



THE ATHENS INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

Abstract Book:

2nd Annual International Symposium on
Religion and Theology
22-25 May 2017, Athens, Greece

Edited by
Gregory T. Papanikos

2017

Abstracts
2nd Annual International
Symposium on
Religion and Theology
22-25 May 2017, Athens, Greece

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First Published in Athens, Greece by the Athens Institute for Education and Research.

ISBN: 978-960-598-118-1

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8 Valaoritou Street
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www.atiner.gr

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

(In Alphabetical Order by Author's Family name)

| | | |
|---------------------------|---|-----------|
| Preface | | 7 |
| Conference Program | | 9 |
| 1. | The Role of Metaphor in Axiomatic System <i>Mohamed Almisbkawy</i> | 12 |
| 2. | The Concept of Education and the Problem of Indoctrination in the Analytical Tradition <i>Manuel Amado</i> | 13 |
| 3. | Willing, Unwilling, and Binding Addiction <i>Audrey Anton</i> | 14 |
| 4. | Hexis and Haecceitas: John Duns Scotus and the Stoics on Unity and Individuation <i>Charles Bolyard</i> | 15 |
| 5. | Ethics and Pseudepigraphy: Do the Ends Always Justify the Means? <i>Luc Bulundwe Lévy</i> | 16 |
| 6. | The Philosophy of "The Dark Side of the Moon" by Pink Floyd: The Teaching of Philosophical Contents, From the Study of a Progressive Rock's Masterpiece <i>Paulo Irineu Barreto Fernandes</i> | 17 |
| 7. | Tolerance, Seriousness and Faith: An Existential-Formal Approach to Tolerance <i>Bjorn Freter</i> | 19 |
| 8. | From a Deconstruction of Ethical Foundations to a Non-Foundational Ethics <i>Simon Glynn</i> | 21 |
| 9. | Emergence by Recursion <i>Richard Grandy</i> | 22 |
| 10. | Agency of Breath - Action and Motion in the Anthropology of Ritual <i>Anna Kawalec</i> | 23 |
| 11. | Routines in Science as Basic Ontological Units <i>Pawel Kawalec</i> | 24 |
| 12. | Wonder as the Experiential Origin of Philosophy <i>Chin-Tai Kim</i> | 25 |
| 13. | Designer Babies Project as Possible New Racism <i>Tonci Kokic</i> | 26 |
| 14. | Free Will, Grace, and God: The Problem of Predestination of Human Beings according to John Duns Scotus <i>Martyna Koszkalo</i> | 28 |

| | | |
|-----|---|----|
| 15. | Not Three Gods but One: Why Reductionism Doesn't Serve our Theological Discourse <i>Finley Lawson</i> | 29 |
| 16. | Interfaith Dialogue in the Modern World: Problems and Prospects <i>Sergey Lepekhov & Elena Lepekhova</i> | 30 |
| 17. | The Meaning of Life: The Major Philosophical Aspects Hidden Behind a Fundamental Question of Human Existence <i>Paul Letsch</i> | 32 |
| 18. | Religion and Life Conduct: Some Affinities between Max Weber and Greek Skepticism <i>Marcelo Maciel</i> | 33 |
| 19. | Marx and the Hypothetical Moral Imperative <i>William O'Meara</i> | 34 |
| 20. | A Natural Ethics of Gratitude <i>William O'Meara</i> | 35 |
| 21. | On the Principle of Beneficence: A Comparative Analysis on its Three Fundamental Views <i>Prasasti Pandit</i> | 37 |
| 22. | Human Technological Improvement and non-Therapeutic Body Modifications: An Analysis from Transhumanism <i>Jonathan Piedra Alegria</i> | 38 |
| 23. | The Evolution of the Human Brain as Justification for Kant's Natural End Hypothesis <i>Fernando Salgueiro Passos Telles & Cassius Schnell Palhano Silva</i> | 40 |
| 24. | The Essence of God and the Identity of God as God <i>Tennyson Samraj</i> | 41 |
| 25. | The Survival of Persons: A Reply to Parfit's Reductionism <i>Andrew Ward</i> | 42 |

Preface

This book includes the abstracts of all the papers presented at the *2nd Annual International Symposium on Religion and Theology, 22-25 May 2017*, organized by the Athens Institute for Education and Research (ATINER). In total 25 papers were submitted by 29 presenters, coming from 14 different countries (Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Egypt, Germany, India, Poland, Russia, Switzerland, UK, and USA). The conference was organized into 11 sessions that included a variety of topic areas such as medieval theology, ethics, and philosophy of ritual. A full conference program can be found beginning on the next page. In accordance with ATINER's Publication Policy, the papers presented during this conference will be considered for inclusion in one of ATINER's many publications.

The purpose of this abstract book is to provide members of ATINER and other academics around the world with a resource through which to discover colleagues and additional research relevant to their own work. This purpose is in congruence with the overall mission of the institute. ATINER was established in 1995 as an independent academic organization with the mission to become a forum where academics and researchers from all over the world could meet to exchange ideas on their research and consider the future developments of their fields of study.

It is our hope that through ATINER's conferences and publications, Athens will become a place where academics and researchers from all over the world regularly meet to discuss the developments of their discipline and present their work. Since 1995, ATINER has organized more than 400 international conferences and has published nearly 200 books. Academically, the institute is organized into seven research divisions and 38 research units. Each research unit organizes at least one annual conference and undertakes various small and large research projects.

For each of these events, the involvement of multiple parties is crucial. I would like to thank all the participants, the members of the organizing and academic committees, and most importantly the administration staff of ATINER for putting this conference and its subsequent publications together.

Gregory T. Papanikos
President

FINAL CONFERENCE PROGRAM
2nd Annual International Symposium on Religion and Theology, 22-25
May 2017 Athens, Greece

PROGRAM

Conference Venue: The Stanley Hotel, 1 Odiseos Street, Karaiskaki Square,
Athens, Greece

C O N F E R E N C E P R O G R A M

Monday 22 May 2017

08:00-09:00 Registration and Refreshments

09:00-09:30 (Room C-Mezzanine Floor) Welcome and Opening Address

Gregory T. Papanikos, President, ATINER.

09:30-11:00 Session I (Room D-3rd Floor): Philosophy of Religion

Chair: William O'Meara, Academic Member, ATINER & Professor, Department of Philosophy and Religion, James Madison University, USA.

