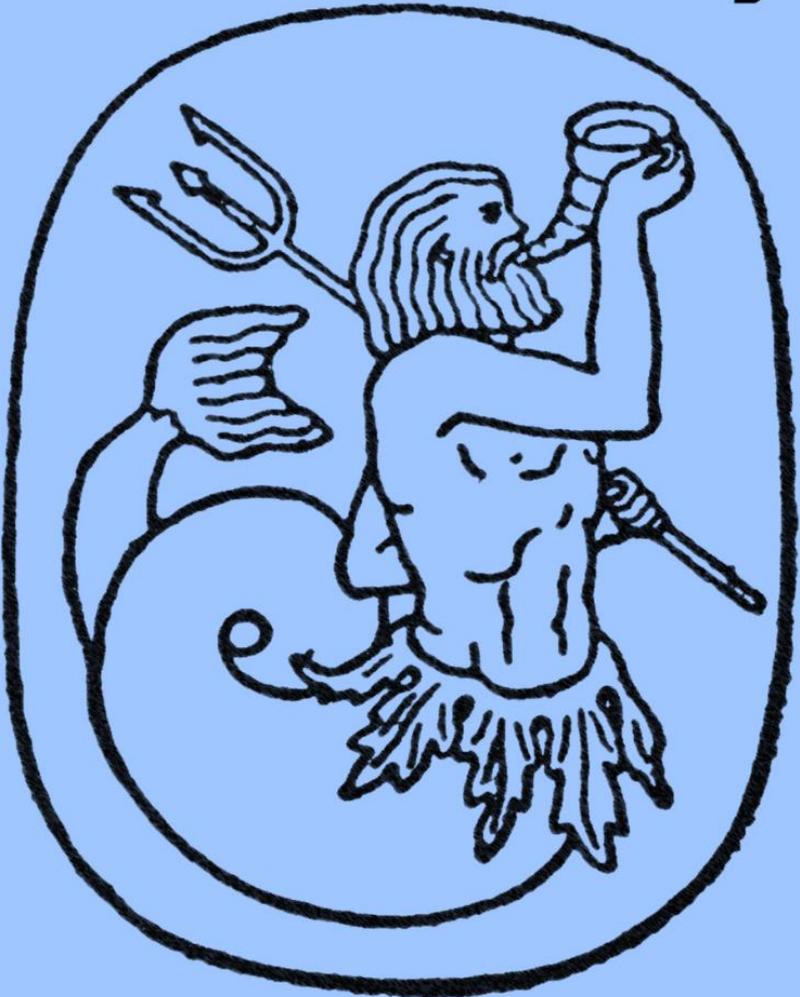


Overheard in Seville

*Bulletin of the
Santayana
Society*

No. 37
Fall 2019



Bulletin of the George Santayana Society

No. 37 2019

(For electronic distribution)

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The George Santayana Society

2020

ANNUAL MEETING

The Society holds its annual meeting in conjunction with the January meetings of the American Philosophical Association (Eastern Division) in Philadelphia.

Chair

Richard M Rubin

George Santayana Society

Speaker

Katarzyna Krempleska

Institute of Philosophy and Sociology,

Polish Academy of Sciences, Warsaw

Ideal Allegiances and Practical Wisdom:
Elements of Santayana's Political Philosophy

Chair

Glenn Tiller

Texas A&M University—Corpus Christi

Lydia Amir

Tufts University

Santayana, Nietzsche, Montaigne

11:15 AM–1:10 PM, Saturday, 11 January 2020

The Philadelphia 201 Hotel

201 N 17th St, Philadelphia, PA

The George Santayana Society

2020

PACIFIC MEETING

The Society holds a session on the topic
Harmony & Well-Being: Santayana on the Good Life
at the April meetings of the Pacific Division of the
American Philosophical Association in San Francisco.

Chair

Richard M Rubin

George Santayana Society

Speaker

Hector Galván

Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi
Philosophy as a Path to Well-Being

Speaker

Diana Heney

Vanderbilt University
Santayana in Conversation:
Guiding Normative Notions in American Pragmatism

Speaker

Hasko von Kriegstein

Ryerson University
Well-Being as Harmony

6:00 PM–9:00 PM, Thursday, 9 April 2020
The Westin St. Francis on Union Square
335 Powell Street, San Francisco, California

Editor's Notes

The 2019 Annual Meeting of the George Santayana Society last January in New York attracted a good-sized audience though two speakers were not present: Brita Stoneman, the winner of the Angus Kerr-Lawson Prize, and Phillip L. Beard delivered their papers and answered questions by telephone. Glenn Tiller, who was physically present, commented on Beard's paper. Both papers and Tiller's commentary appear in this issue. (Hector Galván, the third speaker, did not submit his paper for publication, but he will present again at the George Santayana Society meeting in San Francisco at 6:00 pm on 9 April 2020 at the APA Pacific Division)

This thirty-seventh issue of *Overheard in Seville*, our largest yet, covers a wide range of topics including our third series of biographical sketches of Santayana 75, 100, and 125 years ago. James Ballowe, who writes about 1894, also describes his visit to Santayana's literary executor Daniel Cory in an essay with an accompanying poem and color photograph. This introduction of photography to the *Bulletin* is augmented by pictures of a recently discovered letter from Santayana to the poet and essayist Lionel Johnson. Ruth Derham (whose article "Ideal Sympathy? The Unlikely Friendship of George Santayana and Frank, 2nd Earl Russell" was in last year's issue) and her fellow researcher Sarah Green report how they found this letter at Winchester College in England inserted in a book of Johnson's poetry next to a poem dedicated to Santayana.

Scholarly use of Santayana's letters comes to the fore in Katarzyna Kremplewska's article on Santayana and communism. Kremplewska, who will be speaking at our Annual Meeting in Philadelphia at 11:15 am on 11 January 2020 at the APA Eastern Division, has recently published a book, *Life as Insinuation: George Santayana's Hermeneutics of Finite Life and Human Self*. Martin Coleman reviews it for us.

Lydia Amir, the founder of the International Association for the Philosophy of Humor, also will be speaking at our meeting in Philadelphia. In this issue she gives a comprehensive account of laughter in Santayana's writings and why it is special.

Phillip Beard's article, along with Tiller's amplifying commentary, defends Santayana's take on Emerson against Stanley Cavell. David Dilworth, in the second of three articles on Santayana and romanticism, does exactly the opposite.

Brita Stoneman's prize-winning essay, "Forming Harmony," constructs a theory of rhetoric derived from Santayana's ideas.

Nóra Horváth's article, based on her presentation at the World Congress of Philosophy in Beijing in August 2018, traces the legacy of humanism in Santayana's work.

Richard K Atkins's 2018 *Bulletin* article, "Santayana on Propositions" generated an email exchange. As this animated discussion should be of interest to our readers, we present a lightly edited version.

This issue also includes the regular Bibliographic Checklist Update compiled by Daniel Moreno with additional contributions from Guido Tamponi.

The volunteer efforts of many people go into making an issue of the *Bulletin*. Thanks to the authors for their contributions and their patience throughout the revision process and to the editorial board for their hours of editing and proofreading. I especially want to thank Glenn Tiller, Michael Brodrick, and Matt Flamm, who pitched in to help with the final preparation and copy editing.

RICHARD MARC RUBIN

Editor and President, George Santayana Society

Santayana 75, 100, and 125 Years Ago

Santayana in 1894: The Poet

In the year following 1893, the year of his *metanoia*¹, Santayana had been an instructor at Harvard in philosophy for five years. After returning from his Walker Fellowship at the University of Berlin during 1896 and 1897, he wrote his dissertation under Josiah Royce on the philosopher Hermann Lotze. Upon graduation in 1889, he was hired as an instructor in the department. But he spent the early part of his teaching career writing poetry rather than publishing in philosophy. His colleagues (including William James) had been his professors at Harvard, and he team-taught introductory courses to philosophy with James, Royce, and George Herbert Palmer. Although his colleagues continued to acknowledge his keen intelligence, they and the Harvard administration had some concern about his concentration on poetry. Even though he taught courses during 1894 that concentrated on Descartes, Spinoza, and Leibniz, a course in aesthetics, one in the history of English philosophy from Hobbes to Hume, and another in scholastic philosophy, his first published work, which came in 1894 was *Sonnets and Other Poems*. It was to be followed two other poetic works: *Lucifer: A Theological Tragedy* (1899) and *The Hermit of Carmel and Other Poems* (1901). Nevertheless, his teaching and reading during his early years led to two books of philosophy, *The Sense of Beauty: Being the Outline of Aesthetic Theory* (1896) and *Interpretations of Poetry and Religion* (1900), both engaging philosophical issues while emphasizing art as a way of knowing. It was not until Santayana had published his first major philosophical work, the five-volume *Life of Reason: or the Phases of Human Progress* (1905-1906), that he was promoted, after his own insistence, to a professorship in 1907.

As William Holzberger notes in his biographical introduction to *The Complete Poems of George Santayana: A Critical Edition* (1979), Santayana became interested in poetry early on at the Boston Latin School, an interest that he pursued as a poet and commentator on poetry throughout the rest of his life (POEMS 43). At Harvard, he often entertained his peers at the O.K. Club, the Hasty Pudding, and other student organizations to which he belonged with verses that appealed to their interests. Many of the often humorous and sometimes bawdy poems show a side of Santayana that allows the reader to understand that he was not the complete outsider in American society that he is often characterized as being. But those poems do not have the philosophical intent exhibited in his first book of poetry, which was published in 1894, just after his *metanoia*. Some of the latter poems in *Sonnets and Other Verses* were written before and during the deaths of his father and his young friend Warwick Potter and the marriage and departure to Spain of his beloved half-sister Susana in 1893.

Hannibal Kimball and Herbert Stone, two young Harvard graduates, started a publishing house in Cambridge and Chicago with the expectation of publishing poets associated with Harvard. Santayana wrote a letter to Kimball and Stone

¹ See Herman J Saatkamp, Jr., "Santayana in 1893: the *Metanoia*," *Overheard in Seville* 36 (Fall 2018): 4-5.

saying that he would be able to offer them a manuscript of twenty sonnets, other verses, and a longer poem that he suggested to the editors “may not be wise to print” (LGS 11 December 1893). That poem was the prelude to what became *Lucifer: A Theological Tragedy*. This slim volume confirmed his mastery of the sonnet form. For Santayana, the sonnet contained the essential elements of poetry: number, measure, and euphony. He believed that these elements are also essential to architecture, an art that interested him from early on. In “The Elements and Function of Poetry,” the final chapter of *Interpretations of Poetry and Religion*, published six years after *Sonnets and Other Verses*, Santayana links his interests in architecture and poetry:

Although a poem be not made by counting of syllables upon the fingers, yet ‘numbers’ is the most poetical synonym we have for verse, and ‘measure’ the most significant equivalent for beauty, for goodness, and perhaps even for truth. Those early and profound philosophers, the followers of Pythagoras, saw the essence of all things in number . . . Every human architect must do likewise with his edifice; he must mould his bricks or hew his stones into symmetrical solids and lay them over one another in regular strata, like a poet’s lines. (IPR 151)

The sonnets and verses in his first book of poetry are shaped by these elements. The well-defined form offered him a way of conveying the meaning of the events that marked his *metanoia* or change of heart, particularly in the four sonnets dedicated to Warwick Potter. There was the reaction to death, but also the determination to live his life unconstrained by that which might divert him from his own goals in life. Sonnet III, no doubt his best-known poem, addresses this decision as well as being an apparent harbinger of the distinction between matter and spirit:

O world, thou chooseth not the better part!
It is not wisdom to be only wise,
And on the inward vision close the eyes,
But it is wisdom to believe the heart.

Santayana’s heart would lead him to resign his Harvard professorship in 1912 and live in England, France, and Italy for the next forty years. Even Santayana’s four sonnets dedicated to Warwick Potter, while expressing grief for his death, look toward the future. He writes in the first of these sonnets:

Why should we grieve,
But that we merit not your holy death?
We shall not loiter long, your friends and I;
Living you made it goodlier to live,
Dead you will make it easier to die.

Santayana was immensely productive after leaving Harvard, writing over 20 books and corresponding and visiting with friends and family. His life was thoroughly his own, a life that he writes of in his first book of poems. In sonnet IV, for example, he writes:

I would I had been born in nature’s day,
When man was in the world a wide-eyed boy,
And clouds of sorrow crossed his sky of joy

To scatter dewdrops on the buds of May.
Then could he work and love and fight and pray,
Nor heartsick grow in fortune's long employ.

This yearning from 1894 became a reality when he left the United States for good in 1912, settling first in France, but inadvertently confined to England with the outbreak of World War I. In the chapter "War Shrines" in *Soliloquies in England and Later Soliloquies*, Santayana echoes a sentiment of many of the poems he published in 1894: "There is no cure for birth and death save to enjoy the interval" (SE 97).

JAMES BALLOWE

Santayana in 1919—Return to Paris

By 9 March 1919 Santayana had let it be known that as the winter now was coming to an end, he himself had spent it "in a mentally comatose condition, doing very little but read the papers and a few odd books, and pottering away now and then at some one of my many half-written things" (LGS to Logan Pearsall Smith, 9 March 1919). On the horizon were the publication of two upcoming books of his own, along with an article contribution, "Three Proofs of Realism," to a book co-written by seven American thinkers (including Santayana himself) and scholars: Durant Drake, Arthur O. Lovejoy, James Bissett Pratt, Arthur K. Rogers, Roy Wood Sellars, and Santayana's close friend, Charles Augustus (C.A.) Strong, entitled *Essays in Critical Realism: A Co-Operative Study of the Problem of Knowledge* (1920). On top of that, he had completed a handful ("six or seven of them") of short pieces that would eventually be included in the collected volume of *Soliloquies in England and Later Soliloquies* (1922). Santayana's own books were *Character and Opinion in the United States* (1920), and *Little Essays* (1920), a volume that Logan Pearsall Smith edited and cobbled together into 114 short selections drawn from seven of Santayana's writings.² All three books were published in 1920.

Negotiations in Paris, between the victorious Allied Powers and the vanquished Central Powers lasted from 18 January to 28 June 1919. During these six months, Santayana had stayed put in Oxford for the first three of those months, but by 2 April he informed his closest acquaintance, Strong, that he was going to be on the move soon. He sensed changes were in the air: "Your philosophical letter shall be answered another day. I write now only to say that I am giving up my rooms here (where I have been for four years!) on April 24th and expect to go then for a few days to London" (LGS 2 April 1919). Santayana would remain in England for almost three more months. In the same letter, interestingly enough, Santayana informed Strong that he was seriously considering an offer by the Y.M.C.A. (Young Men's Christian Association, founded in London in 1844, and stateside, in Boston in 1851) to be transported to war fronts, to address young

² They were *The Sense of Beauty, Interpretations of Poetry and Religion, The Life of Reason, Three Philosophical Poets*, the "Introduction to Spinoza's Ethics and "De Intellectus Emendatione," *Winds of Doctrine*, and *Egotism in German Philosophy*.

American troops about British ways and customs, and vice versa. But nothing ever came of it. With the official demands of travel efficiency and dates, along with bureaucratic prerequisites and paperwork that were numerous, the tour never materialized. On 22 May Santayana wrote to Strong in Paris from Richmond, just outside London: "I learn that I am released from the proposed lectures at Coblenz, which is partly a disappointment (it would have been such a curious experience) but chiefly a great relief" (LGS). Santayana told Strong he would arrive in Paris in late June.

We sometimes tend to, in our efforts to understand and probe deeper into the sources and wellsprings of Santayana's thought and life, blind ourselves to what others said and have written about him; or rather, we do ingest it, but somehow transform it into a Santayanian point of view of things. At times, we need to step back and hear what was said and written *about* Santayana, in order to better understand Santayana. Logan Pearsall Smith is a case in point here. An individual who had one sister marry Bertrand Russell and another Bernard Berenson, Logan Pearsall Smith moved easily in cultural circles in England at this time. *Little Essays* would be published in 1920, and was primarily the result of Smith's efforts. Also, it was through the good graces of the Smith family that Santayana ever met Henry James, the younger brother of William James, who had been Santayana's teacher, and then colleague at Harvard. To be sure, passages from Logan Pearsall Smith himself reveal a very measured, even-keeled scholar, who saw in Santayana a master prose stylist. He helped Santayana acquire more readers and spread general knowledge of his existence. As a scholar, he exhibited a lifelong passion in collecting, preserving, and *embodying* manuscripts and writings, *i.e.*, anthologizing them. What we have are numerous passages about Santayana in his autobiography and letters. In the former, *Unforgotten Years*, he writes:

I have always been fond of anthologizing. I think it a dainty occupation for a person of leisure and literary tastes. I have published several of these volumes; but the anthology in which I took the greatest pride is my *Little Essays from the Writings of George Santayana*, since the works of that wise and beautiful writer were at that time almost unknown to the English public. (Pearsall Smith 233)

The word "dainty" here may make us smile.³ And in a letter of 27 February, 1916, he had written to an acquaintance of his:

I have been in Oxford for a few days for a change, staying with the Bridges and the Raleighs. I saw something of Santayana, who is now settled there, and means to make Oxford his home, as far as he has a home anywhere. He leads his delightfully detached life exactly in the fashion he likes, and says that if it wasn't for the war he would never have been so happy. He sees almost no one and, like a beautiful and subtle fish, successfully eludes all the nets spread to capture him. (Tribble 70-71)

³ Our notion of the word has obviously undergone changes. The *OED* defines *dainty* as: "Valuable, fine, handsome; choice, excellent; pleasant, delightful."

What was in the irresistible enticement offered by the Y.M.C.A. that was so attractive to this elusive thinker who had just spent some fifty-plus months grounded in a country that was not his own, during a worldwide conflict? Perhaps it was a strong case of cabin fever, or just something to do that would break the monotony, but the fact that Santayana *seriously* considered (given his embedded, natural reticence) making these talk-tours does indeed show that Santayana sensed himself very much alive with a still curious, inquisitive mind that wanted to see firsthand what the European continent looked like after more than four years of brutal warfare, or as he wrote, “the idea of seeing the armies of occupation is rather tempting” (LGS to Charles Augustus Strong, 2 April 1919).

Once settled safely in Strong’s Avenue de l’Observatoire apartment in Paris, facing the Luxembourg Gardens, he could share on 5 July that he was at work on three unpublished works: these, though not specifically mentioned, had to have been *Character and Opinion in the United States*, *Little Essays*, and the eventual introduction to *Realms of Being, Scepticism and Animal Faith*. It would not be until December when Santayana would consider bringing together in one volume all pieces that would constitute the *Soliloquies*. On 7 December he wrote his American publisher, Charles Scribner’s Sons, that he would like them to take that up, should he decide to make efforts to publish them in one volume. (LGS 7 December 1919) His initial plan to stay in Paris for several months was the way it turned out. Santayana’s residence in Paris at Strong’s apartment lasted until early December, when he departed for the Le Balze, Strong’s villa in Fiesole, outside of Florence. 1919 ended with Santayana in Italy.

CHARLES PADRÓN

Santayana in 1944: The World Comes In

Soldiers and journalists

For two and a half years, no letter had traveled between Santayana in Rome and the United States or England. No telegram had been transmitted. And, of course, no visitors had arrived to see him at the convent and hospital of the Blue Nuns. This isolation was different from his solitude in Oxford during World War I. Then, the restriction was on movement: he could not get back to the continent. During the Second World War, communication was blocked. From the end of 1941 until the middle of 1944, the only letters we have from Santayana are to relatives in Spain. With the entry of Allied troops into Rome on June 1, 1944, a flurry of activity followed. Santayana was beset by a multitude of visitors, many of them reporters and soldiers eager to meet and photograph the philosopher whose fame had recently resurged with the publication of the first volume of his autobiography in January.

