppose that special relationships, involving preferential love, can be the vehicles by which neighbor love is preserved—but concede that Ferreira does not sufficiently show how this happens. I now defend why Ferreira and Kierkegaard are correct and consistent in their simultaneous affirmation of preferential love and neighbor love, of self-denial and self-affirmation, as well as why they need Krishek's suggestion to incorporate *FT* in order to understand *WL*.

With Krishek, we can maintain that neighbor love begins with self-denial. Kierkegaard's picture of neighbor

love as a love that celebrates differences implies that self-denial and celebration of difference are related. The connection is made especially clear in the deliberation "Love Does Not Seek Its Own," where he recommends loving what is the other's own, that is, the other's distinctiveness. He ties this appreciation and promotion of another's particularities to the denial of what is one's own, and it is precisely at this point that he provides us with the biblical reminder: "the person who loses his soul will gain it" (*WL*, 268). The one who forgets himself in love of others is remembered by God and for this reason "acquires what he gives" (*WL*, 281). This makes perfect sense; because I am a person who has natural preferences for certain people and qualities in people, in the sense of valuing certain people and qualities over other people and qualities, and because I naturally dislike certain people and qualities, denying myself and celebrating differences go hand in hand. To appreciate the diversity of the people around me, I need to suspend my preferences—to transcend or give up myself, in a sense—and do some striving toward gratitude for the diverse people I encounter. In this way I could be said to be cultivating preferences for all my neighbors as I endeavor to love them in self-denial. And this, I think, coincides with human experience. If I am determined to appreciate another person's particularity, appreciation comes—not without effort, certainly, but it comes all the same, granted and sustained by the eternal, which, according to Kierkegaard, grounds all love. Because the very character of neighbor love is to celebrate difference, there is no need, contra Krishek, to talk about Christian preferential love as incompatible with neighbor love in any way. Neighbor love necessarily cultivates and involves preference—not comparative preference, and not selective preference, but preference all the same.

If this work of cultivating preference in self-denial is done, self-affirmation follows. As I come to see more and more of my neighbors as worthy of my celebration and devotion, I increase in the amount of positive preference I have. Since, as Krishek explains, preferences are an expression of self, and my preferences have expanded, there is in fact more of myself to affirm. Additionally, because my love is grounded in the eternal, my love is infallible, independent of the wiles of others, and I am free in a way I could not be if were I to participate in the sort of passionate preference untouched by Christianity. Neighbor love, which Kierkegaard himself identifies as being a kind of faith,[11] is

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[10] Only Christian love is "eternally secured against every change, eternally made free in blessed independence, eternally and happily secured against despair" (*WL*, 29). In this way, Christian love appears to be loss, appears to trap or negate a person's self, but is in truth an affirmation of oneself.

[11] Kierkegaard writes, "Just as one by faith believes the unseen into what is seen, so the one who loves by forgiveness believes away what is seen. Both are faith" (WL, 295, emphasis Kierkegaard's). He does not here explicitly tie love to the double movement he describes in *FT*, but I feel justified in involving this quote because of how strongly the case

an affirmation of finitude because to deny myself in the way Kierkegaard counsels is precisely to become more myself. The person of faith trusts, with *Fear and Trembling*'s Abraham, that God will bless her in this life[12] in proportion to her willingness to give up this life; that she is a person who can be made happy in humble service to her neighbor. This kind of self-denial need not be de-throned; it poses no threat to the self and is, upon closer examination, the purest and most complete sort of self-love. And because affirmation of oneself "is an expression of one's relationship to God," who "originally intended" one's selfhood (Krishek 2014, 162), practicing self-denial as Kierkegaard prescribes is not only proper and full love of self and neighbor, but also love of God. Ultimately, then, practicing self-denial as Kierkegaard prescribes is the only way to love self, God, and neighbor.

Conclusion

As Krishek suggests, it is indeed unclear from a cursory read of Ferreira and Kierkegaard how it could be that preference in any way coexists with—let alone preserves—the love commanded by Christ in the gospels. Upon closer examination we see that Kierkegaard condemns relation-ships motivated by preference; such relationships always involve, to their detriment, qualitative comparisons and a reactive selfishness inevitably leading to a break in relation-ship. Preference in this role must be seen in stark contrast to, and as incompatible with, Christian love. At the same time, Ferreira helps us understand that the kind of prefer-ence allowing us to form and function in friendships and romantic relationships must be affirmed if we are to act in obedience to the commandment, and Krishek reminds us of a Kierkegaardian model that helps us make such an affirmation in tandem with an affirmation of self-denial. It is, thus, only with the combined insights of Krishek and Ferreira, as well as renewed attention to the thought of Kierkegaard himself, that the relationship between denying and becoming in *Works of Love* can be properly apprehend-ed. Understood in this way, Kierkegaard's account is coherent, instructive, and edifying for all those interested in the relationship between Christian love and the develop-ment of a full and vibrant self.

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has been made for a strong tie between the texts.

[12] Something *Fear and Trembling*'s pseudonym, Johannes de silentio, associates with "happiness."

Recreation and Environmental Restoration: Ecological Readings of St. Maximus the Confessor

Henry Prinz

The Christian tradition is rich with resources for addressing environmental degradation and its ethical implications. This paper seeks to demonstrate the utility of St. Maximus the Confessor's writings on creation, redemption, and future hope for contemporary Christian approaches to environmental care. Specifically, Maximus both equalizes humanity with the created order and elevates humanity above the created order, identifies sinful passions as operative in environmental destruction, illustrates a deified future in which a unified creation participates in communion with its Creator, and describes the Christian methods of living towards that future in a way that enables Christians to evaluate and encourage approaches to environmental destruction and care.

This paper seeks to demonstrate the utility of St. Maximus the Confessor's writings on creation, redemption, and future hope for contemporary Christian approaches to environmental care. Specifically, Maximus both equalizes humanity with the created order and elevates humanity above the created order, identifies sinful passions as operative in environmental destruction, illustrates a deified future in which a unified creation participates in communion with its Creator, and describes the Christian methods of living towards that future in a way that enables Christians to evaluate and encourage approaches to environmental destruction and care. This paper does not suggest that Maximus is the only theological source for this topic, nor does it claim that this represents the only reading one can render on Maximus' thought. I find a contemporary reading of Maximus to serve as a helpful ancient source in evaluating current approaches to environmentalism, specifically the ecocity movement.