1. Marcelo Maciel, Professor, The Federal Rural University of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Religion and Life Conduct: Some Affinities between Max Weber and Greek Scepticism.
2. Tennyson Samraj, Professor, Burman University, Canada. The Essence of God and the Identity of God as God.
3. Sergey Lepekhov, Deputy Director, Institute of Mongolian, Buddhist and Tibetan Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences, Russia & Elena Lepekhova, Senior Research Officer, Institute of Oriental Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences, Russia. Interfaith Dialogue in the Modern World: Problems and Prospects.

11:00-12:30 Session II (Room C-Mezzanine Floor): Medieval

Chair: *Lin Ma, Associate Professor, Renmin University of China, China.

1. Charles Bolyard, Professor, James Madison University, USA. *Hexis* and *Haecceitas*: John Duns Scotus and the Stoics on Unity and Individuation.
2. Martyna Koszkal, Assistant Professor, University of Gdansk, Poland. Free Will, Grace and God. The Problem of Predestination of Human Being according to John Duns Scotus.

11:00-12:30 Session III (Room D-3rd Floor): Ethics I

Chair: *Chin-Tai Kim, Professor, Case Western Reserve University, USA.

1. Simon Glynn, Professor, Florida Atlantic University, USA. From a Deconstruction of Ethical Foundations to a Non-Foundational Ethics.
2. Tonci Kokic, Assistant Professor, University of Split, Croatia. Designer Babies Project as Possible New Racism.
3. Prasasti Pandit, Assistant Professor, West Bengal Higher Education Department, India. On the Principle of Beneficence: A Comparative Analysis on its Three Fundamental Views.

12:30-14:00 Session IV (Room D-3rd Floor): Metaphysics I

Chair: Simon Glynn, Professor, Florida Atlantic University, USA.

1. Richard Grandy, Professor, Rice University, USA. Emergence by Recursion.
2. Mohamed Almisbkawy, Assistant Professor, British University in Egypt / Fayoum University, Egypt. The Role of Metaphor in Axiomatic System.
3. Andrew Ward, Lecturer, University of York, UK. The Survival of Persons: A Reply to Parfit's Reductionism.

14:00-15:00 Lunch

15:00-16:30 Session V (Room D-3rd Floor): Ethics II

Chair: Sandra Fairbanks, Professor, Barry University, USA.

1. *Bjorn Freter, Independent Scholar, Germany. Tolerance, Seriousness and Faith. An Existential-Formal Approach to Tolerance.
2. *William O'Meara, Professor, James Madison University, USA. Marx and the Hypothetical Moral Imperative.
3. *Chin-Tai Kim, Professor, Case Western Reserve University, USA. Wonder as the Experiential Origin of Philosophy.
4. Paulo Irineu Barreto Fernandes, Professor, Federal Institute of Education, Science and Technology of Triângulo Mineiro, Brazil. The Philosophy of "The Dark Side of the Moon", by Pink Floyd: The Teaching of Philosophical Contents, From the Study of a Progressive Rock's Masterpiece.

16:30-18:30 Session VI (Room C-Mezzanine Floor): A Symposium on Ethics, Economics and Environment

Chair: Panagiotis Petratos, Professor, Department of Computer Information Systems, California State University, Stanislaus, USA.

1. Patricia Hanna, Professor and Interim Chair of Linguistics, University of Utah, USA. Neither Love nor Money: What could save the Environment?
2. Frans P. de Vries, Professor, University of Stirling, U.K. Ethics and Environmental Markets.
3. Timothy M. Young, Professor and Graduate Director, Department of Forestry, Wildlife and Fisheries, Center for Renewable Carbon, The University of Tennessee, USA. Protecting Ethics, Economics, and the Environment in the Era of the Digital Citizen and Exponential Population Growth.
4. Nicolas Abatzoglou, Professor, Department of Chemical & Biotechnological Engineering, Université de Sherbrooke, Canada, Chair Pfizer, PAT in Pharmaceutical Engineering, Director GREEN-TPV and GRTP-C & P. Produce Fuels from Renewable Resources.

For details on the discussion please [click here](#).

21:00-23:00 Greek Night and Dinner (Details during registration)

Tuesday 23 May 2017

07:30-10:30 Session VII (Room -Ground Floor): An Educational Urban Walk in Modern and Ancient Athens

Chair: Gregory Katsas, Vice President of Academic Affairs, ATINER & Associate Professor, The American College of Greece-Deree College, Greece.

Group Discussion on Ancient and Modern Athens.

Visit to the Most Important Historical and Cultural Monuments of the City (be prepared to walk and talk as in the ancient peripatetic school of Aristotle)

11:30-13:00 Session VIII (Room D-3rd Floor): Religion & Theology

Chair: Joel Wilcox, Professor, Barry University, USA.

1. William O'Meara, Professor, James Madison University, USA. A Natural Ethics of Gratitude.
2. *Luc Bulundwe Lévy, PhD Student, University of Geneva, Switzerland. Ethics and Pseudepigraphy – “Do the Ends Always Justify the Means?”.
3. *Finley Lawson, PhD Student, King's College London, UK. “Not Three Gods But One” – Why Reductionism Doesn't Serve Our Theological Discourse.

13:00-14:00 Lunch

14:00-15:30 Session IX (Room D-3rd Floor): Ethics III

Chair: Yvette Prinsloo Franklin, Instructor, Cultural Studies of Education Program, University of Tennessee Knoxville, USA.

1. Manuel Amado, Professor, Free University of Colombia, Colombia. The Concept of Education and the Problem of Indoctrination in the Analytical Tradition.
2. *Paul Letsch, PhD Student, VUB University Brussels, Belgium. The Meaning of Life: The Major Philosophical Aspects Hidden Behind a Fundamental Question of Human Existence.

15:30-17:00 Session X (Room D-3rd Floor): Metaphysics II

Chair: *Dimitrios Dentsoras, Assistant Professor, University of Manitoba, Canada.

1. Audrey Anton, Assistant Professor, Western Kentucky University, USA. Willing, Unwilling, and Binding Addiction.
2. Jonathan Piedra Alegria, Academic and Researcher, Universidad Nacional de Costa Rica, Costa Rica. Human Technological Improvement and non-Therapeutic Body Modifications: An Analysis from Transhumanism.
3. *Fernando Salgueiro Passos Telles, Researcher, National School of Public Health, Brazil & Cassius Schnell Palhano Silva, Researcher, National School of Public Health, Brazil. The Evolution of Human Brain as Justification for Kant's Natural End Hypothesis.