One of those visitors, Herbert L Matthews, a correspondent for the *New York Times*, published an article in the June 14, 1944 issue, and the *Times* followed with an editorial about Santayana three days later. In his report, Matthews wrote: “I have just come back from an ivory tower, where George Santayana interviewed me” (Matthews 1944). Perhaps Santayana’s long isolation prompted him to inter-

rogate his visitor about recent events.⁴ Nevertheless, Matthews interpreted Santayana's comment, "I live in the eternal" to mean he was only mildly interested in knowing about "Italy, Russia, fascism and the war." The *Times* editorial continued this exaggeration of Santayana's detachment from worldly concerns, writing that Santayana "seems to be as remote from contemporary events as if he were a monk of the Thebaid⁵ (*New York Times* 17 June 1944). On August 7, 1944, *Life* magazine took the title character of Santayana's novel to be Santayana himself when it published a nearly full-page picture of Santayana with the heading "The U.S. Army in Rome discovers the last puritan aloof, serene" (*Life* 1944).⁶

Volume 1: Persons and Places

Soon after *Persons and Places: The Background of My Life* was released in January 1944, a *New York Times* critic wrote that the book had been "eagerly awaited" and that "these reflective memoirs, in which we observe one of the most distinguished minds of our time reacting upon his life experience, are sure to be long and widely read" (Adams 23 January 1944). Santayana reported in early July that he "had heard by chance that the book had appeared, but had not seen it or known that it had been well received" (LGS to George Sturgis, 3 July 2019). We know that he had heard by June 9, when he wrote to his typist Evelyn Tindall:

The first volume I don't know whether you have happened to see, appeared in New York on the first day of this year⁷; but, of course, I have not seen it, nor the proofs. The type-written copy on thin paper was sent to America through the kindness of the Vatican authorities. (LGS 9 June 2019)

At some time in the next two weeks, one of his many visitors gave him a copy. Of his first impression he wrote:

It makes a smaller and handier volume than I had anticipated; I am much pleased with the general effect that it seems to make—pleasant, in spite of skirting dangerous susceptibilities. (LGS to Daniel Cory, 23 June 1944)

Correspondence begins and Bob Sturgis visits

The June 14 article by Matthews, the *New York Times* reporter, prompted Santayana's former student (and, for a time, colleague at Harvard) Horace Kallen to write him the next day. Despite Rome's liberation, the war was still going on in much of Europe and the letter did not arrive until October. Although we don't have Kallen's letter, he obviously referred to the article, for Santayana wrote in his reply: "I have had many pleasanter American visitors than Matthews" (LGS 4

⁴ Santayana was also somewhat deaf, which may have caused him to ask Matthews more than once for clarification. One of his visitors, a soldier named Albert Feuer, shot a brief silent color film of Santayana, which can be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KzuATyIEkm0&feature=related>.

⁵ The Thebaid is the region around Egyptian Thebes that became a place of retreat for Christian hermits in the 5th century CE.

⁶ To see the photo and its accompanying text go to: <https://books.google.com/books?id=04EAAAAMBAAJ&lpg=PP1&pg=PA30#v=onepage&q&f=true>

⁷ The date of publication was January 18 (McCormick 430).

October 1944). One, in particular, was Santayana's great-nephew, Robert Sturgis, the son of George Sturgis, the nephew in Boston who managed Santayana's finances.

In a letter to George Sturgis written about a month after the Allied Army arrived, Santayana wrote that Bob was

a big strapping handsome fellow, not without a mind of his own. He spent two whole afternoons here, and won the hearts of the Sisters as well as my own. As he is thinking of studying architecture, I hope that after the war, if I am alive, he will come to Rome again and let me show him my favourite spots." (LGS to George Sturgis 3 July 1944)

Santayana had once seriously thought about becoming an architect himself, as Bob Sturgis did a few years after this meeting. Bob later told John McCormick (who referred to him as 'Robert') that the two of them

talked about the politics and philosophy of the New Deal and of a press report in which Santayana was quoted as having said he was "waiting to die." He was not, he reassured Robert; he thought of the past, not the future. The nuns were trying to convert him back to Catholicism, but the Mother Superior had reported their failure, saying "He has too much brains." Robert found the nuns "kind of fun." (McCormick 432)

In the fall, Santayana wrote about the visits of Bob Sturgis and others:

I have had the pleasure of seeing a great many young soldiers and airmen including a grandnephew of mine, who took me back to the days when I lived in college. (LGS to Mrs CF Lama, 10 October 1944)

Delayed exchanges with Cory— the royalties question

Kallen's delayed letter was by no means the first to reach Santayana. John Wheelock of Scribner's had managed to get messages to and from him by word-of-mouth after the Allied forces took over Rome. Wheelock also arranged with the American forces and the American envoy to the Vatican (who had already assisted in secretly spiriting volume one of *Persons and Places* to New York in 1942) to get letters from Wheelock and Daniel Cory, Santayana's long-time assistant, hand delivered to him. Cory's letter, like Kallen's, was dated June 15, the day after the *New York Times* article. The Wheelock and Cory letters arrived eight days later, on June 23. Cory tells us that the letters "inquired about his health, and assured him that food and clothing would be sent as soon as feasible" (Cory 247). Cory also told Santayana of his marriage in March of 1940. He had refrained from letting Santayana know about this event before they lost touch at the end of 1941, as Santayana had been endeavoring to secure some financial security for Cory and Cory did not want to trouble him with extra burden of a wife and possible children (Cory 248). Both Cory and Wheelock raised the issue of Santayana's intentions regarding the royalties for *Persons and Places*. Did he really intend Cory to get all the royalties from a volume that had become a Book-of-the-Month Club selection, or did he merely intend for Cory to have enough to get by, as George Sturgis had suggested? Sturgis was not only Santayana's financial man-

ager, but, along with Sturgis's sister Josefina Bidwell, one of Santayana's potential heirs.

A good deal of Santayana's extant correspondence from 1944 shows his repeated efforts to straighten out financial matters, especially to clarify that he did indeed mean for Cory to get all the royalties. Other issues included getting money on a regular basis and paying off his debt to the Little Sisters of Mary, the order of the nuns who managed his home. On June 23, he answered Cory immediately, congratulating him on his marriage, reporting that his health was good and he had "lost a lot of superfluous fat," and approving, until he learned more of the state of his finances, of the arrangement that Scribner's and George Sturgis had made with Cory to provide him a regular stipend.

Santayana's letter may not have reached Cory until the following year. The time lag between letters must have been, if not vexing, at least confusing. Cory reports that the first letter he received from Santayana was dated November 4 (Cory 247). In it, Santayana wrote, "Did you ever get my reply to your letter of June 15? I have been expecting to hear from you again, now that letters can come through the post. (LGS 4 November 1944). Cory had written him in late September, but that letter did not arrive until later, on November 10 along with a letter from Wheelock (LGS to John Wheelock 10 November 1944). On December 1, Santayana wrote of a recent letter from Cory (LGS to Lawrence Butler Smith, 1 December 1944), which may have been the one that arrived on November 10. As the year closed, Cory wrote to Santayana on December 28 to say he had not yet received any letters from Santayana (Cory 248; LGS to Cory, 21 January 1945).

New books and works in progress

The first letter we have from Santayana after Rome's liberation is to Evelyn Tindall . He had last written to her in March 1942 to explain that his funds had been blocked and he could not pay her for her work as is typist. With the liberation and the possibility of publishing, he greeted her with:

Dear Miss Tindall,

Are you still here, and are you not too busy to do some work for me? (LGS 9 June 1944)

He then told her of two works: *The Idea of Christ in the Gospels* and the second volume of *Persons and Places*:

I have written a book of theology, most unforeseen; also the second volume of my Autobiography which, however, I do not mean to publish during my lifetime.

In his June 23 letter to Cory, Santayana discusses both these works and reports that he does not yet have a way to get them typed:

As to the second volume of Persons & Places I am in grave doubts. It is complete, and longer than the first, but would require even more severe cutting down; and I hate to mutilate my memories for the sake of giving the public what they might like However, if you will lead me to hope that eventually a complete version of both volumes shall appear, I might bring

myself to omit for the present a great part of what I have written. I have finished another book since: "The Idea of Christ in the Gospels or God in Man". But I can't find Miss Tindall and nothing is copied. (LGS to Daniel Cory, 23 June 1944)

The reservations about publishing the second volume without cutting some parts may have caused Santayana to decide to split that second volume in two. By October, when he wrote to Horace Kallen, the number of volumes had changed:

I have weathered the war very nicely in this hospitable establishment, grown less obese on rations and written my Recollections (3 volumes) and an unforeseen book on The Idea of Christ in the Gospels, or God in Man, which last I hope you will like.

Santayana then explained why he thought Kallen would prefer the book on Christ to his autobiography:

Persons & Places, on the contrary, will seem to you, perhaps, a caricature of the philosopher that you kindly wish to think me: but, except in the ancient sense, I am perhaps as little a philosopher as I am a poet. It was without much understanding that I read the criticisms contained in Schilpp's book about me, and had to abandon the task of replying to them in detail. After all, the purpose of the volume was to explain my philosophy; so I tried to do that afresh. And the book on the Idea of Christ will do so again at a different angle.

Next, he told how he came to write the book:

Being in a religious house, without many books of my own, I read the Sisters' select library; many novels, including much of Dickens again (as during the other war) and all Jane Austen, and a lot by Benson⁸ about the English Reformation: but besides I reread the whole Bible, most of the Summa of Thomas Aquinas, and most of Newman. This set me going, and you will see the consequences. (LGS to Horace Kallen 4 October 1944)

Santayana concluded his letter to Kallen saying he had resumed work on a book on political theory he had begun many years before:

I have often thought of you, now that my thoughts have reverted to Dominations & Powers and am glad to know that you are also thriving.

On November 10, Santayana wrote to John Wheelock, "Volume second of Persons and Places is ready to be sent to you," About a week earlier, in a letter to Cory, he addressed the status of his two other projects:

The first half of The Idea of Christ is now in Miss Tindall's hands; but I am rewriting the second half, which was confused, and not properly brought to a conclusion. I expect this will take me all winter: but incidentally I write

⁸ Probably Robert Hugh Benson (1871-1914), the youngest son of the Archbishop of Canterbury (1893-1896) Edward White Benson. Robert Benson converted to Roman Catholicism and wrote several historical novels. One them, *Come Rack! Come Rope!* (1912) describes the persecution of English Roman Catholics during the Elizabethan era.

things for Dominations & Powers, when an inspiration comes to me in bed. (LGS 4 November 1944)

The impetus to publish the second volume of *Persons and Places* quickly surely came from his publisher, but there may have been an ancillary reason. George Sturgis had argued that the royalties from his books should go to Santayana's heirs, in spite of his wishes and even though he planned to give the manuscripts to Cory. This position was weighing on him. In his November 4 letter to Cory, he wondered whether he should go ahead and publish what had become the third volume regardless of his reservations:

The third volume of *Persons & Places* will certainly remain . . . to be published by you eventually. Or must the profits for it then go to George Sturgis and his sister, Mrs. Bidwell, who are my residuary legatees? In that case, I should be compelled to publish it during my life-time, in spite of moral scruples. (LGS)

Here Santayana's reservations were about the third volume, yet some of those misgivings applied to the second volume as well. Santayana had written in June that the second volume would not be published in his lifetime. But, having split off the third volume from the second, he agreed to publish the second. The concern for Cory's share of the royalties that he raised about the third volume may well have influenced his decision to go ahead with the second. The main source of concern in what he was about to publish was what he had written about Bertrand Russell's older brother, Frank, to whom he devoted many pages in both the second and third volumes.

I have a qualm even here⁹ about Russell, though I speak only of things that in their day appeared in all the papers: but I am afraid Bertie may not like it. He is the only person left who could care. I have changed the names of all the females who were not brought to public notice in Russell's law-suits, and have said nothing about the Oxford scandal: that is, I have left out all that I had written about it. It remains in my original MS. not in the typed copy to be sent to Scribner.¹⁰ This division between the part to be published and the part to be suppressed is like the Judgment of Solomon. The real mother would prefer to suppress it all; but the false mother—the publisher and the public—see no objection to getting one murdered half. I wanted to tell the whole truth, but I find that circumstances will not allow it. (LGS to Cory 4 November 1944)

In writing about this difficulty Santayana revealed his deep feeling about the time when Frank Russell and the people he knew through him formed a major part of his emotional life. To a correspondent in December, he wrote, "Time has

⁹ In the second volume.

¹⁰ This section, although not in any edition of *The Middle Span* (the second volume) produced by Santayana's publishers, is reinstated in the critical edition. It tells of the time Frank Russell let Lionel Johnson (PP 307; see "A New Letter to Lionel Johnson," p. 22, and Derham 2018, 13 footnote), then still in secondary boarding school at Winchester College, spend a night in his room at Oxford. Subsequently, it emerged that Russell was supposed to have written "an improper letter" and he was "sent down"—suspended—for a year.

moved since the 1890's, which I feel to be my spiritual and chronological home" (LGS to Asta Fleming Whiteside, 8 December 1944). And to John Wheelock in early November, he wrote:

My conscience is still uneasy about indiscretions in this volume. There are many about Earl Russell; but he was a public character, and I avoid the most *scabreux* episodes, and have changed the names of such ladies as were not publicly mentioned in the law courts. Still, I am a little afraid that his brother Bertrand may think I might have been more reticent. *But these complications were the most exciting that ever came even vicariously into my life; and I can't leave them out.* The alternative could only be to postpone publication until all who can object have disappeared. This is what we must do about volume third, which intrudes even more into people's private lives. (LGS 10 November 1944, emphasis added)

The Jewish Question

In preparing the first volume of *Persons and Places* for publication without the guidance of the author, Scribner's omitted a key paragraph about the Jewish philosopher Spinoza. In it, Santayana had written that Spinoza was his "master and model" in appreciating the natural origin of morality. On the other hand, the paragraph went on to find Spinoza inadequate in appreciating "all the types of excellence toward which life may be directed". Although Spinoza was "a spiritual man, seeing and accepting the place of the human heart in the universe," he, nevertheless, "had no idea of human greatness and no sympathy with human sorrow" (PP 235). That Santayana thought Spinoza to be his "master and model" was not what led to the omission. Rather, given the charged feelings of the time, Scribner's editors worried that criticism of Spinoza might offend Jewish readers, so they cut the whole paragraph.¹¹

Although Scribner's editors were circumspect about what might appear to disparage Spinoza, they overlooked something more obviously offensive. When volume one of *Persons and Places* first appeared in January of 1944, it contained a passage in a section about a college friend, Charles Loeser, who happened to be Jewish. The passage said that, unlike his friend Loeser, most Jews "squirm and fawn and wish to pass for ordinary Christians or ordinary atheists" (PP 215). After Scribner's received complaints about this passage, Wheelock wrote to Santayana on October 4 and suggested a rewording. In his reply, Santayana defended this characterization as "free satire," but he registered Wheelock's observation that the Jews are "supersensitive" and wrote: "in this case and at this moment . . . I am glad to remove anything that may sound insulting or be really inaccurate". He then acknowledged that "most" was "inaccurate" and that *squirm* and *fawn* "are insulting words." We don't have Wheelock's version, but it must have changed the wording to avoid saying that Jews want to "pass for ordinary Chris-

¹¹Herman Saatkamp in an email message, 4 September 2019" "In my discussions with Mr. Scribner and in going through the Scribner's collections at Princeton (Wheelock correspondence and internal messaging), it was the sense that Santayana's criticisms of Spinoza would be taken as antisemitic, so they were omitted. "

tians or ordinary atheists.” Santayana, reluctant to give in completely proposed that he simply replace “most of them squirm and fawn” with “many of them court the world.” Just before the sentence with the offending words Santayana had written that the “distinction” and “misfortune” of being Jewish afforded a kind of “privilege.” In context, the sentence, as rewritten, would then have read:

If the Jews were not worldly it [that privilege] would raise them above the world: but many of them court the world and wish to pass for ordinary Christians or ordinary atheists. (LGS to John Wheelock 12 November 1944)

He explained this preference as follows:

This preserves the spirit of what I said: a certain suggestion of a vocation missed. For that reason I prefer it to the emendation suggested by you, which concedes too much. The Jews have become of late not only sensitive but exacting. I wish to be just, but I don't want to “squirm and fawn” on my side also.

Daniel Pinkas, in his essay “Santayana, Judaism, and the Jews”, argues that given this was a year in which Jews were being systematically rounded up and sent away to torture or death, Santayana's annoyance is “hard-hearted . . . perhaps unforgivably so” (Pinkas 75). Whether his peevishness is forgivable may be an open question, yet it is clear that finding the Jews to be “exacting” in that case and in that moment surely runs counter to his eagerness to remove insults and inaccuracies. The corrected version never appeared in any edition produced by Santayana's American or English publishers. The critical edition uses the original wording in its main text, but provides the amended version as a variant.

George Sturgis

Santayana's 1944 letters to and concerning his nephew deal largely with business and family matters; yet they provide glimpses into his sentiments and circumstances, and end on a philosophic note. Santayana wrote ten letters to George Sturgis in the latter half of 1944. The first was on July 3, shortly after the visits of Sturgis's son, Bob. In addition to the news of Bob's visits, Santayana reported that he was “alive, and very well, although thinner” and had “weathered the storm with little physical or moral discomfort and am glad I stayed here” (LGS to George Sturgis). Regarding the matter of Cory's finances, he said that the arrangement with Scribner's would do until he learned the state of his own affairs. On July 7, before that letter could arrive, George Sturgis and John Wheelock arranged to have their own letters and some legal papers transmitted via the army. A lieutenant delivered them on August 2 and waited for Santayana's reply.

Sturgis had attempted to send a message to Santayana in March before the Allies had made their way to Rome. The message told his uncle of his divorce, of Bob's possible visit when the army reached Rome, and about two old friends (one dead, the other ill). That message did not get to Santayana until August 8 (LGS to George Sturgis, 8 August 1944). As it came after Sturgis's letter of July 7, it is likely that that letter was the first Santayana had heard of Sturgis's divorce. In 1944, divorce was still somewhat scandalous. In his reply Santayana told George that Bob “did not breathe a word” about his “domestic troubles and divorce” and

added: "I am sorry, but understand that an estrangement within the household was not a tolerable state of things in the long run" (LGS 2 August 1944).

In this second letter he also apologizes for his "unbusinesslike habits" regarding "my royalties and Cory." He then explained the nature of his concern for Cory:

Cory has been a problem for Strong and me for many years. He too is not a business man, and between us three we managed to land him, at the age of nearly forty, in no man's land. I feel a certain responsibility for him, as it was as my disciple and secretary that he first turned to philosophy: but I never meant to make our connection permanent. (LGS to George Sturgis 2 August 1944)

While the lieutenant waited, Santayana penned a second reply (his third letter of the year), in which he explained that sending the royalties to Cory was meant to take the place of an allowance that he habitually gave him. He then added:

The unexpected fact that the royalties for Persons & Places are likely to be large does not change my intentions in this matter.

What I wish, then, is that Mr. Cory should receive everything earned by my books in America (British royalties not included) during the time when it is impossible for me to receive the money.

A few days later, on August 6, Santayana wrote yet another letter (the fourth) addressing some of the fine points in his nephew's correspondence. He expressed bewilderment at Sturgis's idea that giving the manuscript of any of his works to Cory did not give him the royalties and that the royalties would go to his heirs when he died.