The paper is divided into four sections. First, I will introduce two ideological responses to environmental degradation and suggest that the ecocity movement represents an innovative and practical response to the needs of sustainability and economic development. Next, the paper will establish Maximus' doctrines of creation, fall, incarnation, and deification as depicting a fractured created order that strives towards unity through the mediation of the church. The third section seeks to demonstrate how a creative application of Maximus' perspective on creation's divisions, its unified future, and the means the Church will employ to bring this about could stimulate Christian support of sustainable cities, while identifying the potential shortcomings and blind spots of its intentions

and scope. The final segment will offer examples of how the ecocity movement might expand Maximus' theology and creatively apply its useful categories into practical, contemporary, and Christian efforts for creation care.

Two Ideological Responses to Environmental Disaster:

A plethora of studies attest to the human causes, costs, and urgent dangers associated with environmental harm in the modern era, particularly the pervasive use of fossil fuels and other nonrenewable sources of energy.[1] For example, carbon emissions will reach a record high in 2018, exacerbating the risks of water stress, increased recuperative costs, crop loss, and natural disaster, according to a report released by the Global Carbon Project.[2]

In response to the environmental degradation witnessed in the past century, two primary philosophies of environmental care have emerged. Deep ecology calls for a kind of philosophical revolution that "questions the fundamental premise" of the hierarchical categories society applies to all of nature.[3] Deep ecologists reject the existence of an ontological division between humanity and the rest of nature affirming that "the person is not above or outside nature. The person is creation-ongoing." A deep ecologist seeks "a transformation of values and social organization" and argues that a just human being "'lets

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[1] Frank P. Incropera *Climate Change: A Wicked Problem: Complexity and Uncertainty at the Intersection of Science, Economics, Politics and Human Behavior.* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2016).

[2] Guan D. Mahindra, et al. Emissions are still rising: ramp up the cuts by Figueres, C., C. Le Quéré, G. P. Peters, G. Whiteman, A. (Nature, vol 564, 2018) 27-30.

[3] Bill Devall, "The Deep Ecology Movement," Natural Resources Journal 20, no. 2 (April 1980): 299.

being be,' lets nonhuman nature follow separate evolutionary destinies."[4] The ethic advocated by deep ecologists subordinates economic progress and modern technological efforts, even those aimed at curbing the symptoms of carbon emissions, as "diverting attention from more important issues and thus [are] counterproductive to 'solving' the [real] problems."[5]

In contrast to the foundational cosmological transformations that deep ecology seeks, the reformist movement calls for pragmatic political changes that address the "worst of the air and water pollution and inefficient . . . practices in industrialized nations."[6] While the reformist movement questions many of the assumptions of the historically default paradigm of humanity above nature, it does not advocate for the same kind of philosophical equalization of nature and humanity for which deep ecologists strive. Reformists suggest that deep ecology represents an idealistic and potentially dangerous movement in its philosophical equalization of humanity and the rest of nature, as it could inhibit scientific progress and human flourishing.

Ecocities

In addition to threats to environmental substantiality, A 2011 Harvard Business School study identifies "dramatic increases in urbanization" as a prominent trend that will define the 21st century.[7] Cities, especially in the developing world, function as the path to economic opportunity and an escape from extreme poverty. Urban centers, while geographically concentrated, account for up to 80% of the world's energy consumption and "with the urban population of the developing world projected to reach more than 5 billion people by 2050, ideas about how to combine urbanization and sustainability are of critical and immediate importance."[8]

The ecocity[9] movement signals the global community's greatest efforts to reconcile the aims of environmental sustainability with the economic resources presented by the city. Sustainable cities seek to combine the vast opportunities of a developing world escaping poverty with the necessity to preserve the fragile natural world. While the sustainable city movement is not explicitly tied to either deep ecologists or reformists, its focus on environmental care through human-centered, sustainable economic

development suggests closer ideological ties to a practical, reformist attempt to curb environmental harm without uprooting the structures and values that define much of the last century. While the developed world has championed ecocities as a path for the future,[10] this paper will briefly introduce Curitiba, a thriving, sustainable city situated in the southeast corner of Brazil and some of its most interesting and innovative attempts to care for and integrate all of the created world.

Curitiba has distinguished itself as a green city since the middle of the 20th century. Beginning in 1950, the capital of Paraná has experienced consistent and rapid population growth, ballooning to nearly 2 million people today. Amidst this expansion, its accessible public transit system, innovative integration of the natural and urban world, and a creative recycling program that seeks to reduce the embedded inequalities of the city has enabled it to emerge as a symbol of the ecocity movement, particularly in the Majority World. Curitiba has developed and adopted an affordable and pervasive public transit system that reduces reliance on carbon-emitting automobiles and allows for a pedestrian-centered city. Curitiba's Bus Rapid Transit System centers movement within the city around express lanes for massive busses. The busses are affordable, efficient, and have cut local reliance on automobiles for transportation. With a world class public transit system, Curitiba can afford to pedestrianize their city streets, preempting much of the harmful environmental impact of personal vehicle ownership. In addition to their transit system, the Curitiba architects have structured their city to promote a unity and integration between the urban and natural landscape. Vegetation permeates the city, as Curitiba contains 50 square meters of green space per person, including 1.5 million trees and 28 parks. The city's leaders reflect priorities that seek the bodily and economic wellbeing of its inhabitants and that strive to promote an internal unity between the nonhuman and technological, human world.

Finally, Curitiba seeks to encourage all its citizens to engage in environmentally conscious habits in a way that promotes economic opportunity, particularly for those placed at the margins of the city. The local government has instituted an initiative in which citizens can exchange urban pollution for public transit credit, fresh produce, and other necessities. Lower-income communities have

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[4] Devall, "The Deep Ecology Movement," 303.

[5] Ibid., 312.

[6] Ibid., 299

[7] Annissa Alusi, et al. "Sustainable Cities: Oxymoron or the Shape of the Future?" (Cambridge, MA: Working Paper, 2011), 1.

[8] Ibid., 2.