17:00-18:30 Session XI (Room D-3rd Floor): Philosophy of Rituals

Chair: *Fernando Salgueiro Passos Telles, Researcher, National School of Public Health, Brazil.

1. Anna Kawalec, Professor, John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin, Poland. Agency of Breath – Action and Motion in the Anthropology of Ritual. (PHIRIT)
2. Pawel Kawalec, Professor, John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin, Poland. Routines in Science as Basic Ontological Units. (PHIRIT)

21:00- 22:30 Dinner (Details during registration)

Wednesday 24 May 2017

Educational Island Tour (Details during registration)

or

Mycenae and Epidaurus Visit (Details during registration)

Thursday 25 May 2017

Delphi Visit (Details during registration)

Mohamed Almisbkawy

Assistant Professor, British University in Egypt/Fayoum University,
Egypt

The Role of Metaphor in Axiomatic System

The Leibnitz dream of universal artificial language aimed in principle to break with natural language, in terms of its ambiguity and metaphorical nature. Such dream has inspired many generations of mathematicians and logicians which leads eventually to construct the Axiomatic system. We aim in this paper to discuss three points:

1. To what extent the mechanical inference rules within the axiomatic, as Similization apparatus , could break with a metaphor, in its wide meaning, as meaning generator and interpreter device , in natural language
2. To what extent the Gödel's proof of incompleteness shows that the metaphor, which plays a major role in natural and literal language, and plays an implicitly essential rule in metaphysics, as Derrida claimed, could emerge formally within Axiomatic Systems.
3. The impact of the above mentioned points on the future of logic and mathematics

Manuel Amado

Professor, Free University of Colombia, Colombia

The Concept of Education and the Problem of Indoctrination in the Analytical Tradition

In the mid-20th century, thanks to philosophers such as Charles Hardie, Richard Peters and John Wilson, the movement known as *Analytic Philosophy of Education* emerged. This movement focused on the analysis of the word "education" and the usefulness of such analysis for deciding some fundamental questions in the philosophy of education like how to determine whether a person is *well-educated*, how to evaluate the legitimacy of presumed educational practices, and what ought to be learned or taught.

The objectives of this paper are: 1) to characterize one of the most influential approaches to the meaning of "education" in the analytic tradition: the conception of education as *initiation to a form of life*, proposed by Richard Peters. 2) To explain the distinction between *education and indoctrination* implied by Peters' conception. Finally, 3) to suggest some solutions to the classic problems this conception faces.

Peters' analysis has two classic problems: I) the concept of education is *dependent* on the social context; thus, any general conception of education will be incorrect *or*, at least, only applicable to a significantly narrowed context. In either case, Peters' analysis will be unable to account for the fundamental questions in the philosophy of education. II) If Peters' analysis is true, there is a commitment with the idea that education involves forms of indoctrination in a pejorative sense. Therefore, the concept of education cannot be a (normative) positive concept and cannot be opposed to indoctrination, contrary to the intuitive way in which education is usually conceived.

It will be held that Peters' analysis is not susceptible to the problems I)-II). First, it will be shown that there is no reason to think that Peters' analysis is only applicable to a narrow context. Later, it will be argued that Peters' conception of education does not involve indoctrination in a pejorative sense.

Audrey Anton

Assistant Professor, Western Kentucky University, USA

Willing, Unwilling, and Binding Addiction

Charles Bolyard
Professor, James Madison University, USA

Hexis and Haecceitas:
John Duns Scotus and the Stoics on Unity and Individuation

Unity and individuation are central aspects of any coherent philosophical account of material individuals. A principle of unity gives a metaphysically complex entity the necessary coherence to be considered as one item in a strong sense, and a principle of individuation sets that metaphysically complex item apart from all other items. In this paper, I explain John Duns Scotus's attempts to deal with these issues, and use the less well documented Stoic account of *hexis* ("tenor") as a helpful foil by which to understand Scotus's view.

In his *Ordinatio* II, d. 3, part 1, qq. 1-6, John Duns Scotus (1265-1308) spends a considerable amount of time arguing against other medieval accounts of individuation, many of which involve the claim that individuating principles are material items. For Scotus, it is what came to be called a *haecceitas* or "thisness" – a metaphysically simple item – that provides the individuating principle for material things; it individuates what he calls a "common nature", or to use his terminology, a "real, less-than-numerical unity", by "contracting" it to an individual item. After examining some of Scotus's main arguments, I turn to the earlier Stoic notion of *hexis* or "tenor", as discussed in such commentators as Plutarch, Simplicius, and Philo of Alexandria. *Hexis* has possible suitability as a material principle of both unity and individuation, one that meets some of the challenges Scotus raises in his later critique of other medieval accounts, while simultaneously giving a novel explanation of material unity. As I will argue, the dual unifying and individuating roles of the *hexis* gives it some metaphysical advantages over a Scotistic haecceity, insofar as the latter requires a separate unifying principle, over and above the haecceity itself. If reducing the metaphysical complexity of a material individual is a desideratum, then having one dual-purposed principle seems preferable to having two distinct principles: one meant to unify, and the other meant to individuate.

Luc Bulundwe Lévy
PhD Student, University of Geneva, Switzerland

**Ethics and Pseudepigraphy:
Do the Ends Always Justify the Means?**

Popular wisdom recognise, as Machiavelli once said that: « for although the act condemn the doer, the end may justify him ». According to Machiavelli's statement, something wrong per se, can be justified in a specific context: the end. In the New Testament, pseudepigraphical letters – such as 2 Tim or 2 Pet – attest this statement, fictitiously using the apostles' identities in order to reinterpret their work, thus creating a tradition in a new context. While doing so, despite the fact that they give hope to the first Christian communities after the death of the apostles, they apparently infringe the modern notion of plagiarism. In other words, the authors of pseudonymous epistles have the prerogative to be heralds of God's Word but they seem to mislead their readers as to their true origin. Based on this observation, how can we explain the use of pseudonymity in the New Testament? The historical context offers a specific field of analysis in this respect. Pseudepigraphical literature appears right after the death of the apostles, in the time opened with *the delay of the Parousia*. In this specific literature, ethical concepts such as righteousness (δικαιοσύνη) and piety (εὐσέβεια) flourish. They are the sign of a chaotic situation, which needs not only a conversion (μετάνοια), but also rules and clear indications to organise a new era in which the hope of Christ's return is no longer perceived as imminent. The pseudonymity is then a feature of the transition from charismatic religion to institutional religion. Hence, we aim to demonstrate that the objective of the post-apostolic literature is to create values of early Christian communities after the apostles' death. Our purpose will be to demonstrate that the period of turmoil of the first communities were a sufficiently destabilizing situation that supported and shaped the use of pseudepigraphical literature in the New Testament.