What I meant to give him was the profits of the publication, not a keepsake. But if the law assigns the royalties to the author even if he has made a present of the MS, and if the law even in that case assigns them to his residuary legatees if he is dead, then both the intended gift of MSS and the bequest of them in my will are purely nugatory. Is this the case? (LGS to George Sturgis, 6 August 1944)

Furthermore, he added:

The suggestion that I meant Cory to receive my royalties in order to keep them for me until after the war may be lawyerlike but is contrary to fact and to reason.

Santayana wrote six more letters to George Sturgis before the end of 1944. The next one (his fifth of the year) is a brief note on August 8 acknowledging the receipt of Sturgis's message from March, which except for the news of his friends was by then out-of-date. In the sixth letter, on October 11, he responded to a letter just then received:

Dear George: Your letter of Aug. 18 has just arrived. It bears no mark of having been opened by the censor and has taken less than two months to reach Rome. This is encouraging for our correspondence.

Later in the letter, he corrects a mistaken pronoun in a report that Bob Sturgis had made to his father:

The mistake about my having seen Bob the day he was born was probably due to the presence of the Mother General. I was telling her that I had seen you the day after the night of your birth and touched the soft spot on your head; but as I said his head, Bob thought I was referring to him. If his cranium was soft also, it seems to have hardened as successfully as yours.

The jocular reference to a hardened head led directly to a new topic:

This brings me to your business report, which makes me feel like Sancho Panza when he was governor of his Insula, and the magician touched and sent away every smoking dish that was put on the table. I am rich, and can't have any money.

He then went on to address the matter of how to pay for his food and lodging, telling George that because of the instability of the Italian currency and the difficulties in converting dollars to lire, the Mother General of his home requested that payment continue to go to the branch of the order in Chicago.

She has also offered to supply me with pocket-money if what I still have gives out. Evidently this establishment is prosperous, and now that they know better who I am, and have seen Bob as evidence that I really am myself, they don't mind keeping me here for nothing. (LGS 11 October 1944)

Sturgis had written Santayana on September 6, but that letter did not arrive until late November. Meanwhile, on November 4, Santayana wrote a seventh letter that begins by asking if, as parcels could at last be sent from the US to Italy, it might be possible for George to send him something in time for Christmas:

Perhaps it will have occurred to you to send me something; if so, many thanks in anticipation. But now I write expressly to tell you what two things I particularly want, even if you can send me funds as well. They are Tea and Shaving Cream, of the kind that requires no shaving brush. I have both at present, but they are not to be found easily; and they will soon be used up. One of my visitors asking repeatedly if I didn't want anything, finally led me to ask for tea; and after a week or two he brought me a large square parcel of it, which I am now enjoying every afternoon. The Sisters also get presents of tea, and sometimes let me have it, but I should like to be able to return the favour and to offer them some of my own. A tin of substantial biscuits (not soda crackers) to go with it would also be acceptable. As to shaving soap, an old Italian acquaintance, who had been an employee at the Bristol, got me some; but I am always glad to have a little in store. (LGS 4 November 1944)

Santayana, having learned of George Sturgis's divorce, knew little else about the circumstances, certainly not that Sturgis had remarried four months after the divorce. In this November 4 letter Santayana inquired about Sturgis's previous wife:

I don't wish to be indiscreet about your family affairs, and can well imagine good reasons for what has happened, but I should rather like to write to Rosamond about having seen Bob, and for that purpose had better know her address and whether she or you have married again. And with whom are the boys supposed to be living?

Santayana did learn Rosamond's address before the end of the year, but not from George Sturgis. On November 22, Sturgis's letter of September 6 arrived with two power-of-attorney forms. Santayana returned them signed along with an eighth letter in which he confirmed Sturgis's understanding of how he wanted Cory paid, but his annoyance also comes through:

I don't see why so much trouble and so many lawyers are involved
(LGS 22 November 1944)

Within two weeks, by December 4, Santayana had received two letters from George Sturgis, dated September 29 and October 6. The latter included a letter from Sturgis's second son Neville. Santayana's response (the ninth letter) dealt with some financial matters concerning his residence at the Blue Nuns, discussed the transmission of the manuscript of the second volume of *Persons and Places*, and commented on the twenty-one-year-old Neville's impressions of London. (LGS 4 December 1944)

Santayana's tenth and last letter of 1944 to George Sturgis was written on December 22. In it, he reported that he had received the first installment of the money Sturgis was to be sending him regularly, described the complication of having "to go round the corner to the Spanish Consulate to obtain a certificate that I lived alone and had no family," and, having received the money, elaborated on the financial and monetary conversion matters concerning his payment of what he owed to the nuns' establishment. The letter concludes:

I needn't say Merry Xmas or Happy New Year. You are old enough to know that the year begins every day. Yours affectionately, GSantayana (LGS 22 December 1944)

Santayana's last three letters (November 22, December 4, and December 22) never reached George Sturgis. A few days after Christmas, Bob Sturgis visited Santayana. He told him that his mother (Rosamond) still lived in the same house. But Bob did not yet know what had happened to his father the week before. On the last day of the year, Santayana wrote to Rosamond, He told her of Bob's visit, but followed immediately with:

Suddenly, yesterday, I received a telegram from Mr. Wheelock of Scribner's giving me the terrible news that George was dead. (LGS 31 December 1944)

George Sturgis did not live to get the inheritance he had been concerned to protect. He died of a heart attack at the age of fifty-three on December 20. Santayana's words to Rosamond continued:

For you it must be doubly tragic, bringing up as it must old conflicting feelings and memories. George never gave me any explanation of the estrangement that had arisen between you, and of course I respected his discretion and asked no questions. But I could well imagine that, like his father, he might prove hard to live with in the long run. In fact, when you came to Rome, I couldn't help wondering how you ever decided to marry him. He was very good, very useful, and very able in many ways, and for me he proved a treasure (literally) in the management of my affairs, as his father

had been too. But there was never a responsive chord. In Bob there is. (LGS 31 December 1944)

Later in the letter, Santayana suggested there might be hopeful consequences of George's death on Rosamond and her family and he distinguished their situation from his own:

Now, this misfortune (I think Bob will feel it deeply) may have the effect of making the boys gather round you more simply and wholeheartedly than was possible as things were; and that may be a comfort and an interest for you. I love solitude, but I shouldn't love it if I had no memories of society and of real friends, and I am a philosopher, which luckily for themselves, and for others, most people are not. The truth is not always kind. (LGS 31 December 1944)

RICHARD M RUBIN

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New Letters from Santayana

The eight volume Letters of George Santayana (LGS), often cited in these pages, has proved its great value to students of Santayana's life and work. This product of many years labor was published during the years from 2001 to 2008. This extensive collection is by no means the end of the story. New letters have been appearing over the course of the last several years.

When the Santayana Edition published the Letters, the editors knew from Santayana's autobiography that he had an extensive correspondence with his friend Baron Albert Wilhelm Freiherrn von Westenholz (1879–1939), but they had not been able to locate any of the letters. In 2016, Keenan Salla, a history and library science graduate student at IUPUI working at the Santayana Edition, discovered that the Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Columbia University had just made available sixty letters from Santayana to Westenholz. The Santayana Edition has posted a link to photos and transcriptions of these letter on its website.¹

In 2018, Daniel Pinkas, a member of our editorial advisory board, located twenty-seven letters to Santayana's college friend Charles Loeser in Harvard's Houghton Library. By the end of that year, the Edition had posted provisional transcriptions on its website. Both Pinkas and Martin Coleman, the Director of the Santayana Edition, have reported that the transcriptions need further work.

Other new letters have been turning up in odd places. Several months ago, Herman Saatkamp reported a letter from 1938 was available on eBay It is addressed to Mr. L.A. Aucoin, 49 Chestnut St, Spencer Mass. The text is:

c/p Brown Shipley & Co
123, Pall Mall, London, S.W.1

Rome, Feb. 20, 1938

Dear Mr. Aucoin

There is no photograph of me that would be worth having, but I am glad to send you my signature in this note, if that will do for your collection.

Yours sincerely,
G Santayana

This brief response to an admirer's request illustrates Santayana's skeptical attitude toward photography. In 1944, for example, he wrote that he preferred a drawing of himself to any photograph (LGS to Mrs CF Lama, 10 October 1944).²

At about the same time the Aucoin letter surfaced, two English researchers, Ruth Derham and Sarah Green, discovered a letter to the poet and essayist Lionel Johnson. Their account of the context of the letter and how they found it follow.

¹ Links to both the Westenholz and Loeser letters are at <https://digitalsantayana.iupui.edu/>.

² See the section on "Photography" in Richard M Rubin, "Santayana and the Arts," *Overheard in Seville* 34(2016): 49-51.

Fitting, then, that hidden in the archive behind those carefree flint walls, relatively unchanged since Johnson and Russell's school days and Santayana's visit, should have sat for years uncounted a unique memorial to Johnson with contributions that enlighten further the friendship of these three. It surfaced at the end of a long day's work in the archives late in 2018, when we were offered a tour of the school by the archivist, Suzanne Foster. In particular, there were the two volumes of Johnson's poems long-since gifted to the school and kept in a display cabinet in an exhibition room above Chantry (a true Wykehamist³ would never say *the* Chantry) which she thought we might like to see. Though late the hour and worn the stones of Chantry's precarious spiral staircase, the invitation quickly proved well worth accepting. The books we were shown had a different binding from the originals, though neither had had more than one printing. Later investigation revealed they had most likely been re-bound between the wars.⁴ The books were found to contain original letters written to Johnson by seventy-seven correspondents, each stitched professionally into the binding next to a poem Johnson had dedicated to their authors. The find was remarkable, not least for having survived the magpie-like behaviour of a Johnson scholar in the 1940s and 50s whose light-fingers had robbed academia of "all Johnson's papers", but also because the resultant absence of material had subsequently led scholars to surmise that Johnson's dedications were in part wishful thinking. These volumes prove otherwise.⁵

Santayana's letter, dated 27 May 1890 and transcribed here in full, was bound into *Ireland* next to a poem in Latin, "Satanas" (1893), dedicated to Jorge Santayana. Here, we give a new translation alongside the original.⁶ Despite the dedication, it was a poem that Santayana never mentioned, favouring instead the undedicated "To A Spanish Friend" (1894) which, with its opening line "Exiled in America" and its reference to his home town of Avila, he justifiably took to have been written for him. He embraced it to such an extent that some 40 years later, in their last correspondence, he exhorted Russell to re-read it and thereby remember "what we all were in the 1880s" (LGS to John Francis Stanley Russell, 20 October 1929). Perhaps its plea—to "Leave thine endless tangled lore" and in the spirit of Saint Teresa, "Lose thyself in Night again", where salvation would be found in God, "And all darkness disappear" (Johnson 1895, 88-89)—spoke to him more personally than the damnation described in "Satanas". This difference raises certain questions. Was "Satanas" a comment on Santayana's lapsed Catholicism? 7

³ The name for a student at Winchester College, after its founder in memory of the school's founder, William of Wykeham.

⁴ With thanks to Tim Wiltshire of the Winchester Bindery for dating the books' binding.

⁵ For more on the find and suggestions as to how it survived at Winchester see Sarah Green, "Light on the Dark Angel", *Times Literary Supplement*, 2 Aug 2019: 12-13.

⁶ The original Latin version is taken from Johnson 1897, 41-2. An earlier literal translation was published in Iain Fletcher, "Textual Notes," *The Complete Poems of Lionel Johnson*, ed. Iain Fletcher (London: The Unicorn Press, 1953), 313-4.

⁷ "Satanas" is one of two poems in *Ireland* dealing with the problem of a lapsed or non-Catholic friend being damned (the other being 'De Amicitia'). In *Poems*, "A Friend" revisits the theme of "A Spanish Friend" in praying for a non-Catholic friend to be troubled and converted.

Did it reflect a core tension in the friendship of these two men that also led Santayana to focus on that religion in his portrait of Johnson in his memoirs?

The letter is typical of many others in the volumes in extending an invitation or request to see Johnson. Twentieth-century memoirs and criticisms have painted Johnson as a recluse: these letters reposition him within the literary circles of late nineteenth-century Oxford and London. It also represents one of Santayana's repeated attempts to cultivate an acquaintance with Johnson outside their mutual friendship with Russell.⁸ His attempts were often thwarted by his being in England at precisely the time Johnson was away from Oxford (PP 303, 487) such that the two men saw each other "only at long intervals" (PP 304). This may have been one of those frustrated occasions: a letter from Santayana to Strong dated 22 July 1890 comments that "Johnson has left Oxford and is to live in London among artists" with no reference to his having seen him (LGS). Nevertheless, the new letter hints at *what they all were*. The hospitality of Oxford must refer to Russell's introductions made on Santayana's behalf to his brotherhood of friends still there in 1887, which sparked Santayana's ecstatic letters to Henry Ward Abbott (LGS 23 April to 18 June 1887). The necessity to "cultivate our illusions" is perhaps a nod to Johnson's *modus vivendi* which, in Santayana's view, involved Johnson refusing to accept "definition and limitation"—even in his Catholicism—and "defying the false world that pretended to be more real" (PP 305-6). With some irony, he mentions being settled "for the present" at Harvard in what would become a 22-year "exile".

Though Santayana conceded that he and Johnson were "never close" (PP 301), Johnson does appear to have made an impression on him. In *Persons* he holds Johnson up as representative of the aesthetic bent of the 1880s, describing him as a Platonist, a dreamer, affected and aloof (PP 15, 474): he even designates such qualities as "Johnsonian" (PP 436, 498). Yeats did something similar in using Johnson as a symbol for the 1890s in his *Autobiographies* (Yeats 241). In certain respects, Santayana's portrait is not particularly flattering. It highlights, for instance, Johnson's alcoholism rather than his literary work and political activity. Perhaps this would have mattered less had the dearth of Johnson material not impeded the writing of a full biography.⁹ Other letters here speak of Johnson's involvement with the Rhymers' Club and with Irish Nationalism. They reveal his opinions were widely sought; his criticisms highly regarded. There is even a letter from Thomas Hardy praising Johnson's *The Art of Thomas Hardy* (1894), which Santayana had read and enjoyed.¹⁰ Does the discrepancy between Santayana's portrayal of Johnson and the high regard in which other writers held him merely

⁸ Johnson's letter in *Persons and Places* indicates that Santayana had also tried to see him in the summer of 1888 (PP 303).

⁹ The first was written over 100 years after Johnson's death and acknowledged the lack of available material (Whittington-Egan 303).

¹⁰ Hardy called it a "thoughtful, generous, & scholarly book" in which Johnson seemed "to be criticizing the stories as I imagined them before I had written them, & not the executed work—so far short of the intention." Santayana's enjoyment is referenced in Frank Russell, Letter to Santayana, 5 Mar 1895, HRC.

illustrate the infrequent contact between the two friends? Or does it tell us something about Santayana's autobiographical practice and that his later attitude towards aestheticism and Catholicism prevailed over his friendship with Johnson? If taken in the spirit of Spinoza—as expressing something worth knowing about Santayana's Paul to Johnson's Peter¹¹—archival finds such as this may prove to be the catalyst for further study.

RUTH DERHAM AND SARAH GREEN

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¹¹ "The idea Paul has of Peter, Spinoza observes, expresses the nature of Peter less than it betrays that of Paul . . . but the mind of the man too may be worth knowing" (WD 77).

Santayana to Lionel Johnson

Cambridge, Mass.

May 27. 90.

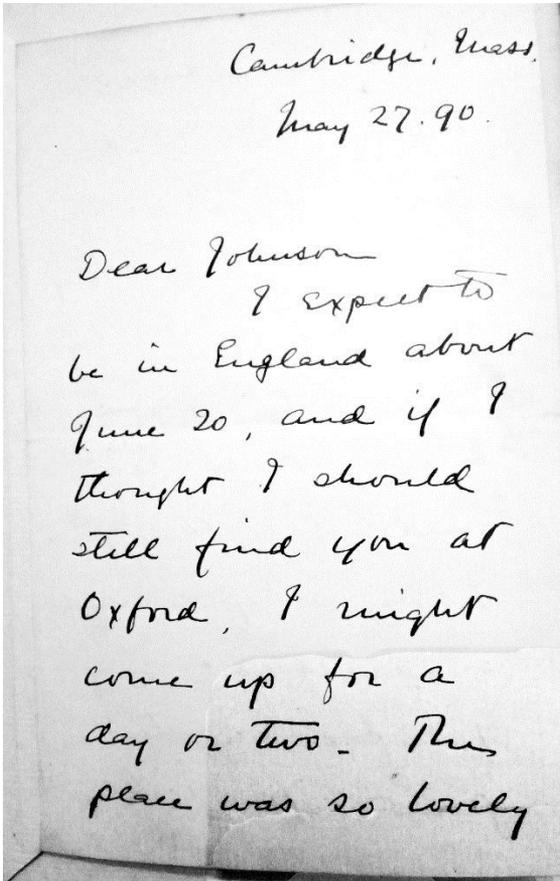
Dear Johnson

I expect to be in England about June 20, and if I thought I should still find you at Oxford, I might come up for a day or two. The place was so lovely and hospitable when I was there before that I should be sorry to mar my memory of it by seeing it again when it is hot and deserted. I know you will understand my scruples on this point, for really it is wrong in these days not to cultivate our illusions, and I cherish one to the effect that Oxford is paradise.

I am on my way to Spain for a few weeks, but must return to America in September. I am settled for the present at Harvard College as tutor in philosophy.

Write me about June 17, care of Brown Shipley & Co, London, and tell me if I may make my pilgrimage to Oxford ^now^ or wait for a time when the saints are at their shrines. — Ever yours

G Santayana

A photograph of a handwritten letter on aged paper. The text is written in cursive and matches the typed transcription above. The letter is dated May 27, 1890, and is addressed to Lionel Johnson. It discusses Santayana's plans to visit England in June and his appreciation for Oxford. The paper shows signs of age, including some creases and discoloration.

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So, tired with rambling through the Town,
I taste the rich delights of *Brown*;
With *Elia* for the evening's crown,
Gentle *Saint Charles!*

1891.

SATANAS.

To Jorge Santayana.

Ecce! Princeps infernorum,
Rex veneficus amorum
Vilium et mortiferorum,
Ecce! regnat Lucifer:
Animis qui dominatur,
Quibus coelum spoliatur,
Qui malignus bona fatur,
Cor corrumpens suaviter.

Fructus profert; inest cinis:
Profert flores plenos spinis:
Vitae eius mors est finis:
Crux est eius requies.
Qualis illic apparebit
Cruciatu, et manebit
Quantas ista quot habebit
Mors amaritudines!

Iuventutis quam formosa
Floret inter rosas rosa!
Venit autem vitiosa
Species infamiae:
Veniant crudeles visus,
Voces simulati risus;
Et inutilis fit nisus
Flebilis laetitiae.

Quanto vitium splendescit,
Tanto anima nigrescit;

Satanas

to Jorge Santayana

By Lionel Johnson Prose translation by Alex Wong

Ecce! Princeps inferorum,
Rex veneficus amorum
Vilium et mortiferorum,
 Ecce! regnat Lucifer:
Animis qui dominatur,
Quibus coelum spoliatur;
Qui malignus bona fatur,
 Cor corrupens suaviter.

Fructus profert; inest cinis:
Profert flores plenos spinis:
Vitae eius mors est finis:
 Crux est eius requies.
Qualis illic apparebit
Cruciatu, et manebit!
Quantas ista quot habebit
 Mors amaritudines!