[9] Also known as "smart city" "green city" or "sustainable city" movement

[10] For example, Freiburg, Germany has developed a vibrant ecocity that serves as a model for the rest of the developed world. Timothy Beatley. *Green Cities of Europe: Global Lessons on Green Urbanism.* (Washington, DC: Island Press, 2012).

organized around this Green Exchange Program, and it has promoted better access to the city's central resources for all its citizens, while securing the recycling of nearly three quarters of its dispersed trash. The program humanizes people through employment and opportunities that serve all classes of the city.[11] While Curitiba contains its own unique flaws,[12] it represents a community in a Majority World context that has managed to combine robust economic development with innovative environmental care. Maximus' narration of redemptive history and its origins and destiny might aid the church in framing and pursuing efforts towards environmental restoration, such as the ecocity efforts in communities like Curitiba.

Maximus & Ecology

Because Maximus lacks writing that articulates his consolidated viewpoints on creation and redemptive history, this paper will draw from important treatises and works to demonstrate his coherent perspectives. Maximus' thought involves two juxtaposed lines of thinking as it relates to humanity's relationship to the rest of the created order. First, he suggests a kind of internal unity embedded into the cosmos, elevating and ontologically uniting the whole created order through his description of God's Uncreated intent as the universal *logoi*. Second, he consecrates and elevates the human's role as a mediator and priest over creation and history in a way that could enlighten a Christian environmental ethic today. Contemporary readings of Maximus' theology engage with key arguments of the reformist and deep ecology responses to environmental restoration, as well as the ecocity movement.

Equalizing Creation

Responding to the Origenism that perceived the physical creation as a product of cosmic rebellion, Maximus' works outline an interconnected created order in which humanity *and* the nonhuman creation contain the meaning, reason, and divine intentions of God the Creator. Maximus describes all of creation as a cosmic representation of the eternal divine rationality and as a result, "the material creation itself is an intended good creation of God."[13] For

Maximus, God creates the world through the *Logos*, or through the word, principle, or reason. The *Logos* connotes meaning and divine intention baked into the created order through the individual *logoi* that emanate from the eternal *Logos*. Every created entity contains the *logoi*, and they represent the becoming of God's thoughts, or the actualization of his intentions in creation. According to Maximus, everything that exists "was created in an appropriate way according to its *logos* at the proper time according to the wisdom of the maker . . . all created things are defined, in their essence and in their way of developing, by their own *logoi*."[14] Each of the *logoi* within creation expresses the meaning of the created order.

The *logoi* paradoxically belong to the created order, but "in another sense they are uncreated, because, they are, as it were, God's thoughts, or intentions." [15] Maximus affirms that the *logoi* represent God's eternal, divine "predeterminations" and "products of the divine will."[16] The *logoi* that each creature possesses represents the will of God for this creature, and Maximus articulates an immanent and active God within God's creation, operating to accomplish the *logoi*, or the purposes of God for creation. The creation holds within it the intent and will of God, and thus God wills nature in a way that lends all of creation divine and cosmic significance. Not only do the *logoi* represent a transcendent intent for all of creation that the Creator immanently and dynamically reveals, "it is also a way of finding a place for human understanding of that will as expressed in creation."[17] In this way, Maximus elevates the status of the nonhuman created world and affirms it as containing divine intent and action.

While Maximus never explicitly describes the nature of environmental care and what consistency with a love for the *logoi* might represent, this paper seeks to put Maximus in dialogue with contemporary ecologists, philosophers, and practitioners to suggest that Maximus' view of the divine rationality as embedded within the cosmos requires a reverence toward the created world as expressed in efforts to preserve its vitality and benefits. Deep ecologists, while many of them are atheists who consider Christianity a

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[11] Food Policy Series, "The Green Exchange Program, Curitiba: Urban Food Policy Snapshot" (New York, NY: Hunter College Food Policy Center, 2016). Jonas Rabinovitch. "Curitiba: Towards Sustainable Urban Development" in *Environment & Urbanization* 4 (1992): 62–73.

[12] Giacomini Martínez Joyde, Ingrid Boas, Jennifer Lenhart, and Arthur P.J Mol. "Revealing Curitiba's Flawed Sustainability." *Habitat International* 53 (2016): 350–359.

[13] Jesse Dominick "Man in Creation: The Cosmology of St. Maximus the Confessor" (Orthodox Christianity) http://orthochristian.com/96486.html. See also *Ambiguum 42* and *Ambiguum 7*.

[14] St. Maximus the Confessor, *On the Cosmic Mystery of Jesus Christ*, trans. Paul M. Blowers and Robert Louis Wilken (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2003), 57.

[15] Andrew Louth, "Man and Cosmos in St. Maximus the Confessor," in *Towards an Ecology of Transfiguration: Orthodox Christian Perspectives on Environment, Nature, and Creation*, ed. John Chryssavgis and Bruce V. Foltz (New York: Fordham University Press, 2013), 63.

[16] St. Maximus the Confessor, *On the Cosmic Mystery of Jesus Christ*, 61.

[17] Andrew Louth, "Man and Cosmos in St. Maximus the Confessor," 66.

poison against the purposes of environmental justice,[18] might embrace Maximus' portrayal of creation as support for their view of an equality and interdependence between humanity and the rest of the created world. Deep ecologists might agree with Maximus, who according to Andrew Louth's reading, affirms that through the *logoi*, "within the created order nothing is nearer or father away from God by virtue of the constitution of its being,"[19] and as a result, humanity's political structures, practices, and values should reflect this kind of equality. Maximus suggests a kind of universal, mutual dependence for all existing things in the universe, as humanity needs the nonhuman creation to fully observe the will and divine intent of God. The *logoi*'s embeddedness into all of nature demands a kind of human care, dependency, and identification with the nonhuman creation. The reality of God's dynamic intent and purposes within all of creation renounces environmentally exploitative practices as an unfaithful and irreverent posture towards divine will.

While Maximus' description of the *logoi* requires a sort of equalized view of the totality of the created world, his writings also consecrate humanity's role above the status of nonhuman creation. Exploring and applying Maximus' descriptions of humanity as priests and mediators of the cosmos for redemptive history might illuminate approaches to environmental care that demonstrate humanity's central role in the cosmos, and as a result, may align closer with the reformist perspective on environmental care.