Paulo Irineu Barreto Fernandes

Professor, Federal Institute of Education, Science and Technology of
Triângulo Mineiro, Brazil

The Philosophy of "The Dark Side of the Moon" by Pink Floyd: The Teaching of Philosophical Contents from the Study of a Progressive Rock's Masterpiece

Despite being taken secularly as a sophisticated exercise of scholarship, Philosophy, since its emergence, requires an attitude of perplexity and amazement, that both can manifest through doubts and certainties, as in the form of a discontentment with the established order, that approaches more commonly attributed to the behavior of young people: the rebellion. This may explain why one of the accusations made against the Greek philosopher Socrates has been that he corrupted young people, to encourage them to philosophical debate, rather than accept obediently the impositions of adults. Similarly, the teaching of Philosophy for young people can encounter obstacles, today, when only reproduces the thinking of classical philosophers, without promoting contextualization that can provide students with the timeliness and relevance of philosophical themes. Therefore, this paper presents a work developed at first in class, whose intention was to convey philosophical knowledge present in art and music, more specifically, on the album "The Dark Side of the Moon" (1973), of the english band Pink Floyd.

Is there any relationship between the album "The Dark Side of the Moon" and Philosophy? That is the question which this paper proposes. The texts that gave rise to the project were developed over several years, from 2003 to the present days (2016), during the Philosophy classes for high school students. More than ready to find answers and conclusions, the project sought to present the ideas developed in the way they were worked in the classroom. The themes: life, death, knowledge, ethics, time, madness, money, are studied in the work of many authors such as Plato, Augustine, Kant, Sartre, Foucault, and others, from its relationship with the lyrics of the songs on the album, such as *Speak to Me*, *Breathe*, *Time*, *Money*, *Us and Them*, *Brain Damage*, among others. Even the members of Pink Floyd acknowledged that the album "The Dark Side of the Moon" is an "expression of political, philosophical and humanitarian empathy that was desperate to get out" (Fernandes, 2009).

Therefore, the intention was to approach the high school students of Philosophy from a reality that is nearest - the Rock music - in a more affordable way, but no less rigorous. In conclusion, we infer that the project presented satisfactory results, in that it enabled a fertile dialogue

between Philosophy and the Progressive Rock, allowing students the opportunity to take an interest in Philosophy, from his interest for the Rock music, on the other side, it enabled a more elaborate view of the content of songs that, for many, are just fun and entertainment.

Bjorn Freter
Independent Scholar, Germany

Tolerance, Seriousness and Faith: An Existential-Formal Approach to Tolerance

Facticity, in our terminology, is *not* to be understood as objective reality, reality as it truly is – whatever that may be – but rather as that which we consider to be reality; that which we – either implicitly or explicitly – assume to be the case. Facticity is thus not purely an ontological or epistemological term, but also a hermeneutic term: facticity deals with reality as a construction, as something that is considered to be real. Existentiality, however, is to be understood as the positing of reality. Existential practice deals with realisation, with the positing of existential facts. In the frame of facticity, we augment reality with existential facts and create, in the midst of factuality, a quasi-factuality, that is: the existentiality. The creation of the existentiality as quasi-facticity means at the same time narrowing the existential range as initially set by the facticity. If it can be shown that we are able to proto-ethically bring existential facts into being, if we are able to demonstrate existentiality as a fundamental pattern in man's grasp of his existence, if we are able to demonstrate existentiality itself as a kind of *transcendental form*, the possibility will thus be opened to assume, by referring to the formal identity of all existentiality, the normative equivalence of various world views. While the existential practices may differ in concreto from one another, and may indeed be expressly declared incompatible in terms of their content, every individual person nevertheless retains the possibility of honouring the dignity of the other's grasp of human existence without betraying their own existentiality.

I am able to recognise the formal identity of another's existentiality to my own despite material differences. This recognition is to be defined as *tolerance*, accepting the other in his or her formal existentiality. We are thus also able to define intolerance as well: an intolerant attitude is one that formally places one's own existentiality above that of another, not accepting the formally identical existentiality of the other. An evaluation of one's own existentiality as materially superior, however, is not to be considered as intolerance. We are thus able to make good use of the term tolerance in the context of inter-religious conflict: the Christian, for example, who believes in the Bible, is not therefore intolerant of the Koran. While he does not materially recognise the Islamic grasp of existence, he is nevertheless able to recognise the formal grasp of existence as such, which is formally identical to his own grasp of existence. This means: the

Christian can take the Muslim seriously, and vice versa, without betraying his own religious identity. Of particular significance in religious existential practice is the fact that it concerns a specific grasp of existence, an understanding of reality and of oneself within reality through *faith*. We suspect that faith, however, is to be defined as a *specific form of love*: To believe in a religious sense means to love, to recognise an ought-to-be and to make it an ought-to-do. And he who does this, even though we perhaps cannot agree with the object of his love, can nevertheless be recognised as my equal simply through this love which is formally identical to my own.

This is certainly a criterion that is difficult to apply to day-to-day questions of religious tolerance, but we suspect that inter-religious dialogue could at least benefit anthropologically, so to speak, from this idea. It seems to us that this dialogue is continually hindered by material differences. But these differences allow virtually no room for discussion, since the individual religious communities are involved in countless internal disputes over so many issues, for example the Christian interpretation of the sacrament. We thus wish to plead for a concentration on existentiality as such.

Simon Glynn

Professor, Florida Atlantic University, USA

From a Deconstruction of Ethical Foundations to a Non- Foundational Ethics

My contention, against traditional claims, is that so far from ethics being grounded in a transcendental source, or even in one simply external to the existentially “lived” relationships to which it is applied, ethics is already implicit in these relationships. Thus in the first part of the paper, I examine, and refute the claims that Religion, Conscience, Faith, Intuition, Reason, Empirical Experience etc., can provide a foundation for Ethics. In the second part I proceed to argue that Empathy -- which so far from being a merely subjective feeling, is derived precisely from our relations to others (from which subjectivity itself is derived or emerges) to which it applies -- is, when qualified by critical reflection, central to all truly ethical ways of relating.