Iuventutis quam Formosa
Floret inter rosas rosa!
Venit autem vitiosa
 Species infamiae:
Veniunt crudeles visus,
Voces simulate risus;
Et inutilis fit nisus
 Flebilis laetitiae.

Quanto vitium splendescit,
Tanto anima nigrescit;
Tanto tandem cor marcescit,
 Per peccata dulcisa.
Gaudens mundi Princeps mali
Utitur venco tali,
Voluptate Avernali;
 O mellita vitia!

Gaudet Princeps huius mundi
Videns animam confundi;
Cordis amat moribundi
 Aspectare proelium.
Vana tentat, vana quaerens,
Cor anhelum, frustra moerens;
Angit animae inhaerens
 Flamma cor miserimum

Gaudet Rector tenebrarum
Immolare cor amarum;
Satiare furiarum
 Rex sorores avidas.
*Vae! Non stabit in aeternum
Regnum, ait Rex, infernum:
Sed, dum veniat Supernum,
 Dabo vobis victimas.*

Behold! the Prince of the infernal regions,
the poisonous King of
base and deadly loves:
behold! Lucifer reigns—
who subjugates souls,
and by whom heaven is despoiled,
and who, being malign, speaks good things,
sweetly corrupting the heart.

He offers fruits; they are made of ashes.
He offers flowers, full of thorns.
The object of his life is death:
the cross* is where he rests.
How racked with torment
shall the dying one appear, and ever remain!
How many agonies, how many,
shall that death have!

How beautiful, among the roses,
blooms the rose of youth!
Yet comes to it the vicious
semblance of disgrace:
the savage faces gather,
the voices of feigned laughter;
and useless then shall be
the doleful straining for happiness.

As splendorously as evil shines,
so much the soul blackens;—
so much, at last, the heart languishes
away through its sweet sinning.
Of suchlike poisons the Prince of the world's
evil makes use:
the voluptuosities of the Underworld.
O, what honey-sweet vices!

The Prince of this world rejoices,
watching a soul confounded;
he loves to look upon the battle
of the dying heart.
It clutches at vain things, looking around
in vain, that panting heart, grieving to
no purpose: the fires that reside in the soul
choke that most wretched heart.

The Master** of the shadows
rejoices to immolate the bitter heart,
and—as their King—to satiate
the voracious sisterhood of Furies.
*Alas! it shall not stand for eternity,
the Kingdom of Hell, says the King;
but till the heavenly Kingdom come,
I shall provide you with victims.*

* or *the gallows*; or, figuratively, *torture, torment*

** but *rector* in English, in the ecclesiastic sense, is ironically implied

Santayana on Communism in the Light of His Correspondence

This paper attempts to reconstruct George Santayana's views on communism on the basis of his correspondence with the support of his political writings.¹ An initial inquiry into Santayana's letters along with consideration of the book *Dominations and Powers* allows one to infer that his approach to communism underwent an evolution—from a moderate skepticism, not deprived of some rays of hope, to a disillusionment, which reinforced in him a distrust of endeavors to materialize utopian ideologies, but did not deprive him of his idealistic imagination.

After Santayana severed his professional relations with academia, he came to be perceived by some as a recalcitrant intellectual, a solitary sage, perhaps a little outlandish but all the more alluring. Thus, a number of intellectuals and activists, some of them of leftist and emancipatory sympathies—such as Horace Kallen, Kenneth Burke, Sydney Hook, Max Eastman, or W.E. Du Bois—exchanged letters and ideas with Santayana. Santayana cannot be regarded as an expert either on Russian history or on Marxist philosophy (his familiarity with these was probably second-hand, mediated by Stalin's works and the secondary sources that he read), but he was an insightful observer, commentator, and interpreter of the events of the day.

One learns from Santayana's correspondence that he was acquainted with some of Stalin's writings as well as those of the American communists of the day—in particular two books by Max Eastman—"Stalin's Russia and the Crisis in Socialism" (1940) and "Marxism: Is It Science?" (1940) (LGS to Max Eastman, 21 December 1940 and to Nancy S. Toy, 21 December 1940). Santayana also followed Hook's engagement in American left-wing intelligentsia. The letters he exchanged with Eastman are evidence of his interest and appreciation of his colleague's work, even though he straightforwardly declares that he never belonged to Eastman's "camp." In these letters Santayana refers to the left-wing, often pro-communist activists in the United States as "radical liberals," whereas the label "liberals" embraces, among others, the representatives of the mainstream pragmatism (like John Dewey) with its pro-social and progressivist spirit. This distinction merits keeping in mind when considering John Gray's opinion (expressed in *Post-Liberalism*) about Santayana being one of the most insightful critics of liberalism among philosophers. The criticism in question, I would suggest, concerns in par-

¹ The idea arose with the opportunity of the hundredth anniversary of the Russian Revolution and an international conference "The Russian Revolution and the History of Ideas", which took place in November 2017 in Warsaw. Scholars discussed a broad spectrum of topics—from the anatomy of the revolutionary processes to the critique of the Revolution and the reaction of public intellectuals worldwide. The paper, being part of the project financed by National Science Centre, Poland (2016/23/D/HS1/02274), is a modified version of the article "A story of disillusionment: George Santayana's views on communism and the Russian Revolution" that will appear this year in a conference volume of *The Interlocutor: Journal of the Warsaw School of the History of Ideas*, vol. 2 (2019), <http://www.theinterlocutor.ifispan.pl/>.

ticular certain aspects and tendencies within the historical development of what we call “liberalism” today.

In *Dominations and Powers*, Santayana noticed a number of assumptions common to pragmatism and communism. Besides the fact that he finally rejected Soviet Russia’s totalitarian ambition and method (even though, as we shall later see, he initially shared in some illusions about its future perspectives), he presented his own materialism as incompatible with the so-called dialectical materialism, just as his naturalism differed from the Deweyan, evolutionary type of naturalism.² These two cases of incongruence are not unrelated. To put it in a nutshell, Santayana was critical of both philosophies on account of what he called their “ingenuity.” The materialism/naturalism declared by these doctrines was, in his view, a cover-up for a crypto-idealistic philosophy of an instrumental kind, which reduced reality to the field of action. Both represented what he called the “dominance of the foreground”—a biased perspective (in one case the perspective of the proletariat engaged in a class war, in the other that of social experience), which they proclaimed to be absolute so that it might better represent certain interests. Dewey’s anthropocentrism, or rather action-centrism, overshadowed the recognition of the autonomous realm of nature and thus, on Santayana’s reading, Dewey abandoned naturalism for an idolatry or a “religion” of social progress (OS 213-241). One of the main targets of Santayana’s critique of liberalism was its progressivist strand. As for Marxism, he denied it the status of being “scientific.” In one of his letters he wrote: “I entirely accept historical materialism, which is only an application of materialism to history. But the phrase carries now an association with the Hegelian or Marxian dialectic, which if meant to be more than the doctrine of universal flux, is a denial of materialism.” (LGS to Harry Slochower, 18 September 1937) In another letter, addressed to Max Eastman, he wrote: “[t]hat Marxism is not a science, for me is a truism. It is a last revision of Hebrew prophecy, as Hegel’s system is also.”³ Rather than being a genuine materialism or a science, Marxism seemed to be “an idealism that prefers material images . . . in formulating its dream [A]n idealist who uses mechanical or economic or pragmatic terms remains a dreaming idealist.”⁴ (LGS to Max Eastman, 31 December 1940) The “dream” was harmless unless it usurped the right to a forceful transformation of human reality with no or little respect to its costs. Santayana’s

² In short, Dewey’s naturalism, referred to as evolutionary, transactional, situational, contextual etc., assumed that experience and perception are continuous with nature, which is ever-changing. Moreover, human mind and experience are viewed in terms of an integral, social process, expressive of the principle of growth. This kind of naturalism seems secondary in relation to Dewey’s main premises being radical empiricism. Santayana’s naturalism, in contrast, postulated ontological primacy of the realm of matter, not only utterly independent from and prior to any human experience, but also recondite from the perspective of human cognitive capacities. Any detailed discussion of the difference in question goes beyond the scope of this essay. Let me just add that it requires a reference to certain dualisms —such as matter-essence or body-spirit - present in Santayana (even if interpreted in a non-orthodox fashion) and rejected by Dewey.

³ Leszek Kołakowski, in his in-depth study, also considered Marx’s “faith in the ‘end of history’ . . . not a scientist’s theory but the exhortation of a prophet” (Kołakowski 307).

⁴ Kołakowski clearly shares this opinion of Santayana: “Neither Marx nor Engels are materialists in the exact or historical meaning of the word.” (Kołakowski 332)

sensitivity to arrogance in philosophy and his advocacy of humility was rooted both in his conviction about the limitations of human reason and his idea of contingent reality. As for the latter, it is present in Santayana's writings in at least two different contexts: first, at the ontological level of the passage from material potentiality to actuality, second, at the level of our interpretation of reality—the patterns of reality we recognize are arbitrary in that they are contextual, dependent on our finite hermeneutic capacity, and descriptive of the way we find ourselves in the world rather than any ultimate truth about events.⁵ The sense of contingency and limitations seems even deeper in the light of Santayana's criticism of the human tendency to overestimate the causal power of mind.

This being said, one should not lose sight of Santayana's intellectual openness and the fact that he enjoyed the belief that no single political option or ideology might be recognized as universally valid and the best for mankind. Thus, on some occasions he did express hopes that Marxism and, specifically, the revolutionary changes in Russia,⁶ might indeed bring desirable changes to human civilization. There are a number of examples in his writings.

He had no principal "hostility" to socialism and communism, according to his letter of 1921 to Horace Kallen, even though he decisively dismissed the idea that they ever might or should become universal and lasting. He seems to have thought that at certain places and in specific historical moments communism might be justified as a sort of cathartic medium. While communism should be accepted "only when inevitable," (LGS to Horace Kallen, 21 November 1921) there was a possibility, he admitted, that the early twentieth century was just the right moment for a communist revolution in a crisis-ridden Europe. What hopes did he attach to communism? The answer is: that it might cater for the most basic needs of the many and do away with the vices of capitalism, without encroaching on certain liberties cherished by civil societies, such as freedom of speech, opinion, association, etc. As he would confess a few years later:

I am more drawn by the *Zeitgeist* . . . towards communism than I was towards liberalism in the old days. Communism would turn the world, physically and spiritually, into one vast monastery, giving the individual sure support and definite limited duties while leaving him free and solitary in the spirit. That doesn't seem to me a bad ideal, even if certain selective forms of society might have to dive under while the universal brotherhood prevailed. It would not, in any case, prevail equally, or forever. (LGS to Max Eastman, 26.12.1945)

The origins of these wishful speculations rest in his critical assessment of what had happened to liberal ideals in the democratic and capitalist world, and his premonitions of future weaknesses and perversions of liberalism, some of which have proved to be not far off the mark. His diagnosis uncovers widespread nihilism, agency crisis, and the hypocrisy of governments, which are alienated from

⁵ For a synthetic discussion of this topic see for example: "Rorty has no Physics" by Angus Kerr-Lawson, (Kerr-Lawson 1995).

⁶ Two revolutions took place in Russia in 1917. During the February Revolution the tsarist autocracy was overturned and a new democratic government was installed. The October Revolution overthrew the new Provisional Government and the Bolsheviks introduced the Soviet dictatorship, starting a bloody civil war, which lasted until 1923.

the interests of those whom they are meant to represent and form a sort of parasitic organism instead. He sounds sensitive to the working conditions of the poor, the so-called modern slavery, and does not spare the mentality of the elites some bitter words (DP 379-380). "Conviction has deserted the civilized mind," Santayana says in his final book, "and a good conscience exists only at the extreme left, in that crudely deluded mass of plethoric humanity which perhaps forms the substance of another material tide destined to sweep away the remnants of our old vanities, and to breed new vanities of its own." (DP 254) Meanwhile, he notices a sort of nemesis of ideology in that the "banners of humanitarianism and equality" previously put forth by liberals, "have now been snatched from their hands by a return wave of communism and dogmatic unanimity." (DP 310) This is where he is immediately concerned with the dangers latent in the communist ideals. What is important, it seems dubious to Santayana whether the unanimity proclaimed by the communists might coexist with what he valued most in the society and what he called "vital liberty." Marx was right in unveiling the class nature of liberalism—it "secured vital liberty for the rich and for the geniuses, . . . for the liberty fostered by prosperity is intellectual as well as personal." However, it was "on the varied fruits of this moral and intellectual liberty that the spirit of unanimous mankind might feed at first." (DP 310) In these reflections resonates his skepticism about the possibility of a successful and long-term implementation of *any* social and political ideal, accompanied by the concern as to the self-defeating tendencies inherent in all ideologies.

Nevertheless, Santayana did flirt—quite explicitly—with the idea of universal communism. In a response to the question "Through whom might wisdom rule the world?" (DP 453), he wrote:

Perhaps the Soviets In the first place, they are a real power, with an autonomous army. . . . Secondly, the Soviets are theoretically international Thirdly, they represent the Dictatorship of the proletariat, that is, of the non-descript masses of human beings without country, religion, property, or skill. *We are all born proletarians, and remain such all our lives long in our physical being and in respect to those radical animal wants which are alone coercive. The dictatorship is therefore not artificial here, but simply a recognition of the fundamental conditions of our existence.* At that level, and in those respects, we live under the control of universal material forces; it would be childish not to recognize them and irrational not to confront them with foresight and method. Lastly, such foresight and method are foreshadowed in the Soviet doctrine of Historical Materialism If the management [of economy] were competent, a universal communism, backed by irresistible armed force, would be a wonderful boon to mankind." (DP 455, my emphasis)

The passage testifies first, to Santayana's metaphorical use of the term "proletariat" and, second, to his materialist conception of the fundamentals of politics which has been referred to in terms of "managing necessity" (Kremplewska 28-42). Having recognized the rudimentary material slavery, the homage humans pay for staying alive and the inevitable situation of bowing to necessity, Santayana speculates on the possibility that communist regime—under the condition of a genuine economic competence—might free people from the shackles of narrow-

mindful materialism and the spirit of competition, thus liberating them to spiritual life. The idea of establishing a political order meant to enable its citizens to develop the virtues that their “souls” are naturally inclined to, with particular emphasis on spirituality, reappears in Santayana’s writings and seems to constitute a more or less explicit Platonic motivation on his part. This, I would suggest, is a possible context for understanding his reflections on communism. Nevertheless, to stress it again, Santayana accounts for the term “proletariat” metaphorically, saying that all people are innately proletarians inasmuch they are incarnate beings who suffer and have certain fundamental needs. This—and only this—seems to constitute the basis for unanimity or brotherhood. “Proletarians thus tend to become equal in the only thing in which equality is possible—in their misery. And this is a great bond” and the source of the idea that “all men are equal by nature.” (DP 369) The “great bond” mentioned by Santayana may be the ground for the feeling and attitude of solidarity. The notion does not appear in his writings explicitly, but I’d suggest it should not be dismissed when considering that the supposed promising aspect of communism is that it recognizes and addresses the said condition of misery and aims at coping with it by way of just distribution of the costs of necessity.

Elsewhere, similar reflections of Santayana are accompanied by serious reservations and his letters show that his skepticism was growing with time.⁷ First of all, for the Soviet ideal to be meaningful and beneficial, the Soviet state, he says, would have to guarantee pluralism of opinion and “renounce all control of education, religion, manners, and arts.” (DP 455-456) Freedom of expression, religious affiliation, travel and migration, etc., are plainly the conditions of possibility for the spiritual liberty that is at stake. This is where a paradox appears. In reference to the previously mentioned unanimity of all people, Santayana notes that:

We are proletarians and unwitting communists only *in the absence of these things* [the liberties listed above]; *in their presence, we all instantly become aristocrats*. Everything except the mechanical skeleton of society, all culture in the German sense of this word, must be left to free associations, to inspiration founding traditions and traditions guiding inspiration . . . a just universal government would not disturb them. (DP 455-456, my emphasis)

Elsewhere the idea is restated in a different way: “The real equality between men is . . . [either] an equality in misery . . . [or] an equality in spiritual autonomy.” (DP 368) In the former case we are “proletarians”, in the latter—we are “aristocrats.” Only and exclusively in an environment of a natural diversity would “the principle of spiritual wealth in spiritual liberty . . . be vindicated” (DP 368). To develop this thought by Santayana and relate it to the remaining quotations in this paper concerning social organization in the imaginary commonwealth, if the burden of the first kind of equality—equality in misery—can be relieved or transformed into an equality in basic material security by means of rational politics, a space of liberty is opened for the actualization of the other equality, the “aristocratic” and spiritual equality, which is potential, formal, thrives only in the condi-

⁷ Besides, as far as I know, the thinker never sided openly with the communists, and the so-called Moscow trials, which shocked American public opinion at the end of 1930s, seemed to confirm the viability of his skepticism toward revolutions and utopias at large.

tions of diversity and produces diversity. This kind of society would not be a society of equals (an undifferentiated mass); on the contrary, it would be informed by differences, which, according to Santayana, arise naturally and provide for an internal variation, which, in its turn, makes a harmonious organization possible. It may even not be a classless society, yet the said differences would make for a wealth of possibilities for the realization of people's diverse abilities rather than debilitate anybody's spiritual potential by turning them into slaves of material necessity or greed. The ultimate aim seems to be the opening of the possibility of spiritual development, in the broad sense of this term, to all those who desire it.

Another issue tackled by Santayana is that of moral representation and rational authority being a challenge for the government. The latter involves the recognition of the authority of facts, the former requires honesty, it "lies in furthering the interests, not in catching the votes, of the people represented." (DP 381) Communist praxis contradicted both principles, leaving many of its former advocates disillusioned. Unable to thrive in the situation of liberty and assert its popular legitimacy, the communist regime resorted to large scale violence showing its totalitarian face. Santayana came to a conclusion similar to that of Andrzej Walicki, who argued that there is a genetic relation between totalitarian enslavement and the attempt to materialize the Marxist idea of freedom. In other words, the former was a very likely effect of the latter. The Marxist idea of freedom, utopian as it was, entailed the possibility and the necessity of a full and rational control over socio-economic forces, a "collective mastery over people's own fate." (Walicki 19)⁸ Moreover, the said freedom concerned not the concrete individuals of here-and-now, but an abstract, future community of humans who have reached identity with their abstract, ideal essence. Meanwhile, Santayana had a clear intuition of the inhuman cost of implementing certain utopias. He believed that doing away with an element of unreason in the human world was an impossibility and "could only come at the price of eradicating the bodies which are the material basis for unreason to flourish." (Kinzel 98) This intuition was to find its grim confirmation in the development of Soviet communism into a brutal, totalitarian system. This is what Santayana, increasingly skeptical as to the motivations and methods of Soviet government, wrote about the post-war Soviet Union under Stalin's leadership:

it is not the authority of things but nominally the material class interests and militant Will of the proletariat and really the ambition of the self-appointed inner circle of the Communist party that not only rule absolutely but intend to keep the whole world unanimous by "liquidating" all dissentients. And half by the wonderful power of propaganda and mass-suggestion and half by systematic extermination of all other ways of thinking, this artificial unanimity has actually seemed to cover vast regions of Europe and Asia like a blanket of Siberian snow. The depth of it is unknown, but the silence is impressive. (DP 457)

⁸The book is available in English, entitled: *Marxism and the Leap to the Kingdom of Freedom*, (Walicki 1997).