Elevates Humanity: Mediator

Whereas readings of the *logoi* in Maximus' thought reflect a kind of equality of creation that exists between the various elements of the created world, the *tropos* of humanity indicates its ability to approach God and fulfill God's will, or the *logoi*, and as a result, this attribute confers on God's image-bearers the unique roles of priests and mediators of all creation.

Maximus the Confessor suggests that as image-bearers, humanity's *tropos*, or its "mode of existence,"[20] which refers to the rational, moral decisions that shape its being, distinguish its status and role from the rest of creation. Louth describes the *tropos* as the "way we are, which is the result of the life we have lived . . . ultimately, it is the level of the depth or the shallowness of our love."[21] The *tropos* functions as a way to fulfill the *logoi*, or the will of God for creation,

by unifying the cosmos, reconciling the various divisions of nature toward communion with God. In *Ambiguum 41*, Maximus outlines five divisions of nature including the division between uncreated and created, intellectual and sensible, heaven and earth, paradise and the inhabited world, and male and female. God tasks human beings to unite the cosmos and its divisions through its mode of existence (*tropos*), applying its ascetic and unifying love. Maximus identifies the unifying role as the original purpose for humanity's creation, explaining that,

> "Humanity clearly has the power of naturally uniting at the mean point of each division since it is related to the extremities of each division in its own part . . .. For this reason, the human person was introduced last among beings, as a kind of natural bond mediating between the universal extremes through their proper parts and leading into unity in itself those things that are naturally set apart from one another by a great interval."[22]

Humanity's ability to love and exercise the *tropos*, in addition to the duality of its nature, possessing both a body and soul, allow it to serve as a priest of the whole created order. Humanity fulfills the role as mediator when it guides "the whole created order into union with the uncreated life of the Godhead—to deification," or to perfect communion with and participation in the life of the Triune God.[23] Torstein Tollefsen reads Maximus as indicating that "[humanity] is created just for this purpose: to actualize the created potential of [its] being to achieve a fully realized community between all creatures and their Creator."[24] Reformists might embrace Maximus' hierarchical depiction of creation as demonstrating humanity's authority over the rest of the created order, and its attendant need to care for its diversity in a way that allows human flourishing.

The Fall frustrates these original priestly and mediatorial purposes for humanity, as it distorts humanity's affections and its understanding of the created order. Maximus describes the Fall as humanity "[moving] in ignorance," "[abusing] the natural power of uniting what is divided," and "[separating] what is united."[25] The Fall thwarts the unifying purposes of the mediators of creation, and a contemporary reading of Maximus identifies the distorted reason of humanity as the driving cause in the environmental destruction observed over the past century. The distorted loves and ignorance of humanity divide the

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[18] Lynn White, "The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis," in *Science, New Series*, (Vol. 155, No. 3767 1967), 1203-1207.

[19] Louth, "Man and Cosmos in St. Maximus the Confessor," 66.

[20] Ibid., 66.

[21] Ibid., 66.

[22] St. Maximus the Confessor, *On the Cosmic Mystery of Jesus Christ*, 70.

[23] Louth, "Man and Cosmos in St. Maximus the Confessor," 67.

[24] Torstein Tollefsen. *The Christocentric Cosmology of St. Maximus the Confessor*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008) 102 – 103.

[25] St. Maximus the Confessor, *Difficulty 41*, trans. Andrew Louth (New York, NY: Routledge, 1996), 158.

created order and lead to human misappropriation of the divine purposes for creation, or the *logoi*.

Maximus describes the recapitulating work of Jesus Christ through the incarnation as the final hope through which humanity can return to and fulfil its original purposes. Speaking of Christ, Maximus claims that "he has . . . united the fragments of the universal nature of all, manifesting the universal *logoi* that have come forth for the particulars . . . and thus he fulfils the great purpose of God the Father."[26] In Christ's resurrection and ascension, he "clearly [unites] heaven and earth" showing that creation is, "by the most universal *logos* of its being, one."[27] Christ's work demonstrates "the convergence of the whole creation with the One according to its most original and universal *logos*."[28] Christ enables the church to participate in this work of recreation, or deification, or divinization,[29] and "by a way of life proper and fitting to Saints, the human person unites paradise and the inhabited world to make one earth . . . gathered together."[30] Maximus' "way of life proper and fitting" envisions members of the church exercising their *tropos*, undertaking lives of asceticism and contemplation toward the eschatological fulfillment of this united and recreated cosmos. Maximus' embodied future requires ascetic practices that involve a sort of renunciation of embodied passions. The church, through Jesus Christ, can recover its original role as priest and mediator, and understand and unite the whole created order, according to their *logoi*.

Maximus describes an anthropocentric future as, Louth aids again indicating that "one way in which Maximus understands the coherence of the universe . . . [is] a sort of coinherence between the human and the cosmos . . . a sympathetic togetherness that is focused on the human person."[31] Maximus rejects the "I/Thou" relationship between humans and nonhumans advocated by deep ecologists,[32] however he also challenges the reformist movement by affirming the need for a transformation of community values and metrics of wellbeing.

The theological vision that Maximus casts for a unified created order, led by humanity, oriented around its final end and beginning in God, when creatively placed in dialogue with modern developments, could encourage not

only the church's support of sustainability efforts broadly, but solutions, such as ecocities, that reflect the intrinsic unity and mutual dependence cast by both the eternal *logoi* embedded in and the eschatological unity of the created world with humanity and God.

Maximus and Ecocities: Harmony

The ecocity movement reflects both the mutual dependence suggested by the unity of the created order, and it represents an effort oriented around humanity's mediation over creation, and therefore it could foreshadow a kind of cosmological, embodied redemption, for which Maximus establishes the theological seeds. While Maximus would have no ability to foresee or explicitly evaluate and encourage the green city movement, a creative appropriation of his theological categories engenders robust theological language to promote the kinds of solutions that the ecocity movement reflects. His work could also expand the scope of and identify potential shortcomings of sustainable cities and their leaders, drawing on the values of an Orthodox version of deep ecology.