Richard Grandy
Professor, Rice University, USA

Emergence by Recursion

The concept of emergence is rather clearly defined for a philosophical concept. A property of an object (or a relation between objects) is emergent just in case it depends only on the properties of the parts but is not reducible to those properties. The focus of interest is the alleged emergence of the mental from the physical – the fascinating and very hard case.

This problem will only be solved, in my view, when we understand that there are many intermediate levels of emergent properties and relations. Until we work that out, I suggest a simpler case, which provides a relatively clear example of the relation between physical objects and their atomic and subatomic constituents. What is novel in my suggestion is that we should understand the relation as explicated as a recursive definition. Logic and mathematics offer us examples of properties of sets or numbers or strings that are determined by the properties of their parts but not explicitly definable in those terms.

Anna Kawalec

Professor, John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin, Poland

**Agency of Breath - Action and Motion in the Anthropology
of Ritual**

The presentation will be on the origins of the cosmic and existential dimensions of the ritual in the perspective of anthropology of Karol Wojtyla and Alfred Gell.

Pawel Kawalec

Professor, John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin, Poland

Routines in Science as Basic Ontological Units

I introduce the notion of scientific routine in the sense of T. Williamson's "first-knowledge epistemology" as a broad condition. Its internal aspect is related to representation (theories, laws, explanatory models etc.), while the external one is related to the institutional dimension of the research practice (including the stages of informal social activities). I illustrate this notion with historical survey using a contrasting model of generative vs productive knowledge creation mechanisms in various modern and more recent scientific practices and institutions.

Chin-Tai Kim

Professor, Case Western Reserve University, USA

Wonder as the Experiential Origin of Philosophy

The view that the onset of an awareness of the contingency of all beings and the permeation of all life with suffering originates a quest for salvific practice, or the view that fear of God is the beginning of wisdom does not press us to question how the originating experience explains the process that subsequently unfolds. But the view of Aristotle that philosophy begins in wonder makes us ask what the object of wonder is, what it is to wonder, what type of thinking is prefigured in the experience of wonder. If we take Aristotle's statement as an interpretation of the nature of philosophy he practices and the legacy he has inherited and appropriates, we should ask how the structural, thematic, theoretical and methodological diversity of philosophy can, if at all, be explained in reference to the same origin. This paper addresses the motive and rationale for a genealogy of philosophy, its promises and its dangers. Philosophy, it will be argued, is not a uniform enterprise but a family of activities having partial affinities and differences, shaped, more than some philosophers would willingly acknowledge, by different sets of historical and cultural circumstances, with different stresses and orientations.

Tonci Kokic

Assistant Professor, University of Split, Croatia

Designer Babies Project as Possible New Racism

This paper claims that human gene editing in embryos selected to be born could be trigger for social stratification based on financial power of their creator or client, forming a new kind of injustice social hierarchy, precisely racism. Moreover, designer baby project could led to emergence of a new biological species within the genus Homo.

In February, British scientists from the The Francis Crick Institute have been granted permission from the HFEA (Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority) to genetically modify human embryos for the sake of better understanding of the crucial process of embryo development and possible causes of infertility, miscarriage and some genetic diseases. Also, this can advantage our understanding the genes that are needed for the development of healthy embryo. Opponents to this authorization does not deny possible good from this experiments, but do worry this experiments technologically open doors to designer babies and psychologically prepare society for the era of new social classes of genetically superior and inferior, maybe even disintegration of species within the genus Homo, as Habermas warned in *The Future of Human Nature*. This experiments challenge a variety of problems: technical, biological, evolutionary, social and in particular ethical – is there and where legitimate limits of genetic intervention.

Leaving aside other problems, this texts made investigation on suspicion of possible new kind racism based on genes, more specifically on genetic editing humankind babies. This new kind of racism could put humans in hierarchical scale relatively to possession of favourable traits and predestined members of social 'castes' based on their genetic traits. This point break down general presumption of individual achievement as measurement of person value, substitute it by amount of money spent in creating and buying a promising genetic equipment (as *Gattaca* film show). Similarity between ranking of superior and inferior man based on editing genes of embryos and racists evaluating physical features of people into hierarchical type are transformed in sameness.

Furthermore, by this way humanity brake Kant's second formulation of the categorical imperative to treat humanity in every person never merely as a means to an end, but always at the same time as an end.

It seems that the background theory of designer babies include metaphysical assumptions which reduce the right of existence to embryos with selected certain physical, mental, esthetical, health or gender

features. Genes engineering, based on wish of prospect parents to provide their offspring better position in life competencies and society, could lead to disparity between new class of genetically superior man and others with at best, average features, namely - inferior. The new type of social stratification and discrimination may arise in an almost completely collapse of civilization by free or out of hand genetically designed babies: for example, is it not hard to imagine aftermath of the same sex babies flood.

Martyna Koszka

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Free Will, Grace, and God: The Problem of Predestination of Human Beings according to John Duns Scotus

John Duns Scotus discusses the problem of predestination of human beings in the following works: *Ordinatio* I, d. 40, 41, *Lectura* I, d. 40, 41 and in the *Reportatio* IA, d. 39-40, 41.

There are three theses that can be distinguished in his theory of predestination.

(1) Scotus tries to reconcile the immutability of divine knowledge and freedom of created persons by applying the concept of synchronic contingency, which allows to justify that the knowledge of God is certain and unchanging, but contingent, and thus events (including the acts of will of created persons) are unnecessary and free. This allows Scotus to avoid fatalism.

(2) Redemption is the matter of grace, and thus is a matter of God's will, and His free choice. It is not the consequence of merits of the created persons. On the contrary, the condemnation is related to the reasons - God, when He condemns a person, he takes into account the sins and bad use of someone's free will. Scotus tries thereby to reconcile both God's justice and His mercy. Against the views of St. Augustine, Peter Lombard, Thomas Aquinas and Henry of Ghent, Scotus' own position is moderate. In terms of predestination, Thomas Aquinas' position is most voluntaristic while Henry's of Ghent is least.

(3) Scotus solves the most difficult problem of the impact of grace on the someone's freedom and choice by using the categories "velle" / "non-velle" / "nolle". God is non-willing (non-velle) the grace for the sinner but this act does not make the condemned person remain an ultimate sinner. This way, the "non-velle" act does not determine the condemned person to sin.

The research on which this presentation is based has been supported by National Science Centre, Poland, grant: The Philosophical Discussion of the Problem of Determinism from St. Augustine to Alvin Plantinga. Human Freedom and Theistic Hypothesis (2014/15/B/HS1/00406).