Alexander Izgojew, one of the contributors to *De Profundis*, the famous collection of essays by Russian émigré intellectuals, noted that life itself proved the ultimate critic of communism and there is no superior critic than life (Izgojew 129).⁹ Similarly, let us note that Santayana suggests that communism—as a materialization of Marxist doctrine—finally rendered itself illegitimate in a manifold way: by proving incompatible with or contradictory to its own emancipatory spirit (liberating people into the spiritual richness of their human nature), by failing against the standard of moral representation and rational government, by disavowing the myth of the scientific authority of Marxism, and finally by proving incompetent in practice and hence, failing from the viewpoint of the authority of facts. The origins of the failure rest equally in the erratic assumptions of Marxism and in the inevitable perversities of its practical application. Among the “myths” of Marxism that Santayana opposed were the ideas that “there can be a perfect identity between collective and individual interests,” that it is possible to remove all the sources of antagonism among individuals by enabling them to merge with the social “whole,” and that there is a possibility of a full emancipation of man, or, in other words, the attainment of his ideal nature (Kołakowski 108). That would entail bridging the gap between necessity and freedom, which means not simply alleviating the burden of the so-called human condition, but rather doing away with the human condition whatsoever. This is where Santayana is most clearly at odds with Marxism (at least in its classical, orthodox version). Even though he believed necessity may and should be understood to some extent, the respect for human finitude, which is irremovable, was part of his philosophical credo. Marx, in turn, notes Kołakowski, “did not believe in the essential finitude and the limitation of man Evil and suffering, in his eyes, . . . were purely social facts.” (Kołakowski 338)

Looking back at the early correspondence with Kallen, Santayana thinks communism should “be accepted only when inevitable, and confined to the community to which . . . [it is] fitted, and by no means to be set up by the philosopher as ideals compulsory at all times and places over all men.” (LGS 21 December 1921) These limitations seem to pertain to all grand socio-economic and political designs, which are necessarily based on arbitrary conceptual schemas, as long as we think “in aesthetic or moral terms which correspond to no lines of cleavage or motion in nature.” Consequently, when the application of an ideal turns out a disaster, “we are consumed with astonishment and indignation at what we think the folly and wickedness of mankind, whose actions and sentiments are so strangely oblivious of the units we wished to preserve.” (LGS 21 December 1921)

Some central categories of scientific materialism, such as class struggle, were questioned by many critics of Marxism. Santayana’s contemporary, Petr Struwe, called the doctrine of class struggle a vague and “dubious schema utilized by demagogues.” (Struwe 206) A famous Russian thinker, Semen Frank, believed at that time that “the people when it means the lower classes or large masses cannot be blamed directly for any political failure The people are . . . tools in the hands of a governing minority.” (Frank 213) And not unlike Santayana, who spoke of the strategy of blaming immaturity of the people for the failures of the

⁹ This collection of essays is available in English under the title: *Out of the Depths [De Profundis]. Articles on the Russian Revolution*, (Woehrlin ed. 1986).

Soviet state, Frank asks, ironically, “[w]hat sort of politicians rely in their programme and agenda on an abstract ideal of the people instead of assuming the real, concrete people?” (Frank 213)

The fundamental question of “the people” and “the proletariat” on the behalf of whose authority the Bolsheviks reached for power seems to Santayana problematic and he returns to it in *Dominations and Powers*, while commenting ironically about the actual value of the whole Soviet undertaking for humans:

does the proletariat exercise any power at all? Or do the vested interests at work regard the special interests of the proletariat or of their own prestige or chosen ambition? Here is a revolution entangled in the complexities of its own success and carried by its organized instruments into enterprises of which it cannot plan the course or see the end. Meantime, what may we expect the spiritual condition of the people and the character of the liberal arts to become in this future realm of equality and unanimity? (DP 349)

Santayana’s answer to the question about who exercises power is: a sect, a party of conspirators, who, notwithstanding their sense of mission, “remained essentially politicians, counting not so much on the loose lost orphans of society as on the organized working class, that could be indoctrinated, trained and mobilized into a political army.” (DP 347) In 1952, in a letter to a friend, Santayana, utterly disillusioned, ascribes a deep cynicism to the Soviet elites: “It is already notorious that in Russia the governing clique lives luxuriously and plans “dominations” like so many madmen. . . . There would be no ‘communists’ among factory hands if they knew their true friends.” (LGS to John W. Yolton, 2 May 1952) In *Dominations and Powers* he notices some irrational and crypto-religious features of the system:

In such a conspiracy there is the same intrepid consistency or internal rationality as in any theocracy. . . . Both reform and reason would thus be banished from the scene, and eclipsed by faith and by prescribed action . . . the undertaking is not only horrible in its methods but vain in its promise. (DP 321)

Not unlike Russian émigré authors, Santayana was also pessimistic about the moral and spiritual condition of the society that was being established on the ruins of the Russian past, after traditional institutions and values were destroyed and all the inherited sources of unity and harmony dissolved. When a moral unity is missing in a society, “the government cannot be rational; it can never be an art; for the country supplies no guiding purpose to its rulers” (DP 380).

An equally important obstacle in the realization of the promised social paradise seemed to him to be the lack of economic competence in the new Soviet system and the inefficiency of a state-controlled economy, one deprived of a free market. We read:

But how, if all profit on land and equipment is abolished is the state to continue paying always higher wages for shorter hours of work, and supplying a more complete system of free social services? Evidently when a government has assumed possession of all means of production and controls all business, it cannot distribute. . . more than industry, so organized, will produce; and it

will probably . . . produce rather less than was at first produced by rival capitalists and private enterprise (DP 381-382).

The central planning of the state's economy, one of the key features of Soviet totalitarianism, was doomed to failure, according to John Gray. Rather than a despotism or a tyranny, it was "an economic chaos contained in a political state of nature." (Gray 163) Thus, it brought about a moral degradation of its participants, who become unwilling perpetrators in this self-reproducing system. These reflections of Gray, pointing to the disastrous moral (and economic) effects of communist social experiments, may be associated with Santayana's skepticism as to the ideas of universal social equality, unanimity, and rational control over all spheres of life. Since diversity and relative inequality are, according to Santayana, natural—they stem from what he calls the generative order of society—they may be subject to moderate rational reform and may be refined by means of spiritually-oriented ideals. However, any radical attempt of doing away with nature is most likely to bring about a return to nature but this time in a much more unexpected, violent form—as it was the case in the described by Gray degeneration of social structure under the Soviet government into a narrow wealthy elite and a mass of impoverished ones fighting for basic goods.

To stress it once again, rational leadership, in Santayana's view, would prefer selective continuity and reform rather than destruction of what had been established in the past. He envisages it as disinterested and knowledgeable, "steady and traditional, yet open to continual readjustment," aware of the its own inability to "define or codify human nature: that is the error of militant sects and factions. But it can exercise a modicum of control over local and temporal impulses and keep at least an ideal of spiritual liberty and social justice before the public eye." (DP 382) Not losing sight of the said ideals is, in my view, a trace of the already mentioned Santayana's allegiance to Platonic (and Aristotelian) ideals of a community caring for the possibility of leading a good i.e., a virtuous and happy life. These ideals help (at least those who are ready either to embrace them or to be inspired by them) endow vital and spiritual liberty with meaning

Valerian Murawiov (English spelling—Muravev) noted that Soviet communism meant discontinuity through the negation of history, tradition and reality as such, and their replacement by an abstract ideological construct (Murawiov 165). Likewise, Santayana ascribes to the revolutionaries "hatred of any view that recognized realities." In particular it was the past that "was the great enemy, the dreadful past." A new kind of man emerged, a momentary man, one who can afford no other past—and consequently no other destiny—than that prepared for him by the state. The undifferentiated mass of "momentary men" "would glorify undifferentiated existence. Such may be the ultimate voice of revolutionary democracy" (DP 350).

The undifferentiation in question is evoked as part of the argument against the idea of equality and unanimity. The unanimity sought by communists disregards the fact that human needs and the ways humans realize their vital liberty "are centrifugal and divergent, so that the goods they pursue are incompatible existentially." (DP 310) In a striking semblance to what René Girard puts forth in his theory about the relation between undifferentiation and violence, Santayana clearly sees that "[t]he more equal and similar all nations and all individuals become, the more vehemently will each of them stick up for his atomic individuality. . . .

But when all are uniform the individuality of each unit is numerical only” (DP 180). In other words, enforced equality rather than leading to brotherhood may result in atomization and, eventually, mutual hostility.

Uniformity between classes or between nations is not favorable to peace, except as it destroys units capable of action. There must be organic units at some level or there would be no potential moral agents or combatants; but similarity in these units, if they live in the same habitat, renders them rivals and therefore, in spite of their brotherly likeness to one another, involves them in war. . . . Similarity is therefore a danger to peace, and peace can be secured only by organization. But the collateral completeness of similar units excludes organization; and then war becomes inevitable at the first shock of competition, unless some higher power, itself organized, stifles the conflict. (DP 364-6)

There is definitely more to say on Santayana’s views on equality, but it goes beyond the scope of this paper. Let me only mention that these reflections by Santayana may be considered in the light of the already mentioned diagnoses of Soviet totalitarianism by John Gray, who emphasized that while cultural and intellectual pluralism along with the institutions of civil society were being annihilated, society was reduced to the Hobbesian state of nature, where (equal) agents become rivals and prey upon one another in competing for goods, which are in permanent scarcity (Gray 185-6).

Perhaps the most mature, synthetic expression of Santayana’s final views on the totalitarian fruits of the Bolshevik Revolution is contained in the passage quoted below.

The moral inspiration of communism is brotherly, pacifistic, ascetic, and saintly. Christianity was originally communistic, and all the religious orders continue to be so in their internal economy and discipline. It is built on tenderness, on indifference to fortune and to the world, on readiness for sacrifice, on life in the spirit. It cannot be militant. But what is now called communism is more than militant, more than a doctrine and a party bent on universal domination It is ferociously egotistical and claims absolute authority for the primal Will of a particular class, or rather a group of conspirators professing to be the leaders of that class. This class, far from embracing all mankind, does not include all the poor, nor the fundamental rural population that traditionally till the soil and live on its products, but enlists only the uprooted and disinherited proletariat Thus, the authority of the “Communist Party” usurped without previous delegation, like the authority of conquerors and bandits, proclaims itself to be absolute and to extend prophetically over all mankind. And whose interests meantime does it serve? At bottom only the imaginary interests of a future society, unanimous and (like the Prussians of Hegel) perfectly free because perfectly disciplined to will nothing but what the State wills for them. Meantime, in order to clear the ground for that ideal plenty in peace, war must devour millions of the faithful communists themselves, as well as millions of their surprised and unconverted fellow creatures; there must be slaughter of enemies, forced migrations of whole peoples, disappearance of institutions, civic and religious, destruction of all traditions(DP 320)

To conclude, whatever Santayana's initial hopes related to communism were, they were motivated predominantly by the idea of spiritual gains and greater personal liberty possible due to a more competent economic order and more just allocation of the costs of necessity. The hopes waned and gave way to bitter criticism of the totalitarian and bloody nature of Soviet communism and its detrimental influence on the spiritual and moral condition of society. Did Santayana's disillusionment with Soviet communism make him abandon altogether his ideal of a universal commonwealth? It seems not. In a letter to a friend, written a few months before his death, he mentions his "playful speculations" about a model of what a rational government might be (LGS to John W. Yolton, 2 May 1952). He continues to dream about a possible multi-national/cultural, universal "empire," where the military, economy, and healthcare would be controlled by the state with the support of scientific knowledge, making—at least to an extent—natural necessity less burdensome and more justly distributed. The "communism" he speaks of is perhaps only to a small degree influenced by the Marxist doctrine, otherwise colored by Platonic inspirations and an idealized vision of *Pax Romana*. It is also unclear what the scope of state intervention in the economic life of the people would be. Nevertheless, Santayana insists that governmental control should by no means extend further than the already mentioned spheres of common life, while securing freedom and encouraging diversity in all the remaining ones. Such a commonwealth would secure internal peace for its subjects and cater for a *modus vivendi*. These, however, remain, as he would note, merely "playful speculations."

KATARZYNA KREMPLEWSKA

the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, Polish Academy of Sciences (Warsaw)

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Review of Kremplewska's *Life as Insinuation*

Katarzyna Kremplewska. 2019. *Life as Insinuation: George Santayana's Hermeneutics of Finite Life and Human Self*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press.

Katarzyna Kremplewska's book *Life as Insinuation: George Santayana's Hermeneutics of Finite Life and Human Self* examines Santayana's conception of selfhood, making insightful comparisons with relevant European thinkers and yielding interpretations of important concepts such as freedom and tragedy. This work, like Daniel Moreno's *Santayana the Philosopher: Philosophy as a Form of Life* (2009; 2015), presents Santayana's philosophy as an attempt "to prevent humans from turning into lunatics" (Kremplewska 111). But Kremplewska's work is distinct in its emphasis on selfhood, indicating the richness of Santayana's philosophy and the originality of Kremplewska's approach, which displays impressive knowledge of both primary and secondary sources. Her work should influence international conversations about the meaning and importance of Santayana's philosophy, demonstrating its relevance to the Continental tradition and to an enlarged set of issues ranging across traditions.

Kremplewska claims that Santayana's theory of selfhood is central to his philosophy of life, which she calls *contemplative vitalism*. Both are understood in terms of Santayana's nonreductive ontology, inoculating them against dualistic conceptions and making "the reality of human life irreducible to the relations of power" (Kremplewska xiv). Kremplewska's interpretation stands apart from those that present Santayana as dissolving the self, reducing it to the vital organizing principle of a material being (psyche), or positing an immutable "kernel." She describes a dynamic self that unites material and spiritual aspects, achieving integrity in an ongoing interpretive process. The first three chapters present Santayana's theory of selfhood, including what is at stake in such theorizing (living well and sanely), the significance of the self to Santayana's philosophy (theory of selfhood as translating ontology into a way of living), and what counts as the good life (freedom through finitude and transcendence).

What is at stake in understanding the self, is a sane and livable orientation to the world. A conception of selfhood reflects an understanding of reality, which has a bearing on how well we live. Drawing on Charles Taylor's work, the book begins with a survey of European conceptions of selfhood. For Augustine, introspection was checked by the reality of God, which limited the excesses of subjectivity. Aristotle's relational self-cultivated excellent action and practical wisdom, culminating in contemplation. But Cartesianism, lacking Augustine's antidote to the self and Aristotle's naturalism, resulted in unrestrained philosophical egotism, opened a chasm between self and world, and rendered reason instrumental. While many subsequent responses to Cartesianism failed to curb the ego or mend the self-world split, Kremplewska sees "[a] breakthrough in thinking about subjectivity [with the appearance of] the idea of stream of consciousness" (Kremplewska 12) as in the thought of William James, Edmund Husserl, and Henri Bergson.

Their consideration of tensions between subjectivity and factuality and between finitude and freedom greatly influenced Santayana as he challenged egotistic illusions and rampant subjectivity that marked modernity.

Santayana's conception of selfhood is significant because it translates his ontology into terms directly relevant to human living. His ontology rejected Cartesianism and Hegelianism *and* their logic—a logic entailing a hegemonic self and insisting that self be persistent, autonomous, and identical to ego or else dissolved altogether. Santayana's ontology united self and world and tamed the ego without sacrificing consciousness as do philosophies of will to power. Kremplewska points out that Santayana's ontological distinctions—the realms of essence, matter, truth, and spirit—account for an intelligible reality, objective truth, the possibility of human freedom through spirituality, the value of imagination in itself, and the potential of essences to counter superstitious idealism. This ontology allowed him to synthesize traditional oppositions, acknowledging both spirituality and materialism, and to suppress ego while articulating a conception of individual selfhood.

According to Kremplewska, Santayana conceived an *aporetic* self, which includes seemingly incompatible elements and eludes any fixed and final description. The aporias of self are articulated in Santayana's terms of *psyche*, the vital pattern of a material organism that preserves its life, and *spirit*, impotent consciousness or intuition of essences (qualities and forms in themselves). The first aporia arises from the contrast of spirit's disinterested awareness of essences as immediate, actual, and infinite with psyche's experience of the flow of future into past involving memory and anticipation. The second aporia arises from the contrast of the "Cartesian illusion of spiritual independence" (Kremplewska 41) with the fact of psyche's material nature.

These two subjective experiences of conflicting elements set philosophical challenges; and explanations of the aporias reveal the nature of selfhood. They are ignored by conceptions of a fixed, unitary ego, which aspires to master the world but proceeds by imposing illusions: Egotistic conceptions ignore the impossibility of controlling an irrational material flux or surveying infinite essences; they ignore otherness, denying the complexity and relational aspect of selfhood. Santayana's ontology counters ego's illusions and acknowledges our suspension in ignorance between irrational matter and infinite essence. His materialism introduces an impersonal perspective without reducing all reality to matter. Matter is the realm of power, spirit of the free but impotent witness; and both are real. Acknowledging human finitude is necessary to restrain ego and maintain sanity.

Acknowledging ignorance and seeking to interpret the experience of the aporias without ego's illusions, reveals the hermeneutic self, which is "a *triadic temporal structure* . . . a psycho-spiritual unity with an irreducible first-person perspective" (Kremplewska 46). As a structure it unites material body, living organism, and consciousness; as temporal it is an ongoing process of translating psyche's material impulses into spirit's medium of essences and then into symbolic knowledge of the material realm. Freedom and integrity arise when the self understands its own nature, which is characterized by finitude and integration of body, psyche, and spirit in intelligent action.

Spirit adds a dimension of interpretation and communication, transcending material existence. This does not deny the material genesis of the self (which includes the body and the psyche), but it can reverse the relation in terms of freedom. Awareness of essences—of the forms and patterns of existence—frees humans to articulate an autobiography that is not dictated solely by biology. This freedom has limits: the hermeneutic self remains aporetic, spirit remains impotent in the realm of matter, but this does not make transcendence unreal. For Santayana, living *is* transcendence: we come from a birth no one can remember moving to a death no one can experience; these limits of consciousness are the material events that living consciousness transcends. Birth, death, and the aporias of selfhood are inescapable reminders of finitude, which modify expectations, restrain ego, and discourage delusion.

The impotence of spirit may make its transcendence seem an unhelpful source of freedom; but Kremplewska contends that since Santayana begins his account with a dynamic unity, spirit “acquires a function in the context of this whole” (Kremplewska 64). If the self is a dynamic unity, the impotence of spirit is consistent with its “*activating* role in the process of life” provided that it never be regarded as distinct from the process (Kremplewska 65). Spirit’s activating role can be observed in the efficacy of thinking, which Kremplewska understands as “no less material than spiritual . . . a psycho-spiritual, interpretive way of exercising psychic power and expressing its nature” (Kremplewska 65, 67).

The dynamic unity of the self and of the ontological realms more broadly is key to *contemplative vitalism*, Kremplewska’s interpretation of Santayana’s philosophy of life. Just as the hermeneutic self unites spirit and psyche, the good life of *contemplative vitalism* unites spiritual and active life. In *contemplative vitalism*, spirit’s ability to raise life above material relations of power makes possible freedom of intelligent action, freedom to become oneself (vital liberty), and the free life of the mind. Contemplation belongs to the “to the wider dynamics of an individual life” (Kremplewska 69), so that spirituality can bring a new quality to the dynamic unity of the self and influence active life. In *contemplative vitalism*, reason escapes the narrow constraints of instrumentality and enriches the immediate quality of human life.