The declaration of the World Ecocity Summit describes the ecocity, like Curitiba, as:

> "…an ecologically healthy city. Into the deep future, the cities in which we live must enable people to thrive . . . with nature and achieve sustainable development. People oriented, ecocity development requires the comprehensive understanding of complex interactions between environmental, economic, political and socio-cultural factors based on ecological principles. Cities, towns and villages should be designed to enhance the health and quality of life of their inhabitants and maintain the ecosystems on which they depend."[33]

The language of a human-centered, integrated created order as the key to a sustainable and just future reflects the kind of theological imagination that Maximus provides Christians seeking to bolster the work of smart cities. Maximus describes humanity's mediating work as a recreative effort to unify the various divisions within the created order. This future requires humanity to cast and execute a vision, perhaps like Curitiba's, that promotes people-centered solutions, such as urban agglomerations, that encourage human economic flourishing and integrated interactions between the natural and human order. These efforts reflect a kind of preexistent equality and mutual dependence of the whole created order, embedded in the

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[26] Ibid., 159.

[27] Ibid., 159.

[28] Ibid., 160.

[29] For more on the Orthodox doctrine of divinization, see James R. Payton, *Light from the Christian East: An Introduction to the Orthodox Tradition.* (Downers Grove, Ill.: IVP Academic, 2007).

[30] St. Maximus the Confessor, *Difficulty 41*, 157.

[31] Louth, "Man and Cosmos in St. Maximus the Confessor," 62.

[32] Bill Devall, "The Deep Ecology Movement," 312.

[33] Kirstin Miller, "San Francisco Ecocity Declaration," (San Francsisco, 2008), https://ecocity.wordpress.com/2008/05/15/san-francisco-ecocity-declaration/.

universal *logoi*. The vision and hope of ecocities also resides in its central focus on humanity as the responsible mediator for the rest of the created order respecting and preserving the beauty and purposes of nature. In this way, ecocities reflect ideological elements of deep ecology, but its focus on humanity and practical solutions within the social paradigms with which we operate today align the movement more closely with reformist practitioners.

Maximus Evaluates Ecocities

Maximus and the ecocity movement might also evaluate one another. First, contemporary readings of Maximus' work allow us to question some of the "ecological principles" driving the ecocity movement and efforts of a similar nature. Maximus' work expands the ecologist's vision and narrative scope of what integrative and humanistic environmental preservation comprises. Whereas the encouragement of many ecologists does not envision beyond the humanistic enterprise of progress and universal preservation for future generations, contemporary applications of Maximus' thought situate efforts for environmental care within a broader redemptive narrative. The church should seize upon the theological vision of Maximus as one who envisions an eternal cosmological unity, achieved through Jesus Christ's enablement of the church, toward a recovered and enveloping communion with God.

In fact, this recreative narrative could function as a useful theological resource for winning over Christians who doubt the severity and scope of climate change. For example, the Cornwall Alliance[34] comprises a group of conservative theologians and commentators who question climate science and seek to rebut the progressive and naturalistic worldviews that seem to drive the urgent ecological efforts undertaken by movements like ecocities. Prominent theologian Wayne Grudem also questions efforts to modify or curb environmentally harmful economic activities in an interview with *Christianity Today* claiming that "it seems very unlikely to me that God would have set up the earth to work in such a way that these good and necessary activities would actually destroy the earth."[35] Grudem's intellectual and political sympathizers identify with a conservative political vision that may perceive the urgency of liberal thinkers, scientists, and theologians who press for environmental care, concern, and reform as an overemphasized attack on conservative, biblical values.[36]

One evangelical student recounts her conservative family's suspicious response to her interest in Christian environmental ethics. She describes how her father associates "transformation into a 'climate activist' with a liberal agenda [he perceives as] suspect."[37]

Maximus' eschatological vision might enable the church to detach environmental ethics from the ideological location it occupies in many American Christians' minds. Maximus' theological corpus not only serves as an ancient source for environmental care, his narrative descriptions of the ends of environmental care draw on acts of recreation. Maximus delineates a kind of recovery and fulfillment of the Garden of Eden in which the universe is oriented toward the divine communion. Christian narratives of creative recovery, inspired by Maximus, envision an eternal, unified created order that is divinized in God, and this theological and rhetorical tool might prove useful in demonstrating the redemptive necessity of environmental care. Christian support of the ecocity movement, without Maximus' theological provisions, is left vulnerable to attacks of simply promoting human progress, or an attempt to merely secure the existence of the human species, bending to the will of progressive naturalists. The church can situate ecological efforts within the eternal redemptive narrative of recreation and recovery, which Maximus describes.

Furthermore, Maximus writings resonate with deep ecologists' critiques of reformists work, such as ecocities, affirming that the recreative effort, which I have partly equated with environmental sustainability, requires fundamental personal transformation in ways that uproot dominant social definitions of what comprises success and wellbeing. Whereas reformists cling to traditional metrics of economic growth and financial prosperity as indicators of human wellbeing, Maximus frequently emphasizes the life suited for the saints and its component ascetic disciplines as the fundamental requirements for the achievement of a cosmological divinization and universal, eternal wellbeing. For Maximus, asceticism occurs at a personal level and involves submitting the fall-induced passions to reason and commitment to the "the practice of virtue and the exercise of the will . . . free of unruly passions" in which Christians "will affectionately love and cleave to the *logoi* . . . [they] will love God himself."[38] Similarly, deep ecologists argue that human loves must transition away from

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[34] https://cornwallalliance.org/

[35] Grudem quoted in Sheryl Henderson Blunt "Cool on Climate Change." *Christianity Today,* 2006, https://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2006/october/8.26.html.

[36] See Wayne A. Grudem, *Politics According to the Bible: A*

Comprehensive Resource for Understanding Modern Political Issues in Light of Scripture. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2010).

[37] Meera Subramanian, "Can Young Evangelicals Change the Climate Debate?" *Inside Climate News*, 2018, https://insideclimatenews.org.