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Not Three Gods but One: Why Reductionism Doesn't Serve our Theological Discourse

The triune nature of God is one of the most complex doctrines of Christianity, and its complexity is further compounded when one considers the incarnation. However, many of the difficulties and paradoxes associated with our idea of the divine arise from our adherence to reductionist ontology. I will argue that in order to move our theological discourse forward, in respect to divine and human nature, a holistic interpretation of our profession of faith is necessary. The challenge of a holistic interpretation is that it questions our ability to make any statement about the genuine, ontological individuation of persons (both divine and human), and in doing so raises the issue of whether we are, ontologically, bound to descend in to a form of pan(en)theism. In order to address the "inevitable" slide in to pan(en)theism I will examine the impact of two forms of holistic interpretation, Boolean and Non-Boolean, on our concept of personhood. Whilst a Boolean interpretation allows for a greater understanding of the relational nature of the Trinity, it is the Non-Boolean interpretation that has greater ontological significance. A Non-Boolean ontology, grounded in our scientific understanding of the nature of the world, shows our quest for individuation rests not in ontological fact but in epistemic need, and that it is our limited epistemology that drives our need to divide that which is ontologically indivisible. Whilst this ontological shift may be necessary, it raises questions about how divine-human relations are to be understood, and I conclude by examining some possible solutions.

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Interfaith Dialogue in the Modern World: Problems and Prospects

Interfaith relations have always played a significant role in the history of civilizations. Religious motives could act as either uniting or destructive factors in shaping cross-cultural relationships. In the context of globalization and intensification of information interfaith dialogue now becomes more and more relevant and is disclosed in the new supplementary aspects, caused by the significant shifts in public opinion that occurred at the turn of the century.

In Western Christian theology, there has been a trend towards the strengthening of theological orthodoxy, as the opposition to the increasing secularization of a globalizing society. This new movement is nondenominational in nature and is characterized by appeal to Patristic, Saint Augustine, Thomas Aquinas and departure from the Protestant theology of the twentieth century ("Radical Orthodoxy" in England, "New Theology" in France). The similar processes, though less pronounced, also can be viewed both in Islam and in Buddhism. This process has been accompanied by the growing of sectarianism and tension in interfaith relations.

In general, the society is interested in preserving the basic cultural and religious traditions while updating them in interpreting theology, which would maintain social stability, also preserving the cultural and religious identity. The increasing secularization of society, treated by the representatives of the religious community as perhaps the biggest threat, in fact, in the face of multi-confessions and globalization, is less destructive factor for religion. As it was in the Middle Ages modern theology cannot claim to totality, ignoring the other sources of knowledge, particularly scientific ones, playing the role of legislator. Changes in theology are inevitable and their quality will determine the viability of the denominations in the 21st century. New theologians must demonstrate flexibility and a high level of human culture beyond the narrow ethnicity and even confessional frameworks.

As the experience of modern Western theology, the heritage of classics could be completely combined with the modern philosophy and could tolerate a wide range of interpretations, while preserving the doctrinal foundations. As another required condition of the reformation in theology in any denomination becomes the interfaith dialogue. The ability of such a dialogue is an important indicator of the viability of this denomination in a changing world.

The subjects of interfaith dialogue could be not only the representatives of the clergy and theologians, but also the ordinary believers and any persons interested in the discussing issues of interfaith relations. It could be assumed that the peacekeeping, fighting with disease, poverty, drug addiction and other social problems of the modern society could be a field of activity where the representatives of different denominations should interact.

Another field of such interaction should be the joining of efforts to discuss the spiritual foundations of modern civilized society. Of course, the call for interfaith "unity" should not be understood as a desire to link in a whole any doctrinal and liturgical foundations, which, of course, is impossible. But it could and should be unified in understanding the unity of cultural conditions of the spiritual life. This process could not be achieved without coordinated positions of the representatives of all denominations. And this aspect should be the one of the main tasks of interfaith dialogue at the present situation.

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The Meaning of Life: The Major Philosophical Aspects Hidden Behind a Fundamental Question of Human Existence

The question about the meaning of life is one of the most crucial questions that the human mind is able to produce. The way we respond to it determines the way we design and arrange our life and our culture. Leaving this topic to religious authorities for instance results in an irrational approach, but philosophical scholars are not addressing it sufficiently.

So, what exactly do we mean when we talk about the meaning of life? Behind this expression is hiding a set of very diverse philosophical ideas. Analytic philosophy is the tool to bring the hidden philosophical issues to the surface, clarify their content and study the conceptual compatibility between each other. This approach results in a clearer understanding of what '*the meaning of life*' stands for.

My reflection starts off with 5 categories in which all historical philosophically relevant answers to the meaningfulness of our existence can be inserted. From those overall conceptions can be extracted the material, i.e. the hidden philosophical ideas, that allows us to construct a relevant semantic network which brings a great deal of clarification and the possibility to find more precise common grounds for discussion about this highly abstract question. A conceptual and linguistic analysis is applied to a number of concepts and issues contained in this semantic network such as the moralistic fallacy, the eudaimonistic issue, the concept of 'meaning' itself etc.

The results of this analysis are used to produce a personal outlook on the validity claim of former and future theories about the meaning of life. My paper concludes that the question about life's meaning should not only be placed in a non-religious, non-teleological and intersubjective narrative for normative purposes, but gains a large amount of clarity by doing so.

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Religion and Life Conduct: Some Affinities between Max Weber and Greek Skepticism

This article is intended to carry out a comparison between the ideas of Max Weber and Greek skeptics about the foundations of religious beliefs and their relationship to human behavior. The aim is to show that there are some significant similarities between these postulations of thought so far away in time from each other and inserted in so different intellectual contexts. On the one hand, it will be showed that the problem of the relationship between faith and reason occupied a prominent place in both the history of skepticism and in the work of Weber. Greek skeptics questioned the possibility of a rational inquiry to achieve a secure knowledge of the divine, showing, as a rule, how the acceptance of a "religious truth" to some extent requires submitting one's reasoning to unprovable beliefs. The same concern with the conflict between the grounds of religious ideas and the purely rational knowledge is present in Weber, revealing in this respect, a line of continuity between his outlook and the one traditionally associated with skepticism.