The benefits of spirituality are explained further in Kremplewska’s consideration of Santayana’s metaphor of masks. Masks cover and uncover nature: they cover existences and, like essences, are a medium of understanding and intelligent interactions; they uncover nature by revealing our knowledge to be symbolic and relative to our concrete lives. Masks are the meaningful results of the hermeneutic process and a medium of self-understanding and social relations. Some are tempted to cling pathologically to a particular mask as a fixed fact; for example, when a dogma, ideology, or conventional role stifles spontaneity and personal growth. But we live more fully when we regard masks from a spiritual perspective as varying expressions of psyche that are immaterial and infinite. This allows us to regard them as possibilities for a self and the self as something to be negotiated. This provides “the margin of the *freedom of authorship*” of the self (Kremplewska 82).

If a mask, as an expression of psyche, determines a role for a self to play, it remains for that self to play the role well or badly: The drama I enact is only partly dependent on the role I am given; there also is the immediate situation including other actors in the drama, the audience, the setting, the broader social circumstances. In my performance, I can enact my freedom. Kremplewska writes, “[e]lements of spiritual practice support the enactment of” the freedom of authorship because they cultivate the ability to suspend masks, to momentarily transcend the facts of our decisions and actions, and to remain open and attentive to possibilities (Kremplewska 82). This openness and attention, liberated from material concerns, “may become a discipline and an art capable of transmuting the whole performance of life” (Kremplewska 83). This spirituality is not a final goal but a phase of living. Living authentically is no permanent state or final accomplishment; Kremplewska characterizes it as “a *quality* of expression” and “a fragile equilibrium, which depends on a sustained engagement with life” (Kremplewska 84). This equilibrium indicates an honest self—free from delusion and free to be itself.

Chapters 4 and 5 compare Santayana with Henri Bergson and with Martin Heidegger, which enhance understanding of significant concepts in Santayana’s conception of selfhood by placing them in broader philosophical contexts. The chapters appear to reflect the two aporias of the self. Chapter 4’s concern with temporality recalls the first aporia that arises from spirit’s eternal perspective and psyche’s experience of sentimental time; Chapter 5’s consideration of the relation of self and world, or of spirit and matter, recalls the second aporia that arises from spirit’s sense of control and the fact of psyche’s materiality.

Santayana and Bergson shared a concern for freedom from the mechanical repetition of material forces, and both thought that spirit and our experience of temporality provide opportunities for freedom. Their similarities converge in Bergson’s idea of insinuation. Bergson thought of life as continual insinuation or infiltration of one thing by some other thing; and it was through insinuation that spirit could win freedom from material necessity. Past events as memory insinuate themselves into perception of the present, allowing the self to transcend and make sense of the present. In this way, spirit insinuates itself into the material flux. In this hermeneutic insinuation, consciousness draws on the past by using memory to perceive the present and by using established bodily affects and reactions to respond to the present: The past is “*resurrect[ed] in the costume of the present moment*” (Kremplewska 102). This “paradoxical new repetition” provides a margin of freedom from a mechanical repetition and materiality; the past is a source of liberation for the self and is essential to human agency.

Kremplewska writes that Bergson’s “vision of freedom starts with the very fact that we endure, have a history, and accumulate memories like a snowball, to re-live them creatively myriads of times when thinking and acting” (Kremplewska 103). She explains that Bergson understood finitude as the irrevocability of the past and then articulated how it made human freedom possible; these ideas are significantly similar to those of Santayana who thought human freedom depends on both spirituality and limited psychic experience of time.

In the next chapter, Kremplewska imagines a debate between Santayana and Heidegger based on Santayana's reading of Heidegger's *Sein und Zeit*, as documented in *George Santayana's Marginalia* (MARG Book 1). Kremplewska finds "strategic affinities among large concepts and ideas" (Kremplewska 122) as when Santayana indicated rough analogues of his notions of animal faith, realm of essence, and intuition in Heidegger's work, and when he understood Heidegger's *Dasein* as "spirit incarnate." Both thinkers rejected a Cartesian quest for certainty and asked, in Kremplewska's words, "*What do the facts of the centrality of awareness and thinking to this particular form of life tell us about its being/nature?*" (Kremplewska 115).

Comparing Santayana and Heidegger's ideas aids understanding of the aporetic self and the dangers it faces. Because self-understanding is always in the making, it involves a risk of failure and tempts abandonment of the vital interpretative task. On Heidegger's view, *Dasein* tends to falsely understand itself as a thing in the world or a fixed and disembodied self. But self always misses itself in its living being; what it perceives always comes too late to fully identify the dynamic self. This *attunement*, in Heidegger's terminology, is, thought Santayana, similar to "spirit incarnate" which involves a never-fully understood material psyche and a perceived mask or essence which can never reveal the dynamic psyche. This situation can tempt one to retreat from life and assume a fixed identity, thereby destroying the equilibrium of the honest self. This, for Santayana, is spiritual distraction and, for Heidegger, inauthentic being. Recognition of finitude can counter this and makes possible a fulfillment of life and a liberation of spirit from the distraction of false understanding and delusion.

More complex than the preceding two chapters, the sixth compares Santayana and Nietzsche, and it also surveys modern interpretations of tragedy and reads Shakespeare's *Hamlet* as an expression of secularized culture and subjectivized tragedy. The chapter relates and extends key ideas of the book by presenting Santayana's understanding of the tragic as integral to his criticism of egotism and his notion of an aporetic self.

The notion of tragedy changed with modern conceptions of the self. The ancient concern with fate is replaced by individual responsibility and a subjective understanding of tragedy. Nietzsche thought the emphasis on individuality devalued Dionysian heroism and tragic suffering in favor of Apollonian representation: the mask of convention and static selfhood obscured the fluidity of existence. Nietzsche responded with the idea of eternal return, which Kremplewska reads as "a *metaphysical experiment in thinking* . . . a conscious risk, a wager" (Kremplewska 168) played out in choosing a temporal perspective that foregoes what Santayana called sentimental time. Nietzsche thought this could liberate will, transcending accidental, individual being and modern subjectivity.

Santayana's criticism of Nietzsche does not, of course, take issue with rejecting modern subjectivity; rather Santayana thought Nietzsche's rejection remained adversely influenced by modern philosophy: The doctrine of the will to power, which reduced individuality to a play of forces, resulted in a "barbaric" philosophy, and carried on modern philosophy's rendering "*self incapable of transcendence*" (Kremplewska 165). For Santayana, Nietzsche's philosophy had two main

harmful results: rejection of transcendence and embrace of instrumental reason. According to Kremplewska, Santayana read Nietzsche as replacing transcendence with "the spontaneity of the will and [transgression of] the boundaries of humanity" (Kremplewska 171), leaving no place for spirit, ideals, or disinterestedness, which make human freedom possible. For Santayana, Nietzsche's thought embodied instrumental reason, making thinking a means to survival and making truth whatever is useful for this (continuing German Idealism's attempt to eliminate the precariousness of life). "*The polemic of Santayana with Nietzsche, then, was first and foremost an argument about the possibility and the necessity of spirituality*" (Kremplewska 175).

Spirituality in a material world was central to Santayana's understanding of the tragic. Kremplewska writes, "The tragic aspect of existence may be traced in the discontinuities within the *self*, reflected in its *aporetic* status and fully revealed in the ontology of realms, where the *self* finds itself in a Pascalian suspension in-between 'two abysses of infinity and nothingness'" (Kremplewska 176). Conflicts between the human and the divine, facts and ideals, matter and spirit are tragic conflicts. Reflection on the tragic brings out the significance of the aporetic self and of the recognition of finitude. The hermeneutic self neither denies tragedy with a conventional mask nor dissolves the self in a play of forces, but seeks sane equilibrium between freedom and necessity. The discussion of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* demonstrates how different conceptions of a unified self influence the experience and understanding of the tragic, and what this means for achieving a sane equilibrium. Shakespeare's work reflected Santayana's concern with how conceptions of the self influenced actual living.

The final chapter considers the political implications of Santayana's conception of selfhood and is a prospectus for further research into the social significance of Santayana's ideas. The chapter, the shortest in the book, is comparable to other, longer chapters in the variety of its insights and suggestions, but space limits their development. Questions remain (for example, What exactly is the negativity of human being? How is it significantly different from the aporetic self?), but the book gives the reader faith that succeeding work could address issues raised in this final chapter in the detailed manner of the preceding chapters.

A great value of this work lies in its potential to inspire further reflection on how to live wisely. The conception of selfhood articulated here suggests particular practices and techniques to know oneself and achieve integrity (hinted at in the especially compelling sections "Narrative and Dramatic Strategies of Sustaining Self-Integrity" and "Dramatic Hermeneutics"). I could imagine further inquiry pursued through a re-reading of Santayana's *The Last Puritan* as a dramatization of selfhood or through development of Santayana's idea of "auscultation of the psyche" (RB 335) and detailed practices of spirituality.

Kremplewska's smart and thoughtful book is both demanding and exciting to read. The book expresses a strong and inspiring interpretive vision and conveys a quiet and convincing confidence backed by admirable scholarship. There is not a lack of structure and consistent terminology, but a reader might imagine a more explicit guide through the development of ideas; repetitions and digressions might more directly illuminate the main themes. The distinctive voice and well-

grounded understanding evidenced in the work suggest these things may well work out as a matter of course in what will surely be further valuable work in Santayana scholarship.

MARTIN COLEMAN

Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis

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“I Stand in Philosophy Exactly Where I Stand in Daily Life”: The Special Case of Laughter

Let me begin with a personal note. 18 years ago, I began a thorough investigation of philosophy’s relations with the comic, following an early interest I had at the beginning of my academic studies. I developed an argument presented at the Conference of the International Society for Humor Studies (1984), the first international conference in which I participated as a graduate student, into an elaborate worldview—*Homo risibilis*. This approach makes systematic use of self-referential laughter in view of reaching the highest ideals philosophy and religion are advancing, and criticizes most alternative worldviews for the epistemological and ethical prices that they impose on individuals for the very joy, peace, and happiness that follow from the liberation they claim to offer their respective followers.¹ In terms of the famous Jewish joke about the Rabbi, who runs shouting: “I have an answer! Ask me a question! . . .” (Biro 2017), I had an answer and formulated thus the question: What is the role of humor and laughter in the (philosophic) good life?

The suggestion that I include Santayana in the study was relayed to me from none other than Herman Saatkamp,² and by the end of my research, I had found nine (modern) philosophers who argue for a significant role of humor and laughter in philosophy.³ The manuscript *Laughter and the Good Life: Montaigne, Nietzsche, Santayana (Bergson)*, contains a long chapter on Santayana. It examines his view of the good life, and elaborates in detail the various accounts of the tragic and the comic he gives, as well as his arguments for the use of laughter, humor, wit and irony in the good life. It compares his thoughts on these matters with those of Michel de Montaigne and Friedrich Nietzsche, and finally evaluates the novelty of his approach.

As I cannot do justice in this article to the wealth of information the chapter brings, I would like here to convey my impression of the role of laughter in the Santayanan good life (or lives), as shaped by my acquaintance with other philoso-

¹ *Homo risibilis* was first described in the last sixty pages of Amir (2014a), and later further explicated in Amir (2017 and 2018). A short version of the theory can be found in Amir (2014c) and a full version in Amir’s Philosophy, *Humor, and the Human Condition: Taking Ridicule Seriously* (2019).

² This valuable suggestion was conveyed to my host, Larry Ventis, a childhood friend of Saatkamp, while I was researching the topic at the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia.

³ These philosophers are identified in the titles of the trilogy I have undertaken to write, once I understood that one book would never do justice to the topic. They include, *Humor and the Good Life: Shaftesbury, Hamann, Kierkegaard* (2014a), *Laughter and the Good Life: Montaigne, Nietzsche, Santayana* (Bergson) (work under contract for SUNY Press), and *The Legacy of Nietzsche’s Philosophy of Laughter: Bataille, Deleuze, Rosset* (Routledge, forthcoming).

phers' approach to the matter. This will also lead us to what seems to me the most original argument of Santayana's thought on this topic and to the difficulty of accounting for it.

The nature of Santayana's laughter: a matter of controversy

Xenophon begins his *Memorabilia* with the following striking remark about Socrates. "When he was joking, he was no less profitable to those who spent time with him than when he was serious" (Xenophon bk. IV, chap. 1, sec. 1). If this is true of the ironic philosopher that Socrates was, it is even more so in the case of Santayana, who famously stated that he stands in philosophy exactly where he stands in daily life (SAF vi). And, when the object of study is the view of laughter a philosopher holds, his own use of it as reported by his contemporaries and as recorded in (auto)biographies and letters is of no lesser significance than that of his writings.

Two things are notable in relation to Santayana's laughter: the abundance of his testimonies on its significance and the variety of judgements his laughter draws.

1. Out of Santayana's own testimonies allow me to recall the following. Lightness of heart, *désinvolture*, and a sense of fun are qualities that he values as truer signs of a spiritual being than any amount of solemn self-importance. He acknowledges their presence in a young friend and in his half-sister, Susana, who are both said to be "full of laughter." Laughter is not only "the deepest bond" between himself and his beloved sister, but the capacity to laugh is also one of the prerequisites to a perfect friendship, the other being the capacity to worship. These are, to him, "the two windows through which the mind took flight and morally escaped from this world" Laughter in particular, as he came to see in his old age, is "the innocent youthful side of repentance, of disillusion, of understanding. It liberates incidentally, as spiritual insight liberates radically and morally" (PP 351).

At the end of his life, sick unto death, George Santayana wrote his testament and left behind a self-portrait in a poem. Its penultimate verse reads:

Blow what winds would, the ancient truth was mine
And friendship mellowed in the flush of wine
And heavenly laughter, shaking from its wings
Atoms of light and tears for mortal things
(quoted in Kallen 1968, 61).

The laughter is described as heavenly because Santayana resolved in his youth to let go of despair, a resolution best expressed in another poem that his student, Horace Kallen, quotes:

Farewell, my burden! No more will I bear
The foolish load of my fond faith's despair
But trip the idle race with careless feet
The crown of olive let another bear
It is my crown to mock the runner's heat

With gentle wonder and with laughter sweet
(Kallen 1968, 62).

Though these personal testimonies reveal laughter's significance in Santayana's life, the response of those who encountered it either through his texts or through personal interactions with the philosopher varied.

2. Those who met with Santayana could not easily discount his laughter. Hardly anyone who has had the chance of talking with him, Kallen notes, omits commentary on "his recurrent bursts of laughter, and on an ambiguously malicious twinkle in his eye, an irony in his voice, a satiric intent in his words, as if he were discoursing of an opponent. . . ." (Kallen 1964, 32). An example is Meter Van Ames' account of "the frequent laugh and the hermetic smile" of Santayana, who he describes as having "the detachment of Democritus and the laughter" (Ames 1964, 65; 64). Ames' judgement is echoed in the testimony of Santayana's old-age portraitist, Harry Wood, who asserts that Santayana "had surely also turned himself, 'like the superb Democritus,' into a 'laughing philosopher.'" He adds:

I wish that those who found him only a singer in a minor key who "never caught the heart cleansing laughter of paganism" (Durant 1926, 551) might have sat with him an hour. They would have a lifetime deposit of the twentieth-century's most precious laughter stored in their ear-memories, as I have. (Wood 2001, 25; quoted in Pinkas 2007, 162)

The judgments of Santayana's laughter by those who witnessed it have been echoed in contemporary commentaries about his thought. For example, Daniel Pinkas, in recalling Nietzsche's ranking of philosophers according to the quality of their laughter (Nietzsche [1886], section 294) and, suggests that Santayana "is a clear contender for the upper ranks of Nietzsche's philosophical hit-parade" due to "the importance of humor and laughter, both in his writings and on a personal level" (Pinkas 2007, 162). Roger Kimball also claims that it is Santayana who is "the cheerful, affirmative figure that Nietzsche pretended to be but wasn't" (Kimball 2002, 18). Furthermore, Santayana has been deemed "our times' one laughing philosopher" by Kallen, a view shared by many yet contested by others.⁴

3. While many who met with Santayana noticed his laughter, its *nature* has become an object of controversy. Margaret Münsterberg heard it as sheer, untendentious spontaneity, "the laughter of Peter Pan brimming over with pure merriment" (Münsterberg 1924; quoted in Kallen 1964, 32). Lionel Trilling, who visited the aged Santayana in Rome, found instead the smile of Parmenides, "the ironic smile at the universal joke," which did not eclipse its un-tastefulness (Trilling 1956). He viewed Santayana's dry, tolerant wit, as well as his predilection for laughing, as part of that attitude. In the same vein, after meeting with Santayana in 1939, Bernard Berenson reported,

All in all, he left me with the impression of a very self-satisfied, rather maliciously cynical, sniggering, sneering old man. He has no wife nor child, nor

⁴For such a view, see also Ames 1964, 64 and Wood 2001, 25. Will Durant, among others, disagrees (Durant 1926, 551).

friend nor foe, no needs except the elementary ones, and yet is happy, consciously happy. (Berenson 1964, 170–2)

Upon his visit with him at the end of the Second World War in Rome, Gore Vidal, too “was sickened and revolted by his sang-froid, his cynicism” (Vidal 1983; quoted in Woodward 1988, 116). Yet, fulfillment and serenity are the impressions Santayana most strongly conveyed to Edmund Wilson (Wilson 1947, 50–1).

4. When gathered together, these testimonies produce a comical, puzzling and somewhat alarming impression. Fortunately, Santayana addresses some of the concerns they raise in his autobiography. He explains that while in ancient times his attitude was deemed philosophical, it is nowadays considered offensive: “That I was a philosopher, that I could identify willingly only with intelligence and the truth, offended my friends” (PP 528). Moreover, he readily admits that his laughter confuses those who suffer from disillusion, and he apologizes for laughing too much (Wood 2001, 25):

I laugh a great deal, laugh too much, my friends tell me; and those who don’t understand me think that this merriment contradicts my disillusioned philosophy. They, apparently, would never laugh if they admitted that life is a dream, that men are animated automata, and that the forms of good and beautiful are as various and evanescent as the natural harmonies that produce them. They think they would collapse or turn to stone, or despair or commit suicide. But probably they would do no such thing; they would adapt themselves to the reality, and laugh. (PP 156)

Santayana employs laughter as a critical means towards achieving an explicit goal. He calls for an original mind that does for his own time what Dante had done for high Christendom, namely, “compose a natural comedy as much surpassing Dante’s divine comedy in sublimity and richness as it will surpass it in truth” (TPP 210). In the meantime, he sets out to write his own “natural comedy,” which Henri Levinson qualifies as a “comic faith” and Kallen as a “laughing faith.”⁵

However, while he also describes himself as ironic (PGS 12, 604), his work as satiric (PP 198, 414; PGS 29) and his own faith in nature and history as humorous (LGS to William Lyon Phelps, 16 February 1936)⁶, he admits to admiring wit, most of all (SB 155; LR2 136).⁵ While not many failed to notice Santayana’s laughter, the controversy its nature created has been followed by another, perhaps corresponding, debate over the relative significance of the tragic and the comic in his thought. To some, Santayana’s thought came across as more tragic than comic (Padrón 2001; Lyon 1987), while to others, the reverse is was true (Kallen 1964; 1968; Levinson 1988; 1992). Whilst some emphasize both the comic and the tragic elements in it (Flamm 2001; Wahman 2005, 80), others note an evolution that accounts for “the element of the comic that sits cheek by jowl with the tragic in Santayana’s mind particularly in his old age” (McCormick 1983, 10; see 1986;

⁵ Kallen 1968, 63; Levinson 1992, 205; chaps. 6–7; see also Levinson 1988.

⁶ He also emphasizes the satiric power of spirit (RS 175; 269) and the humorous situation of intelligence (RS 2).