[38] St. Maximus the Confessor, *On the Cosmic Mystery of Jesus Christ*, 59.

technological development and consumption.[39] Whereas deep ecology suggests a love for human progress balanced by an equal and opposite love for nature, Maximus affirms that human love must move from self and things to God. Deep ecology and Maximus challenge the reformist movement to embrace language of moral upheaval. The ecocity movement encourages structural changes that align human decisions more closely with environmental flourishing, such as the recycling and exchange program in Curitiba which enables the poor to gain opportunity through environmentally conscious methods. However, the ecocity movement should consider how it can encourage a kind of cultural shift that involves not only economic incentives towards environmental care for the poor, but seeks cultural, moral, and affective transformation away from the empty hopes of the world, particularly in ways that will drive the rich to reduce their carbon footprint. Maximus' vision of the ascetic life that leads to an eschatological unification involves a deep satisfaction discovered in communion with God and a turning away from the allures of the physical world. It encourages what deep ecologists advocate for as the "spiritual development . . . of the members of a community . . . not just training them in occupations . . . for consumerism in advanced industrial societies."[40] Maximus could illuminate ways in which the church could form a Christian ecology that uniquely contributes to the ecocity movement, namely, by encouraging communities to find satisfaction and hope in eternal Being, growing in love, instead of looking to the created order. This affective transformation undermines the environmentally harmful materialism that plagues communities today, and it will serve the ultimate purposes of establishing and maintaining sustainable cities in which its citizens' values reflect conceptions of wellbeing not tied to the kind of excessive consumption that harms the natural world.

Ecocities Expand Maximus' Vision

In addition to Maximus challenging elements of the ecocity, reformist, and deep ecology movements, the ecocity movement and the efforts of Christian environmentalists can expand and inform what Maximus considers as a life fitting for the Saints beyond personal renunciations of excessive passions. In his article on community organizing, Luke Bretherton considers how Augustine's political thought could frame contemporary approaches to local politics. Bretherton identifies Christian efforts to organize

around causes that require the obedience of the church as disciplines reflective of the kind of ancient asceticism described by Maximus, explaining that, "from a Christian perspective, community organizing is best viewed as a political form of ascetic discipline that enables churches to resist the temptation to be either co-opted by the state, compete with other faith groups, or conform to the market."[41] Bretherton provides a helpful model of how we might expand Maximus' explanations of the kinds of ascetic habits fitting for the saints towards environmental care. Christians today should encourage and participate in organizations at local and international scales that promote environmental care and strive towards human-centered, sustainable cities, as a form of ascetic discipline and growth in virtue. For example, the urban agriculture movement seeks to capitalize on the mysterious unity of the whole created order to promote healthy environments and social cohesion. Organizations such as "Gangstas to Growers," a program that serves Atlanta citizens returning from incarceration, employing them to work on urban farms during the day, providing financial and environmental sustainability education in the evening, spring from a recognition of and attempt to live into the natural mutual dependence and interconnectedness between various elements of the created world, and strive for a peaceful, sustainable, human-centered future that also involves personal moral transformation. A community garden has sprung in Chicago's Woodlawn, seeking to embrace the natural environment as a humanizing force within communities to promote stronger bonds and peace. The Chicago Neighborhood Initiatives, located in the historically under-resourced neighborhood of Pullman, has developed a hydraulic farm that employs 50 people, providing fresh produce to the community. The CNI's efforts also reflect the goals of the ecocity in a human-centered effort to restore the environment and strive towards the unified created order that contemporary readings of Maximus guide the church to envision.

These organizing efforts do not represent the only kind of work consistent with the Christian ecocity, however, they promote a mutual engagement of humanity with the nonhuman creation in ways that elevate the nonhuman creation and that empower humanity to fulfill its mediatorial and unifying role, through the adoption of ascetic disciplines. Maximus' work clarifies ideologies that describe environmental destruction and restoration, gives the

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[39] "Human welfare should not be measure by quantity of products" Bill Devall, "The Deep Ecology Movement," 311.

[40] Bill Devall, "The Deep Ecology Movement," 312 – 313.

[41] Luke Bretheron, *Christianity and Contemporary Politics: The Conditions and Possibilities of Faithful Witnes*s, (West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 106.

church a theological language to evaluate responses, especially the ecocity movement, and Maximus articulates a cosmic, redemptive narrative in which to situate recreation and strive towards its fulfillment. While the ecocity movement does not explicitly rely on religious doctrines in describing its ends, the cosmic realities Maximus describes commend its efforts of recreation.

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The Past Like Silk Cotton Trees: Oral Tradition and West African History

Abbey Walker

This paper seeks to demonstrate the value of oral tradition to historical study by overviewing the ancient Jenne Jeno in West Africa. In many ways this city defies traditional theories of civilization and demands that historians incorporate such diversity as they strive to tell an inclusive story of the past. As Christian historians especially, we must celebrate this diversity as concomitant with our biblical calling.

In modern Djenne of West Africa there stands a great mosque, the heart of the city over which it towers. Every year, members of the community come together to protect its walls from the coming rain. They pass baskets to one another, plastering mud over the cracking walls of the mosque. The entire town collaborates around this one central piece of their identity. The mosque retains its fundamental structure, even as people plaster a fresh coat of mud over it every year.[1] It retains its underlying integrity while evolving as it interacts with the community.

Likewise with oral tradition: it depicts an additive history. Generations add on layers every time they tell it. In this way, the past expands through time, taking on new flavors as it meets new people. Oral history constitutes a way of knowing the past which esteems history as remembered by those who lived it. It gives the whole story to those who intentionally remember the past as a continuation of the present.

Historians and archeologists, and especially Christians practicing these disciplines, need to consider the value of oral tradition. In recognizing oral tradition, they celebrate diverse ways of knowing and include them in their presentation of the past. In this paper, I will present a case study of the ancient West African city, Jenne Jeno. First, I will introduce the city according to archeology, and then outline how oral tradition depicts the same history in a sweeping gestalt of memory, kinship, and identity.

"The Middle Niger is a landscape of mystery folded upon mystery. . ."[2]

Archeologists Roderick and Susan McIntosh came to Mali in 1977 under a post-independence atmosphere which encouraged celebration of identity and desire to create a shared past. What they found unleashed a plethora of new excavations and theories among experts in diverse fields. Jenne Jeno represents one of hundreds of cases of "cities without citadels" in the Middle Niger of West Africa.[3] Most of these constitute cases of "urban clustering," with the sites divided into as many as seventy physically distinct parts as with Jenne Jeno.[4] In this system, each cluster retained its own spatial identity, area of specialization, and political autonomy.

These findings both challenged prior theories of civilization and revealed gaps in the explanations behind these cities without citadels.[5] For example, the lack of centralization in Jenne Jeno stands in stark contrast against "typical" complex societies. The assumption rested that, as a state developed, a single power must assert control to maintain collective identity and order.[6] Thus, this decentralized city puzzled archeologists and historians.