On the other hand, the purpose of living in accordance with phenomena led Greek skeptics to a kind of practical accommodation to traditional religious rituals and to the recognition of religion's influence on conduct, as a supplier of ethical standards, regardless of the unsustainability of their ultimate statements when submitted to rigorous rational criticism. In this, one can see another affinity with Max Weber once one of his greatest contributions in the field of religious studies was precisely his emphasis on the concept of religious ethics, which allowed him to study the role of religious beliefs in the conduct of practical life. The analysis of the original sources will demonstrate that, apart from the specific intellectual problems in which Weber and Greek skeptics were involved, there are, at least, two common features in their reflections: the recognition of the impossibility of faith resting upon any rational evidence and the emphasis on practical effects of belief.

William O'Meara

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Marx and the Hypothetical Moral Imperative

Whereas Kant offers his categorical imperative as an unconditional command based on abstract reason apart from any concept of human nature and its needs, Marx offers his fundamental moral imperative as a conditional command based on his concept of human nature and its needs. Human nature evolved the abilities of rationality and freedom through the development of labor, social relationships, and language. However, human nature comprises not only these capacities of rationality and freedom but also the need to develop those capacities. For at the dawn of human evolution for Marx, consciousness and freedom are quite limited by nature and social others since consciousness appears here as instinctive consciousness or herd consciousness. The need to develop consciousness and freedom arises dialectically as human labor, language, and social relationships become more complex.

In our time, the laboring and social relationships of capitalism do not by themselves give us the task of freeing ourselves from their domination. We give ourselves that hypothetical moral imperative by interpreting capitalism from the viewpoint of the needs of the proletariat for the development of rationality and freedom in and through labor and social relationships. When we dedicate ourselves whether individually or as members of a revolutionary group to fulfill these needs, then we give to ourselves the moral vocation and task of living in accord with the fundamental moral imperative that the freedom of each is the condition for the free development of all by looking upon ourselves as members of the universal society of persons whose rationality and freedom need to develop in mutually enhancing ways through labor and social relationships.

My paper will explore Carol Gould's affirmation that the self-realization of self and community in mutually enhancing ways involves the moral concept of justice in which all individuals have an equal right to self-realization as positive freedom. In mutually enhancing relationships, individuals not only respect each other as ends in themselves but also positively recognize and respect each other's concrete projects for developing rationality and freedom. Such mutuality involves assisting each other to fulfill their human needs.

Finally, my paper will discuss how Stojanovich's or Aronovitch's grasp of the Marxian concept of human nature and its potentials affects Gould's interpretation of Marx.

William O'Meara
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A Natural Ethics of Gratitude

Cicero has affirmed that gratitude is not only the greatest of virtues but the parent of them all. Following Cicero, this paper will explore how we can find gratitude at the center of the virtues of faith, hope and love.

The theologian, Richard McBrien, has identified three models of ethics that have influenced Christian ethics, the teleological model of Aristotle, the deontological model of Kant, and the personalism model of Catholic moral theology through most of the 20th and 21st century. We will follow McBrien in exploring the personalism model and also use his point that recent moral theologians have gone beyond the traditional distinction between the theological virtues of faith, hope and love by which we relate to God and the cardinal virtues of wisdom, courage, temperance and fortitude by which we relate to humanity. Some theologians have adopted a distinction between general virtues, such as faith, hope and love, applicable in all our moral life and special virtues, such as a good sense of humor, applicable only in some aspects of our life.

When we are born, we do not have any general or specific virtues well developed that form our character, but we learn good actions and consequent good habits primarily, Aristotle points out, from others. This paper argues that we develop our general virtues of faith, hope and love through a three step process:

Faith

A Grace from Others: Others first teach me to believe in my own self-worth, most especially in the power of my own understanding of the world and others and in the efficacy of my own will to be creative.

A Grace from Myself: As a high school student, as a college student, as a person striving for excellence in my own field of study, I choose to believe in the efficacy of my own intellect and my own creative will even when I encounter teachers who do not understand me or appreciate me.

A Grace for Others: I choose to believe in the power of the intellect of my students and in the efficacy of their own creative wills. (From deep within me, Jesus believes in others as I choose to believe in these others.)

Hope

A Grace from Others: Others first teach me to hope in my future and

our mutual future. When I do not see a future for myself, when I am all knotted-up in my own failures and my own despair, others trust in me, helping me to envision a new future and encouraging me to work for that new future.

A Grace from Myself: Even when I may have fallen into despair, even so, something deep within me may rise up and teach me to see a new future, to hope for that new vision, and to work for that.

A Grace for Others: Even though others may be trapped in profound despair or depression, I choose to believe in the power of the intellect of others and in the efficacy of their own creative wills. (From deep within me, Jesus hopes in others as I choose to hope in these others).

Love

A Grace from Others: Others first teach me to love myself and others, to affirm the dignity of self and others, and to forgive myself and others when we fail.

A Grace from Myself: Even when I fail myself and others, I can love myself, forgive myself, and start anew.

A Grace for Others: I choose to treasure others, to forgive them even though they may have injured me, and to affirm their worth as persons.

Conclusion

In deep gratitude to others (1) for their faith in the dignity of my person, (2) for their hope for the continued dignity of my person, and (3) for their love of me for my own sake, then for their gift of faith, hope, and love in my person, I can choose to live in deep gratitude with faith, hope, and love in the dignity of all persons for their own sake as the central virtue of my life.

The paper will also explore whether or not the three-fold process of (1) a grace from others, (2) a grace from myself, and (3) a grace for others can be found in the cardinal virtues of wisdom, courage, temperance, and justice.

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On the Principle of Beneficence: A Comparative Analysis on its Three Fundamental Views

Moral philosophy is the study of right and good. Moral philosophy plays an essential role in formulating ethical theories. This is an inquiry among rules, principles, and virtues which can be morally established. Among them the principle of beneficence is an established one. The principle of beneficence is an indispensable moral principle in many current studies such as, in economics it is a chief determinant to measure financial profits, however, here we only focus on the moral foundation of the principle of beneficence which is an expedient principle in various streams of applied ethics such as it is an important determinant in medical ethics, bioethics, public health care and business ethics. Generally the term beneficence connotes acts of mercy, kindness, and charity. Although the concept of beneficence seems same as doing charity or showing pity to others, it is far more than that. In the field of ethics the principle of beneficence evokes some normative meanings, i.e. some moral obligation to act for the others' benefit, helping them by promoting collective welfare and often by preventing or removing possible harms.