Cronan 2007). Finally, some commentators resort to an evolutionary approach to explain the seemingly “divergent unharmonizable allusions to laughter and its uses, to the tragic and the comic, their social role and cosmic import” in Santayana’s philosophy (Kallen 1964, 32; see also Levinson 1988).

While few scholars deny the existence of the comic in Santayana’s work or dispute the existence of his “ethics of cheerfulness,” to use David Dilworth’s characterization (Dilworth 1996), they differ in their emphasis on the comical in relation to the tragic in Santayana’s thought.

The above considerations may give the impression that laughter and its cognates are well researched in Santayana’s secondary literature. This is far from true. In concluding the survey of the literature on Santayana through 2007, Pinkas rightly notes, “Much remains to be said if we are to do justice to the satirical and comical dimensions in his philosophy.” He adds:

In some of the best philosophical commentary on Santayana, one finds but few occurrences of the word “laughter” or its cognates (“humor,” “comedy,” “wit”). . . Any self-respected scholar would concede that laughter, humor, *esprit* and comedy can in no way be seen as peripheral to Santayana’s outlook. (Pinkas 2007, 161)

Pinkas’ judgement seem to me valid today as well.

6. Not only have Santayana’s laughter and the role of the comic in his thought been the object of diverging comments, but the *sort* of laughter Santayana recommends *in his writings* has been a matter of controversy as well.

Jessica Wahman maintains that it is humor, which “is an indispensable element in philosophy and life” (Wahman 2005, 75). This is followed by Pinkas and Daniel Moreno, who deem “humor” the mixture of satiric and sublime which account for the tone for Santayana’s novel, which contains the whole of his philosophy (Moreno 2015). Anthony Woodward considers that Santayana’s eulogy of humor in his study of Dickens is misleading (SE 58–72), however, and argues that “a compassionate cynicism” better represents Santayana’s predilection (Woodward 1988, 91). Others emphasize his satiric stance (Kimball 2002, 18; Levinson 1992, 197), and find it in his three volumes autobiography as well (Beck 1997, 113–4). They rely on Santayana’s testimony that his work is “satirical, joyful, and Hermesian” (Kimball 2002, 18) and that his soliloquies are a festive play (SE 137, 138–9) that should not be trusted (BR 36).

Some commentators point to irony as best characterizing Santayana’s thought. Henny Wenkart maintains that Santayana employs “a playful irony...free of sarcasm as a philosophical tool,” which makes irony “the voice” of his philosophy (Wenkart 2007, 692, 691). For Ignacio Izuzquiza, irony also sums up best Santayana’s attitude: it is “a form of understanding, a philosophical attitude, often the only possible one when the presuppositions of Santayana’s philosophy are accepted; it is a consequence of his materialism and at the same time a genuine road to salvation” (Izuzquiza 1989, 62; my translation). Levinson also emphasizes irony, but of Richard Rorty’s sort (Levinson 1990). Kallen (1964), John Lachs and Michael Hodges (1995) characterize the upshot of Santayana’s philosophy as “ironic,” without explaining their use of the term. Morris Grossman considers everything in Santayana ironic, including Santayana’s summaries of his philosophy, because

without masks Santayana is not Santayana. They are “a part of a complicated drama,” and irony, for Grossman, is compressed drama (Grossman 1990, 21, 19). Thus, there is “no argument, no doctrine, no philosophy and no religion in Santayana” (1990, 18).

The controversy about the nature of Santayana’s laughter and the sort of laughter he recommends may be partly resolved by taking a chronological approach to Santayana’s life and writings. Kallen takes this path and maintains that at a certain point in Santayana’s life “the warfare of the satirist gave way to the peace of sympathetic humor” (Kallen 1964, 29). In his own careful chronological study of Santayana’s thought, Levinson also finds an evolution in Santayana’s view of laughter that expresses changes in his personal life (Levinson 1992).

Still, probably referring to Walter Lippmann’s description of Santayana’s ironic smile as “Mona Lisa furnished with a beard” (quoted in Padrón 2001, 10), Baker Brownell may be right in characterizing Santayana as “the Mona Lisa of philosophy”: “Though eloquent and penetrating, he finally brings forth...only an enigmatic smile,” Brownell quips (Brownell 1940, 33). Contemporary scholars have echoed this characterization in their evaluation of Santayana’s thought. For example, referring to its most elaborate part, his theory of essence, Levinson and Pinkas maintain respectively that it loses “all but satirical point” (Levinson 1992, 215) and that it is a “parody of a ‘theory’” (Pinkas 2007, 169). For these reasons, finally, Grossman asserts, “Santayana can serve as an exemplar of how to write philosophy in this post-modern age” (Grossman 1990, 27).

The comic, laughter, and humor in Santayanan thought: a preliminary account

The abundance of testimonies, both personal and by visitors, the lack of consensus on the nature of Santayana’s laughter in his life and writings as well as that on the role of the comic in relation to the tragic in his thought attest to laughter’s relevance to Santayana’s life and thought. This is made even more puzzling as Santayana’s last words on philosophy is not on laughter but on serenity and sublimity. However, the comic, laughter, humor, and cheerfulness do play a crucial role in the philosophic liberation that Santayana proposes. Not only is he the first philosopher who sees existence as intrinsically comical. He also is the first to recommend laughter as both a self-transcendent spiritual phenomenon and the adequate response to a naturalistic view of the universe. He advances humor as a proper way of handling life’s many incongruities, notably the “incongruous contrast between the eager fret of our life and its final nothingness” (Leacock 1938, 219–20).

Santayana intertwined laughter with tears. In his autobiography, he notes, “between the laughing and the weeping philosopher there is no opposition; *the same facts* that make one laugh make one weep. No whole-hearted man, no sane art, can be limited to either mood. In me this combination seems to be readier and more pervasive than in most people” (PP 156). He fuels the evolution hypothesis from the tragic to the comic voiced above by putting in Democritus’s mouth (and later acknowledging that these are his own thoughts): “The young man who has not

wept is a savage, and the old man who will not laugh is a fool” (DL 57). Although he deems tragic each existence’s fate, a change of heart in the middle of his life makes him advocate the comic, the surprise that the contingency of things creates, over the tragic perspective, as he now sees the comic perspective as more sympathetic and fairer to life. Emphasizing the tragic sense of life, to the contrary, makes you miss the comedic route of life (DL 56).

Among terms associated with the comic, the term most commonly found in Santayana’s writings is laughter. Once we note that Santayana uses self-laughter, rather than humor in many places, out of respect to the choice of this accomplished aesthete, we should address in this limited space his views on laughter.

Laughter occupies a privileged place in the liberation, or inward philosophic salvation, that Santayana’s philosophy purports to offer. Indeed, Santayana views his task as the modernization of the Aristotelian account of the good life. Its aim is to incorporate in the ethics he proposes the values foreign to the Greeks that we uphold. He recognizes Benedict Spinoza’s undertaking of a similarly motivated project, but is unsatisfied with Spinoza’s lack of appreciation for imagination and the arts as well as with his mysticism. Santayana’s ethics is predicated on two tenets: that the forms of the good are diverse, and that the good of each animal is definite and final. The needs to uproot and to gain self-knowledge follow respectively these tenets, and both are necessary for the Santayanan good life. Laughter’s role is to enable deracination and self-knowledge, and its main function lies in liberating from false restrictions and uniting the self with spirit. Laughter is Santayana’s main tool of liberation, first as laughter at others’ peculiar madness of considering their own good as the only good and then as self-laughter at one’s own madness of doing the same.

However, laughter is variously judged according to its quality. It is described along a continuum that aligns it, on the one extreme, with devilish aspects of it (such as cynicism, cruelty and scorn) and on the other, with spiritual practices that result in “pure” laughter. Thus, our spiritual situation determines the quality of our laughter, which can be either devilish or free. Santayana’s praises of laughter ought not to overshadow his position that laughter may cheapen the world (LR2 134). However rich we find the description of laughter to be, it does not receive Santayana’s final philosophical endorsement due its limitations: the liberation it offers does not compare to the sublimity involved in the contemplation of essences. In such contemplation, laughter as a bodily phenomenon is deemed obsolete, as contingency and situatedness carry no relevance.⁷ Especially “in after years laughter becomes bitter;” he writes. “We have laughed enough to no purpose and can no longer laugh merrily at the old comedy of things. One half of us has despaired and smiles sadly at the other half for not having been able to do so” (LR2 249).

Neither can humor be Santayana’s last word. He tends more toward “satiric humor” than the form of humor that slips outside of the comic altogether. Santayana ascribes his preferred form of humor to Socrates, Democritus and Shake-

⁷ Laughter is related to contemplation in the mystical traditions, both in the East and the West. I will address this topic at the end of the article.

spere, and characterizes it as being both satirical and friendly. Although “we do not consent to be absurd, though absurd we are” (SE 68), and Dickens saw and showed it well, humor cannot be equated with charity. Nor with wisdom, of which humor falls short (SE 137), although it is an indispensable ingredient of it (PGS 11).

As is well known in Santayana’s circles, however, the relations of materialism and spirituality, body and mind, psyche and spirit, the life the reason and the spiritual life are not sufficiently clear although Santayana feels at ease with these apparent tensions. Laughter, I argue, minimizes these difficulties for Santayana, by providing a conceptual tool that hold their divergences or incongruities.

However, laughter not only enlightens this recurrent and difficult junction in Santayana’s philosophy, but also exemplifies and mirrors it, as Santayana relates his laughter to his materialism as well as to spirit. This argument will become clearer through the resolution of a puzzle I have found in Santayana’s thought, which I consider as revealing its crux. The next section introduces the puzzle while its resolution occupies much of the remaining sections of the article.

Laughing nature

Laughter liberates because it arises from the recognition of the fundamental contingency of all forms of existence and from the awareness of potentiality and liberty, which epitomize matter for Santayana. “A thorough materialist, one born to the faith and not half plunged into it by an unexpected christening in cold water,” he writes, “will be like a superb Democritus, a laughing philosopher” (LR5 90).

However, is this only part of the story? To look closely at what Santayana understands by materialism, I have to quote at length some passages so as to emphasize some sentences in context.

In the preface to *Dialogues in Limbo*, whose protagonists are Democritus, Socrates, Alcibiades, Aristippus, and the younger Dionysius, Santayana writes: “I imagined myself intruding into the company of those ancient sages, Democritus and Socrates, whom I recognized to be my real masters, above the heads of all moderns” (DL 1). Disguised as “the Spirit of a Stranger still living on Earth,” Santayana testifies that he prefers the laughter of Democritus to Heraclitus’ sorrow on the transitoriness of things (DL 206). It is there that he has Democritus say the last sentence of “Normal Madness,” “Shed your tears, my son, shed your tears. The young man who has not wept is a savage, and the old man who will not laugh is a fool” (DL 57). In the same dialogue, he has Democritus say:

Such is the origin of opinion; and as the chief endeavour of the animal body is to defend and propagate itself at all costs, so the chief and most lasting illusion of the mind is the illusion of its own importance. *What madness to assert that one collocation of atoms or one conjunction of feelings is right or is better, and another is wrong or is worse!* Yet this baseless opinion every living organism emits in its madness, contradicting the equal madness of all its rivals. *They say the stars laugh at us for this, but what is their own case?* The sun and the planets may seem to gaping observation to lead a sane life, having found paths of safety; yet to the sharp eye of science the ambush is visi-

ble into which they glide. If they think themselves immortal gods, and feast and laugh together as they revolve complacently, they are mad, because a sudden surprise awaits them, and the common doom. *Had they been wise, like philosophers who know themselves mortal*, they should have consented and made ready to die, seeing that they are not pure atoms or the pure void, and that in forming them nature was not in earnest but playing. *They would have done well to laugh, if they had laughed at themselves; for those who will not laugh with nature in her mockery and playfulness*, turn her sport first into delusion and then into anguish. (DL 55; emphasis added)

The reference to Democritus is not accidental. Santayana recognizes the roots of his materialism in the ancient materialism of the Greek atomists. Democritus was the fifth-century founder of Greek atomist philosophy and the proponent of an ethics of tranquility. He was known in his own age as a sage but entered tradition as the “laughing philosopher.” This is how Santayana describes him:

The ethics of Democritus, in so far as we may judge from scanty evidence, were merely descriptive or satirical. He was an aristocratic observer, a scorner of fools. *Nature was laughing at us all; the wise man considered his fate and, by knowing it, raised himself in a measure above it*. All living things pursued the greatest happiness they could see their way to; but they were marvelously shortsighted; and the business of the philosopher was to foresee and pursue the greatest happiness that was really possible. This, in so rough a world, was to be found chiefly in abstention and retrenchment. If you asked for little, it was more probable that the event would not disappoint you. It was important not to be a fool, but it was very hard. (TPP 33; emphasis added)

I am interested in the view that nature laughs, and laughs at us, mockingly and playfully. Santayana ascribes this view to Democritus, not only in “Normal Madness” in the *Dialogues in Limbo*,⁸ but also in *Three Philosophical Poets*. He points to the importance this view has for him in the preface to the one-volume reprint of his *Realms of Being*:

There is no more bewitching moment in childhood than when the boy, to whom one is shyly propounding some absurdity, suddenly looks up and smiles. The brat has understood. A thin deception was being practiced on him, in the hope that he might not be deceived, but by deriding it might prove that he had attained to man’s stature and a man’s wit. So with this thin deception practiced upon me by nature. *The great Sphinx in posing her riddle and looking so threatening and mysterious is secretly hoping that I may laugh*. She is not a riddle but a fact; the words she whispers are not oracles, but prattle. Why take her residual silence, which is inevitable, for a challenge or a menace? *Her secret is as great a secret to herself as to me. If I perceive it, and laugh, instantly she draws in her claws*. A tremor runs through her en-

⁸ Santayana wrote to a correspondent that “you... have struck the bull’s eye, as far as my heart is concerned, by saying that you especially like my *Dialogues in Limbo*, and the idea of ‘Normal Madness’” (LGS To Richard Colton Lyon, 6 May 1948).

igmatical body; and if she were not of stone she would embrace her boyish discoverer, and yield herself to him altogether. *It is so simple to exist, to be what one is for no reason, to engulf all questions and answers in the rush of being that sustains them. Henceforth nature and spirit can play together like mother and child, each marvelously pleasant to the other, yet deeply unintelligible; for as she created him she knew not how, merely by smiling in her dreams, so in awaking and smiling back he somehow understands her; at least he is all the understanding she has of herself.* (RB xix; emphasis added)

The content which can be drawn from these three texts, all significant for Santayana, is the following: although nature is a surd, by mocking herself she rises somehow above her own condition, echoing the situation of the philosopher, who first laughs at the world and then at himself. Nature transcends herself through mocking her own forms, but needs the child's smile or the philosopher's laughing understanding to do so. At least, this is how Santayana wishes to see her. It is notable that it is through laughter that he purveys the spiritualization of nature that his philosophy advances. This is so because laughter, being a bodily and a spiritual phenomenon at the same time, functions for us as Hermes, the laughing messenger of the gods, would do. He translates matter in spirit, enabling both a disengagement and a union, a combination that can only be felt as humorous, because it is unsolvable.

Santayana ascribes this position to the 5th century philosopher, Democritus, and provides, thereby, an interesting explanation of the nickname the atomist acquired within Western civilization, the laughing philosopher.

Democritus the laughing philosopher

How viable is this explanation of Democritus' laughter? Let us review the knowledge we have of the legend that ascribes laughter to the 5th century atomist.

Democritus the Laughing philosopher was a character widely known in the Ancient world, and several sources discuss Democritus' tendency to laugh on any and all occasions. The sole testimony we have in Greek of the laughing Democritus is in an anonymous legend of the first century, the *Novel of Hippocrates*, composed of a collection of 27 apocryphal letters of the renowned doctor. Democritus laughed so much that the people of Abdera believed he had gone insane and called Hippocrates to heal him. The Abderians characterize Democritus' laughter as indiscriminate and Hippocrates characterizes it as sadistic and depraved: Democritus laughed as if everything that concerned mankind was worthy of laughter. However, when Democritus explained to him through a long series of examples that he was laughing at the folly of humankind, Hippocrates could only conclude that Democritus was truly a wise and serious man, and that he was laughing to make a serious point.

In the Latin testimony, Cicero (106–43 B.C.) is the first to mention Democritus in the context of laughter (Cicero, *de oratore* 2.58, 235). At the latest in Horace's days (he died in year 8 B.C.), Democritus was referred to as "the laughing philosopher." In Horace, Democritus laughs at the distractions that people need (Horace, *Letters* 2. 1 154ff). Apart from conjoint appearances with Heraclitus the

weeping philosopher, he can be found in Hippolytus (170–236 A.D.), the prolific writer of early Christianity, who wrote, this philosopher “turned all things into ridicule, as if all the concerns of humanity were deserving of laughter.”⁹

The relationship of laughter and atomism that Lucian advances in *The Sale of Philosophers*, which represents Zeus as putting Democritus and Heraclitus up for sale as examples of the creeds of “smiles” and “tears”¹⁰, is reprised in the *Suda*, a byzantine text of the 10th century. Democritus is called there “wisdom” or “laughter,” because he is laughing at the vacuity of human efforts (1853, 1253). An anterior funerary epigram refers to a Democritus laughing at everything—including human science and books or efforts to learn—and who concludes laughing still in the grave.¹¹

The Novel of Hippocrates has received special recognition and notoriety at the Montpellier Medical School. A member of this school, the famous physician Laurent Joubert published two works on laughter (1560, 1579), the second is a French translation of the last part of the “Hippocratic novel.” Democritus appears in Erasmus (“Christiani matrimonii institution,” 1703–6, V, 560). But it is Thomas More, to whom Erasmus dedicated his *Praise of Folly*, who is credited with being a Democritus, a reputation that is corroborated by the seventeenth-century clergy, Jean-Batiste Thiers: “...in the whole course of your life [you] have played the part of a Democritus.” Erasmus compares More to Democritus also in his letter to Ulrich von Utten.¹²

Montaigne preferred to laugh with Democritus than to weep with Heraclitus, because he considers the human condition more worthy of mockery than of pity (*Essais* I. 50, 303). In the seventeenth century, Louis Richeome, Pierre-Juste Sautel, and Pierre de Besse published the *Christian Democritus* (1615). Democritus was also popular in the Netherlands (see Minois 2000, 342–9). Spinoza, however, who considered laughter a “pure joy” (*Ethics*, part IV, prop. 45, cor. 2, scholium), nevertheless presented the project of his ethics as predicated on rejecting the laughter of satire that Democritus represented as well as the pity of Heraclitus, with the purpose of understanding. Heraclitus and Democritus, as well as the third alternative, anger, which Seneca introduced, are implicit in Spinoza’s “not to mock, lament, or execrate, but to understand human passions.”¹³

Nietzsche took a great interest in Democritus’ philosophy, and adopted as his (without reference to Democritus) the ideal of the laughing philosopher and developed it into the idea of grading philosophers according to their laughter, until the golden laughter that takes the laughing philosopher out of the whole truth.¹⁴

⁹ Hippolytus, *Refutation*, Book I, chap. 11; Diels 1901, 360, 20.

¹⁰ Lucian, *The Sale of Philosophers*, 1913–1967, 171. *Vitarum Auctio* 15 = Diels and Kranz 1972, 22C5.

¹¹ Epigramme funeraire no. 56, *Anthologie Grecque*, Première partie, *Anthologie Palatine*, tome IX, livre VII, 1938, 81.