These decentralized cities seem to have paralleled a more egalitarian society as well. At Jenne Jeno, McIntosh found no evidence of a class system or any ruling elites; he concluded that corporate groups shared the power[7] Cities

2. Robert J. McIntosh, *Ancient Middle Niger*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 45.
3. Ibid., 14.
4. Ibid., 3.
5. See Kradin's "Archaeological Criteria of Civilization."
6. McIntosh, 18.
7. David M. Anderson and Richard Rathbone, eds., *Africa's Urban Past* (Oxford: James Currey, 2000), 31.

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1. *Human Planet*, produced by Brian Leith and Dale Templar (BBC, 2011).

like Jenne Jeno enjoyed relatively peaceful, pluralistic, and most likely flexible societies where many autonomous identity groups collaborated with one another for trade.

McIntosh's findings also characterized these identity groups by intense specialization, where skill united the members of each cluster. That is, on one mound they found exclusive evidence for agriculture, whereas other mounds held evidence of fishing, metallurgy or weaving.[8] Historians would expect specialization in complex civilizations, but this looked rather different.[9] Instead of separate districts within the same city, each group organized in their own smaller city, physically distinct on mounds. The McIntoshes also found evidence of iron import and on-site smelting as early as 250 BC, and assumed blacksmiths provided the basis for trade patterns.[10] I will expand on this idea in the section on oral tradition.

The lack of fortifying structures and monumental buildings or citadels in the archeological record reflected the security and solidarity among clusters. Apparently, Jenne Jeno maintained its complexity while largely avoiding oppressive governance or violence among communities. However, archeological analysis alone proves limiting: How did these cities work? How did they maintain this solidarity? What did such an organization really look like? "Kingdoms are like trees; some will be silk-cotton trees, others will remain dwarf palms and the powerful silk-cotton tree will cover them with its shade. Oh, who can recognize in the little child the great king to come?"[11]

Before the McIntosh excavations, the modern town of Djenne knew about the remains of the neighboring ancient city from both proximity and oral tradition.[12] Archeology only put concrete evidence behind the city already very present in Djenne's collective history. But "the world is full of mystery" and archeology masters the knowledge it directly observes, leaving many mysteries unaddressed. While respecting the aspects of the past that must always remain a mystery, oral tradition sheds light on matters of memory and culture which archeology can only theorize about.

Griots, performing as respected professional artists and historians, exemplify this oral tradition in West Africa, handing down oral history for hundreds of generations.[13]

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[8] Anderson, 24.

[9] That is, traditional Western historians. See V. Gordon Childe's "The Urban Revolution."

[10] Anderson, 25, 29.

[11] N.T. Diane, *Sundiata: An Epic of Old Mali,* (Edinburgh: Longman African Writers, 2001), 5.

[12] McIntosh, 1.

[13] Nicholas M. Hopkins, "Memories of Griots," *Literature and Anthropology in Africa*, no. 17 (1997): 43-72, Accessed February 27, 2018, 46.

This oral tradition famously remembers Sundiata, the founder of the Mali empire. After desertification made Timbuktu a strategic point of trade along the Niger River, Sundiata consolidated the river network into an empire, united under a common identity as Mali.

The Epic of Sundiata tells his story, which arose out of this historical context of cities without citadels, as intentionally remembered by those who consider themselves his ancestors. Griots have passed down stories like Sundiata's for hundreds of years in oral performances, shaping a unique living history. They preserve the traditions, values, and beliefs of the period, while incorporating and adding those of subsequent generations. These continuous values provide the framework upon which archeology rests. It revolves around central themes of mystery and magic, which have been celebrated for as long as the griot can remember.

Sundiata shows this best in the character of the Buffalo Woman. The speaker introduces his audience to the Buffalo Woman through an interaction of Sundiata's father with a hunter he meets while lounging under his favorite silk-cotton tree. This hunter turns out to be left-handed, which portends his skill at divination—he spreads some cowry shells, mutters some words, and prophesizes Mali's coming greatness.[14] He tells Sundiata's father of mystery and destiny:

> Oh king, the world is full of mystery, all is hidden and we know nothing but what we can see. The silk-cotton tree springs from a tiny seed—that which defies the tempest weighs in its germ no more than a grain of rice. Kingdoms are like trees; some will be silk-cotton trees, others will remain dwarf palms and the powerful silk-cotton tree will cover them with its shade. Oh, who can recognize in the little child the great king to come?[15]

This scene of divination and prophecy proves foundational to the rest of the epic. The man also predicts the coming of the Buffalo Woman, who will bear the child to rule Mali. Everything about the Buffalo Woman exudes magic and mystery—the object of grand quests and folklore, she shapeshifts between the form of buffalo and woman.[16] Secrets, magic, and mystery weave into the landscape of the story with the implication that only griots themselves are wholly privy to knowledge of the universe. The Sundiata epic presents magic and folk religion as a natural layer of the world.

This is a layer of the world archeology never revealed with its potsherds and soil samples. But the mystery revealed by oral tradition relates well and even answers to

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[14] Diane, 4-5.

[15] Ibid., 5.

[16] Diane, 6.

the mysteries evoked by archeology. As mentioned briefly above, McIntosh discovered evidence of specialized blacksmiths in Jenne Jeno. Oral tradition remembers the cultural and geographic importance of these blacksmiths. Essentially, the Mande viewed blacksmiths and metallurgists as having special access to the land and the energy within it. They call this energy *nyama*, and their skill as a smith includes the ability to recognize and manipulate this mysterious natural power.[17] Because *nyama* resides in the earth, geography is sacred to a smith; the land represents a vast power grid, where certain locations hold more potential or *nyama* than others.[18] For this reason, blacksmiths naturally would have congregated in one region—in one cluster, one might say. Indeed, the magic and mystery obvious in oral tradition may provide the framework from which one understands the settlement pattern of McIntosh's clustered city. Thus, this constitutes a practical reason for historians to implement oral tradition as they seek a holistic understanding of the past.