In this article, I want to critically explore the foundation of beneficence through a comparative study between three major classical ethical theories of Aristotle, Mill and Kant. While critically analyzing these three ethical theories, I confronted with some ethical quarries, such as: Whether beneficence towards other inspired by self-beneficence or self-love? And how much i.e. to what extent and which sense self-love is morally permissible? Whether the principle of beneficence can be practiced in its ideal sense? Whether beneficence can be done purely for duty purpose? On the issue of beneficence whether there are any converging points of the two confronting theories i.e. teleological and deontological. The whole purpose of this study is to confer those arising questions on the principle of beneficence from the view of its foundation.

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Human Technological Improvement and non-Therapeutic Body Modifications: An Analysis from Transhumanism

Within transhumanism and posthumanism, it analyzed the role of technology and the direct influence it has on the human condition. This is done through the category of human technological improvement (or simply: human enhancement). Lots of texts in reference to nanotechnology, genetic modifications, the brain-computer interface or uploading, to name some is done. Although "In one sense, all technology can be viewed as an enhancement of our native human capacities, enabling us to achieve certain effects that would otherwise requires more effort or be all together beyond our power." (Savulescu & Bostrom, 2008, pp.2).

Despite this, rarely body-no therapeutic modifications and non-corrective cosmetic changes are taken into consideration, as they are seen as something cosmetic, superfluous or elements that do not improve humanity as a whole, but only modify individual aspects and in a relative manner, which according to the criteria of authors like Nick Bostrom, is not the purpose of human improvement.

In fact, Bostrom introduced into the philosophical debate categories relative advantages and intrinsic benefits (or net positive externalities), where the therapeutic-no body modifications are not in a broad sense, the kind of changes that will allow us reach a posthuman state or at least, transhuman. Bostrom (2003) believes that human enhancement, should be a consideration regarding the benefits obtained and what kind of improvements should be promoted by the transhumanist movement. For this purpose, we should consider the difference, "... Between enhancements that offer only positional advantages (eg. an Increase in height), Which are only insofar advantages as others lack them, and enhancements that provide either intrinsic benefits or net positive externalities (Such as a better immune system or improvement of cognitive functioning). "(pp.19). In this sense the changes that truly contribute improving the human condition are those amendments which involve intrinsic benefits or net positive externalities such as abolishing the suffering of these diseases (through neuro-technology, for example), slow down the process of old age or the prolongation of life. Positional advantages (eg. non-corrective cosmetic changes) do not pose benefits rather than from an individual and subjective view. Thus only from a

comparative point of view casuistry that could be considered beneficial for someone and not generally for the human species.

Well, the purpose of this paper is to show by an analysis from the philosophy that non-corrective cosmetic changes and non-therapeutic body modifications (in a broad sense) are relevant to the improvement and human empowerment, under they open new spaces of material and symbolic interpretation for human improvement in aspects of identity, personality or individuality. Similarly, these alterations or changes generate questions to biological-normative normality from reflection sex-gender system. Including therapeutic-no body modifications pose interesting challenges to the traditional concept of health (part of a bio-medical approach) because it broadens the horizon on boundary between when a treatment or procedure is considered as medical or therapeutic. However, one of the most interesting aspects is that these changes redefine or extend the statute itself improvement and human empowerment.

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The Evolution of the Human Brain as Justification for Kant's Natural End Hypothesis

This article aims to establish a nexus between the theories of Harry Jerison, which links the emergence of symbolic language to a kind of sensorimotor evolutionary sophistication of the human brain, and Kant, which explain the genesis of harmony between Understanding and Reason as dependent of a process developed by the Faculty of Imagination. For Jerison, with the development of the neocortex came also the symbolic language as a resource needed to a new way to organize and save the motor responses to stimuli. These are also generated by memory. Kant, in the third criticism, seeks to demonstrate the existence of harmony between the Faculties of Understanding and Reason promoted by aesthetic judgments. These allow a free agreement between Understanding and Reason, without which no determination arises, either in practical or speculative interest. Nevertheless, to the German philosopher this power of aesthetic judgment depends on the acceptance that there is a purpose in nature, which should also be justified. If biological evolution happens by nature pressures, then we can seek justification for the concept of Kant's Natural End in Jerison's thesis.

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The Essence of God and the Identity of God as God

What people believe about God does not establish any specificity that would identify God as God. Yet without identification we cannot identify God as God, should God show up. Apriority, analyticity and necessity of God cannot establish identity. If what we know about God cannot identify God as God, then we can only establish what apriority, analyticity and necessity establishes regarding the essence of God without any identification. Everything that exists, exists with specificity or better, nothing exists without specificity or identity (kripke). If God exists, God too exists with identity, but we do not have any clue of what that identity is or might be. Without any clue as to what the identity of God might be, we can only put emphasis on why we choose to believe in God and not what we believe about God. In this paper an attempt is made to show that if all the arguments for God cannot establish any identity for God—then the search for empirical proof amounts to nothing. If what we believe about God cannot provide identity then we must extrapolate the essence of God from why we choose to believe in God. If the sacred texts cannot provide any visible traits that can identify God for the believers; if Pascal's wager for 'what we stand to gain' by believing in God, cannot identify God for the wagers; if Calvin's *sensus devinitatis* cannot not give believers any specifics that can identify God as God; if Descartes logical necessity, Swinburne's factual necessity and Plantinga's metaphysical necessity of God cannot establish any identifiable essence, then the essence of God derived from apriority, analyticity and necessity simply impinges on the relevance of the questions (Leibniz) that purports such beliefs. The significance of this research is to point out that if identification of God is not a given then we cannot be fundamental or dogmatic about the essence of God. Here Epicurus advice becomes relevant, when he argues "an impious person is not one who rejects the beliefs of many but attaches to gods the beliefs of many."

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The Survival of Persons: A Reply to Parfit's Reductionism

Reductionists about personal identity contend that there is nothing more to our survival than a series of causally related experiences and/or bodily continuities. Our belief in a separately existing self or subject of experiences is held to unjustified, and we are recommended to reduce the conception of our identity by jettisoning that belief. Despite the very real ingenuity that reductionists have shown in defending their position, I shall argue not only that they are committed to accepting a view of our survival that is a version of the very theory which they are seeking to overthrow, but that, on the evidence available, such a theory ought to be accepted as the most defensible account of our continued existence. More particularly, I shall contend that we need to distinguish between persons (as continuing subjects of experience) and any related series of experience (their lives); and in such a way that persons can justifiably be held to survive the ending of any of their lives. This position is defended in the first section. In the second, I examine a number of objections to the conception of persons that is defended in the first section, including the following two objections: first, that in distinguishing persons from their lives, I must be turning each person into an abstract entity; and, second, that I cannot allow for significant personality changes to occur during the lives of person.