But more than this, Christian historians should value awareness of this layer of magic and mystery as they strive to communicate the God who acted in history to cultures who embrace different ways of knowing the past. How can we compellingly present the gospel without recognizing the ways other cultures intentionally remember history? When cultures remember history with layers of the supernatural, to some extent Christians must accept this at face value. It seems like there may even be room to acknowledge some common ground in moving from one supernatural explanation to another. Sundiata, the small child who grew like the silk-cotton tree into a great king, may provide a reference point for us to talk about Jesus, the small child who grew into Savior of the world.

In addition to mystery and magic, themes of loyalty and generosity play a major role in the epic of Sundiata. Again, the Buffalo Woman demonstrates this well. Before accompanying them to meet Sundiata's father, she appears to two hunters as an old woman. Moved by pity, they give her food. This act of kindness proves pivotal to the story. She tells the hunters:

> I know that you are going to try your luck against the Buffalo of Do, but you should know that many others before you have met their death through their foolhardiness, for arrows are useless against the buffalo; but, young hunter, your heart is generous and it is you who will be the buffalo's vanquisher. I am the buffalo you are

looking for, and your generosity has vanquished me.[19] The value of generosity demands attention in this passage, particularly the way it in turn promoted loyalty. Sundiata's alliances with past friends constantly affirm this value of loyalty. Again, this framework of generosity and loyalty proves vital in understanding how the clustered cities revealed by archeology would function. McIntosh wondered about the role of kinship ties, but confirmation of his suspicion lay beyond the scope of archeology.[20] Oral history steps in to affirm the necessity of kinship and generosity among neighbors. Hospitality and patronage would have facilitated relationships between groups, drawing them together in this way through mutual dependence in trade.

Again, the value of oral tradition extends beyond functionally explaining kinship networks. Christians can recognize and learn from the emphasis on generosity and hospitality in kinship-based societies. Awareness of this pre-existing cultural framework equips us to go out and present a gospel that demands hospitality and love for neighbor. Moreover, communication with kinship-based societies helps us make sense of such gospel messages, in the context of the kinship-based cultures of 1st c. Jewish and Greco-Roman worlds.

The Sundiata epic additionally emphasizes freedom, independence, and autonomy. Although oral tradition credits him as the founder and ruler of the Mali empire, his consolidated cities really formed more of a confederation or network with Sundiata at the head. That is, each remained largely autonomous. McIntosh described this phenomenon as "resistance to centralization;"[21] yet this presupposed centralization as normative and failed to represent how the Mande would have understood their own situation.

The Sundiata epic gives the inside perspective. While addressing his men before going into battle, Sundiata invokes the glory of their ancestors, telling them, "I salute you all, sons of Mali, and I salute you, Kamandjan. I have come back, and as long as I breathe Mali will never be in thrall—rather death than slavery. We will live free because our ancestors lived free."[22] He draws upon language of kinship, calling them "sons" and invoking praise of the ancestors. Oral tradition nostalgically remembers the period in which Sundiata took power, as people looked back to the peace and independence of their ancestors before the Almoravid movement. Much of Sundiata's actions strive to recreate these glory days. None within his confederation found themselves subject to anyone else. All were free,

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[17] Anderson, 25.
[18] Ibid., 31.

[19] Diane, 8
[20] Anderson, 28.
[21] Anderson, 21.
[22] Diane, 56

"sons of Mali," valued in the role they played within the greater entity, yet independent and secure in their individual identities as well.

This description certainly recalls Jenne Jeno, the clustered city where autonomous groups lived and traded peacefully alongside each other. It also recalls the language of Galatians, as Paul celebrates our freedom from slavery, resulting in adoption as children and heirs of the kingdom of God.[23] To reiterate, knowing diverse cultural frameworks equips us to understand the context of the gospel and present it to other cultures in more meaningful, personal ways.

Conclusion

Archeology and oral tradition each contribute something unique to a discussion of the history of the Middle Niger. Yet archeology could not describe the magic and mystery behind settlement patterns. It could not explain the kinship ties binding identity groups in trade networks. It could not introduce the overarching atmosphere of identity and pride. Oral tradition shows continuity against the change shown by archeology. It offers history from an emic perspective as well as from an etic perspective.

Furthermore, oral tradition joins together with archeology to challenge presuppositions of "normative" civilization, even challenging the word "normative" itself. The cities of the ancient Middle Niger suggest that it is normative to have no norms. Societies across time and space develop in diverse ways, and to force them all into a single, Eurasian-dominant pattern is to deny the reality of diversity in the progress of civilizations all over the world. The research of anthropologists, sociologists, archeologists, historians, and Christians ought to aim at validating this diversity, celebrating it. Indeed, the modern city of Djenne celebrates their past as uncovered by the McIntoshes and remembered by their oral tradition. They honor a collective past of peace and security—an alternative to society dominated by powerful elites and violence.

Just as all narratives should contribute to the general knowledge of the past, historians—Christian historians—should also incorporate different *ways* of knowing the past, especially working to include the worldviews of their historical subjects. Sometimes this means not denying the supernatural but taking these beliefs and assumptions at face value. Christian scholars especially must take the lead in initiating this kind of inclusivity. Indeed, they must see it as concomitant within their Biblical calling. The gospel message invites a deontological conception of knowledge, with the synoptic gospel accounts offering a foundational example. That is, they compel us to see the truth inherent in the different ways people come to knowledge, present knowledge, remember knowledge.[24] The inclusion of different ways of knowing the past is akin to the inclusion of different ways of knowing the gospel.

Some things will always remain a mystery—after all, the world is mystery. Only griots are privy to all the secrets and hidden knowledge.[25] However, we can learn some things. We start small: with some broken pottery, some words passed around a town. And then the great comes from the small—the silk-cotton tree springs from a tiny seed. One must approach oral tradition with careful consideration for its strengths and limitations; but ultimately, it contributes to historical study in ways that powerfully challenge modern theories and—more importantly—tell an inclusive, diverse story of the past.

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[23] Galatians 4:7. I opted for a gender-neutral translation, but the traditional translation does better emphasize the commonality with Sundiata's language of sonship.

[24] Indeed, Hays says we must "ask what conceptions of time and history and human possibility are woven into the texture of the narrative [of any gospel]". Richard B. Hays, *The Moral Vision of the New Testament* (New York: Harper Collins, 1996), 74.

[25] Hopkins, 47.

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