¹² Epistle 999, *Opus epistolarum*, 1906–58, 4: 16 lines 121–30.

¹³ *Political Treatise*, I, 4; see *Ethics*, part III, preface.

¹⁴ For more information about Heraclitus and his opposition as the weeping philosopher to Democritus, the laughing philosopher, I refer the reader to the chapter on Santayana in my forthcoming book. It may be of interest to note here that both philosophers appear in the

Democritus had an immense influence.¹⁵ Apart from his direct followers, Epicurus and Lucretius, Democritus influenced the skeptics Pyrrho and Timon, and the cynics, who in turn influenced the Stoics. Democritus's influence on the three Hellenistic philosophic schools is traceable both in their common goal and in their use of various forms of the comic as a philosophic device. According to these schools, the end of philosophy and of life is ataraxia, that is, peace of mind or imperturbability or liberation from worries. James Hankinson (2000) maintains that it is Democritus who is genuinely and historically the author of this conception of the philosophic telos, as various incontestably authentic fragments testify.¹⁶ The work of the philosopher, towards which he must direct his efforts, is to discover the means of attaining his goal. If this project marginalizes him in relation to normal life and society, it is too bad for the rest of the ignorant world. For apart from the true philosopher, all men live in a state of unconsciousness, which leads to dissatisfaction due to ambitions and desires that are by nature unquenchable.

Moreover, all three Hellenistic schools and the cynics stress the importance of cheerfulness and laughter.¹⁷ The Stoics always used Cynic literary genres for their exoteric teachings. The Cynics used a style that mixed the humorous and the serious as a didactical device. "Ridendo dicere verum" (speaking the truth, laughingly), the Stoics aimed to snap people out of taking themselves too seriously. To that end, "they used laughter to free people from their serious endeavors, or more accurately, as a way of allowing them to enter a more balanced way into the serious" (Sanders 1995, 114, 115). Finally, the part played by satire from the days of Lucilius to those of Juvenal in popularizing Stoic philosophy is manifest.

The Epicureans, too, emphasized laughter. See Epicurus: "We must laugh and philosophize at the same time and do our household duties and employ our other faculties, and never cease proclaiming the sayings of the true philosophy" (*Vatican Collection*, 1940, 41). Notice also the satirical tone of Epicurean maxims, many of which call attention to the vanity of conventional human motivations¹⁸, and the positive, optimistic, even joyful tone of the Letters. Philodemus the Epicurean wrote a long, witty poem. And Lucretius, in his poem, *On the Nature of Things*, has the twin duties of a teacher and an entertainer: We may stop reading his poem at any time, and the teacher-entertainer, wary of this, is constantly out to keep our attention in order to have our following and assent to his reasoning.

How is Democritus' atomism associated with his laughter? Democritus wrote a treatise on ethics (*Peri euthumias*), in which he advocated cheerfulness or tran-

Spanish poet Lope de Vega's *Carta y Elegia Segunda*, among other writers. The literature on the couple is immense as well as the iconography (see the paintings of J. Jordaens, S. Rosa and Rembrandt).

¹⁵ His influence as the laughing philosopher is traced in Muller 1994. For Democritus' influence on Epicurus, Seneca, and Spanish literature in the Renaissance, see Cordero 2000. For his influence on the cynics, see Lutz 1954.

¹⁶ I.e., Diels and Kranz 1972, 68 B 4, 188, 189, 191, 215, 26, etc.

¹⁷ For laughter at the foolishness of the world as a characteristically Cynic and Skeptic trait see Dudley 1937, 74, n. 19; Laertius 9.115 (Timon); For Pyrrho and Timon's attitude towards Democritus, see Long 1978.

¹⁸ See Epicurus, Diels and Kranz 15, 21, 29; *Vatican Collection*, 21, 25, 33, 46, 65.

quility, depending on translations and interpretations. However, there is no indication there, or in any other extant fragment or ancient text that refers to Democritus, of a material nature that laughs at us. To the best of my knowledge, no such explanation of his ethics has ever been given.

Interestingly, Santayana misses on Lucretius's satire, emphasizing other aspects of his poem, *On the Nature of Things*, in *Three Philosophic Poets*, and dismisses Epicurus' ethics as post-rational. However, Epicurus' association of laughter and philosophy is well known, and he emphasized, more than other atomist philosophers (Lucretius was melancholic) the relief and joy of the deliverance that philosophy afforded.

Democritus's ethics of cheerfulness or tranquility are considered to be at the origin of all the Hellenistic (later Roman) schools of philosophy, such as Epicureanism, Stoicism, and Skepticism. He has strong alliances with cynicism as well. All of these schools, materialistic or not, used laughter (see Amir 2013; 2014b). Thus, it is not farfetched to ascribe laughter to the historical Democritus, although no one except Santayana has done it, to the best of my knowledge.¹⁹ Not even Nietzsche, who as a philologist interested in materialism, knew that philosopher well and planned to reconstruct his philosophy. Not once does he allude to Democritus' laughter, although he is sensitive to the various revolutionary aspects of his ethics, such as health and redemption. Nietzsche does make the idea of the laughing philosopher his own, however, without ascribing it to Democritus, and improves on it, by suggesting gradations of laughter. Yet he never associates this laughter with materialism. Nietzsche does associate Democritus' ethics with his atomism, however, as few scholars do now, with the exception of Gregory Vlastos.²⁰ Only recently, has there been an attempt, not necessarily successful, to associate Democritus' ethics of health and cheerfulness with Nietzsche's laughter (Berry 2011, 156–173).

More important than the attempt to associate laughter with atomism or with the historical Democritus, is the view that “nature was laughing at us all.” Santayana ascribes it to Democritus in various places, although there is no evidence to back this up, not for the historical Democritus, nor in the *Testimony*. I have gone to some length in looking for the source of such an assertion, and though I have found that Lucian and the *Suda* text do associate Democritus' atomism and his laughter, they do not address the laughter of nature.

To the best of my knowledge, no such view—nature's playful laughter requiring a similar response—has ever been voiced by Democritus, his followers, or by any other philosopher.

¹⁹ See the discussion of the laughing philosopher in Salem 1996, 82–114; Gomez 1984, 2–18; Bell 1978, 58. For Democritus and Santayana, see Dilworth 1989 and Kallen 1968, chap. 4.

²⁰ See the excellent account in Swift 2005. Many scholars oppose the idea of Nietzsche and Vlastos (1945; 1946) that there is a consistent ethic to be found in Democritus. See, for example, Barnes 1979, 228–33; Striker 1990; and Annas 1996, whom Jessica Berry mentions in 2011, 167n67.

How does this issue fare among Santayana's commentators? A few scholars have attempted to compare Democritus and Santayana. Not only Santayana's ethics of cheerfulness, but the entirety of Santayana's philosophy is framed by Democritus' worldview, according to Dilworth (Dilworth 1989). As early as *Three Philosophical Poets*, he remarks, Santayana had a clear grasp of the difference between the thought of Democritus, on the one hand, and those of Epicurus and Lucretius, on the other (Dilworth 1989, 9). The intentionality of Santayana's symbolic naturalism, with its radical epiphenomenalism and doctrine of essences, is essentially described in Democritus' terms. Dilworth explains,

In Democritus' very doctrine of the geometrical properties of the physical elements we find contained a postulate as to an affinity with the world's finer and rarer energies that eventuates in the highest sympathies of the human and divine minds. Democritus' ethics of imperturbable wisdom, cheerfulness, moderation and friendship stem from this source. (Dilworth 1989, 9)

Dilworth does not address the laughter ascribed to nature, and voices a different opinion about Democritus's significance in a later work (1996). There, he holds that Santayana's system "blends together the Democritean and Lucretian strains of reductive materialism on the one hand, and the psychological relativism of the schools of Hellenistic Skepticism on the other. Santayana's Platonism—conspicuous in his doctrine of an infinite realm of essences which do not exist—is a function of this confluence of the two paradigms in his thought" (Dilworth 1996).

Kallen, who has recognized Santayana as "one modern Democritus" (Kallen 1964, 35; 1968, chap. 4) argues that Santayana and Democritus' laughter is the commonality of their philosophies. He maintains that their philosophic laughter were at once "a nullification of the universal menace and a liberation from the apprehensiveness it ever evokes" (Kallen 1968, 67). He further advances that their laughter signaled their accepting the "plight of man for what it is," and "keeping up their existence of struggle to go on struggling cheerfully, fearlessly, without false hope, and without the illusions which fear and such hope project, institute, and nourish" (Kallen 1968, 67).

However, the difference I recognize between the laughter legend ascribed to Democritus and Santayana's laughter, which is predicated on a laughing nature, is not commented upon. These two forms of laughter are just implicitly recognized as different by Kallen, although Santayana himself ascribes this kind of laughter, somewhat misleadingly, to Democritus. We will see that Santayana emphasizes the significance of a human laughter that responds to nature's laughter; rather than an idiosyncratic response to nature and its tragic aspects, Santayanan laughter is presented as the appropriate relation to reality, as it enables a connection that is otherwise missing between the human being and the world.

Laughter: the Hermes of Santayana's philosophy

No such view as Santayana puts in Democritus' mouth—nature's playful laughter requiring a similar response—has ever been voiced in philosophy, as far

as I know. Santayana himself acknowledges thus far in a letter I have recently discovered, though dated 8 August 1925. Commenting on “Normal madness,” he writes to Robert Seymour Bridges:

...I am not at all sure that the extant saying of Democritus and the rest will justify everything that I put in their mouths. I use them only as Platonic *types for points of view which are natural to my own mind*, braver and more truly ultimate than my accidental personal opinion such as I assign to the Stranger. (LGS, emphasis added)

Indeed, Santayana does not take full responsibility for his views, he does not argue clearly enough for the significance he ascribes to laughter. In his autobiography, he acknowledges the problem I am dealing with:

The harmonies into which accidents could fall were picturesque; they were also ridiculous, and a sense of the ludicrous, a love of laughter, was native to me. A kindred but less innocent motive was satirical. It was not only I, in my silliness, that was laughing at the world; it was the gods that were laughing at it. Its own substance mocked the forms it took. Not only were events and conventions mere episodes in an endless flux, but they were mechanically produced by forces irrelevant to our dramatic poses and pert egoisms: they were like patterns seen in a kaleidoscope—a toy of which I was fond. There was a sort of satirical magic in their existence and childish impulse was strong in me to turn the crank and see what would come next. (PP 448; emphasis added)

The Olympians are the mythological Greek gods, which are described in Homer’s *Iliad* as laughing an “unquenchable laughter.”²¹ The laughter of the gods or of the forces of nature (IW 14) is a recurrent theme with Santayana (PPI 453; IW 8; LR2 248; DP 53). Nature is laughing at us all, he repeatedly writes (TPP 33; SE 28), and “those who will not laugh with nature in her mockery and playfulness, turn her sport first into delusion and then into anguish” (DL 45). Laughing, we can be as gods, for the gods have always been laughing at the world, and “now the spirit in us may laugh too” (LR2 248).

Although in Greek thought, the gods laugh at other gods and at humans, this is not necessarily the case for Santayana. For him, nature is mocking her own forms and laughs along with the philosopher who mock them with her. Recall, “It was not only I, in my silliness, that was laughing at the world; it was the gods that were laughing at it. Its own substance mocked the forms it took.” Thus, in his autobiography, Santayana emphasizes that his own laughter is an emulation of the laughter of nature, and in “Normal Madness,” he ascribes this laughter to Democritus.

However, laughter is not just a psychological device recommended to avoid anxiety. Santayana seems to be saying, perhaps only poetically, that laughter is rooted in the nature of things, because nature itself is “hoping” that we will laugh:

²¹ The occasion is as follows: “And laughter unquenchable (*asbestos gelos*) arose amid the blessed gods to see Hephaistos bustling through the palace” (*Iliad*, I: 599).

The great Sphinx in posing her riddle and looking so threatening and mysterious is secretly hoping that I may laugh...If I perceive [her secret], and laugh, instantly she draws in her claws. (RB xix).

This is reminiscent of the laugh of recognition in the child—which the following line from Virgil calls to mind: *incipit, parve puer, risu cognoscere matrem* (“Begin, young man, to recognize your mother by your laughter” or “by her laughter” (Bataille 1960, 140n).

Laughter, then, is the key to the riddle of existence, a significant thing for Santayana, who says, “I hate enigmas” (SE 262). It is the only common language possible between nature and us. Hermes, the Olympian god of laughter and traveling, mediates between the gods and us. Laughter enables a similar communication with nature, a translation between the individual and nature:

I am sure that Hermes loves riddles only because they are no riddles to him; he is never caught in the tangle, and he laughs to see how unnecessarily poor opinionated mortals befool themselves, willfully following any devious scent once they are on it by chance, and missing the obvious for ever...Oh for a touch of the healing hand of Hermes the Interpreter, that we might understand the language of the birds and the stars, and, laughing first at what they say of us, might then see our image in the mirror of infinity, and laugh at ourselves. (SE 263)

Nature laughs at her own appearances and the comic in all existence similarly commends us to laugh, not because we had better laugh than cry or because existence seems to us comical in our silliness or fancy, but because only then can we unite with nature. God, or nature, laughs, and only in laughter can we connect with Him or her, as Santayana makes clear though the symbol of Hermes, the messenger of the gods, until we reach the higher level of the contemplative life, where laughter, as a bodily phenomenon, fades away.

This proposal is ironic or paradoxical because a nature that laughs at itself, that mocks its own forms, is not a surd. By ascribing a sense of humor to nature, Santayana finds a common ground with it and calms his terrors. It is through this common smile that he is part of her. Instead of the laughter of the Homeric gods, who mock other gods and humans, it is a smile, the shortest connection between two beings, which unites Santayana the child and his rough mother nature.

We may ask whether the understanding that materialism brings its own deliverance enlightens the theoretical and practical interests Santayana had in smiling: Not only does he portray well the Mona Lisa’s smile, as Brownell noted, but Santayana states that of all actions, his *Skepticism and Animal Faith* purports to explain our smiling. However, Santayana’s interest in and reason for smiling go deeper than the deliverance materialism brings along.

Greece and India, materialism and illusion

The gist of Santayana’s philosophy as well as the solution to our puzzle is revealed in the letter I quoted above, whose main theme is reprised in McCormick biography of Santayana (1986). Santayana wrote of the dialogues that

[T]hey are not...a work of erudition or even of retrospective fancy... My Democritus is intended to establish between his "atoms and void" on the one hand and his "normal madness" on the other precisely the same opposition and connection that the Indians established between Brahma and Illusion. (LGS to Robert Bridges, 8 August 1925)

There, as elsewhere, Santayana shows himself the heir of Schopenhauer, who attempted to unite Indian and Christian thought, deeming his own doctrine "the only true Christian philosophy" (Schopenhauer, "Sufferings of the World," 1893, p. 27). Santayana, who inherits the interest in Indian thought from Arthur Schopenhauer, was convinced that the Hindus' thought lies at the origin of Greek thought, and that a great number of heresies have branched at this or that point of their thought. He was interested in showing the unity of Indian thought and Greek philosophy, a project that did not materialize, McCormick explains in the biography of the philosopher (1986). However, the *Soliloquies in England and Other Soliloquies* and "Normal Madness" came instead. Santayana, who has acknowledged the importance of Neoplatonism and Indian systems for his philosophy (PGS, 18-19), explains in the letter quoted above the role "Normal Madness" and Democritus play in that project:

There are two things which I should be much pleased if people found in this book, although I am afraid they won't: one is a connected doctrine and theme, the other an assimilation in spirit, though not in language, between Greek and Indian philosophy. I have long thought that the earlier Greeks had virtually the same wisdom as the Indians, and that it was only an accident of race and rhetoric that they seemed physiologists rather than religious mystics. My Democritus is intended to establish between his "atoms and void" on the one hand and his "normal madness" on the other precisely the same opposition and connection that the Indians established between Brahma and Illusion. I think myself that this is the only right physics or metaphysics: but it is only half of human philosophy. Socrates...is brought to supply the other half, the self-justification of Illusion, because it is the essence and fruit of life; and the "Secret of Aristotle"... is the means to harmonizing the two points of view, and proving them to be not only consistent but indispensable to one another if the nature of things is to be understood at all. ... Both science and religion, not being on the human scale, do violence to the human point of view, which at the same they show to be excusable and inevitable in a spirit expressing an animal life and generated by it. Is this a hard saying? If not, why are people so slow to understand it? (LGS to Robert Bridges, 8 August 1925)

According to "Normal Madness," however, that which holds nature and illusion together is not Aristotle's philosophy: laughter incessantly acknowledges and embraces their continuous incongruity, until it is resolved into the sublimity of the contemplative life. Humor serves a similar role in the thought of Montaigne—the philosopher who acknowledged the significance of illusions to the human mind, of folly to wisdom, of ridicule to the sublime.

Thus, that which is original in Santayana's thought about laughter is its echoing the laughter of the universe, which mocks its own forms, an idea that is repeated in the assertion that "everything in nature is comic in its existence" (SE 142).²²

At the end of the Preface to *Dialogues in Limbo*, Santayana writes,

The gist of the whole is to confirm the scientific psychology that I have put into the mouth of Democritus at the beginning. Subjectivity is a normal madness in living animals. It should be discounted, not idolized, in the philosophy of the West, as it has always been discounted in that of the East. (DL 45)

To laugh at is to discount. If the East has discounted subjectivity, should we look for precedents for Santayana's laughter in Eastern religions and philosophies rather than in Western philosophy?

Kallen has associated Santayana's laughter with the mystical tradition. In characterizing the former's laughter, he writes:

Such laughter is transcendent. It is beyond words. It is a mystic experience. It is an expression which supervenes when words have been used up and serve no longer to utter the events that laughter appraises. It is what one or another Taoist painter labored to signalize on the faces of Taoist sages. It is immanent in the smile of the Buddha; and audible in the voices of some of his disciples. It is the promise in the smile of Erasmus' Dame Folly. (Kallen 1968, 64)

Should we turn now to such traditions to evaluate Santayana's laughter? There is a rich tradition that unites mysticism with laughter, which I analyze in the chapter on Santayana. Suffice it to say here that in studies of laughter and religions it is a common assertion that "laughter and mysticism go hand in hand" (Gilhus 1991b, 272-3), that "laughter is the greatest spiritual phenomenon" (Shunyo 1991, 124; quoted in Gilhus 1997, 130), and that humor is one of the essences of mysticism (Scharfstein 1972, 180-3).

Is there a clear connection between the transcending function of mystical and ludicrous experiences? The last section of Saegvild Gilhus's essay, "Mysterium Tremendum and Ridiculum" (1991), articulates such a connection: although the experience of the ludicrous is always triggered off by external stimuli, at the moment of laughter there is a feeling of having direct access to the world (Gilhus 1991, 272-3). Along the same lines, Mary Douglas' study of the joker aptly argues that he "should be classed as a kind of minor mystic" (Douglas 1975, 108). Thus, that mysticism often exists in company of a rich sub stream of humor, jokes, and laughter does not seem to be an accidental feature of it.

Moreover, the joker and the fool often appear in religious movements that lay stress on personal and direct experience, such in the Sufi of Islam, in Zen Buddhism, and in the Greek Orthodox tradition of the "holy fool." Gilhus asserts, "because of their common characteristic—that is, a knowledge of the relativity of all ideologies, religious or otherwise—the mystic and the clown often appear together" (Gilhus 1991, 273).

²² But also "lyrical in its ideal essence, tragic in its fate" (SELS 142), "Thus it is at once a sad, a comic and a glorious spectacle that existence presents to the spirit" (RS 257).

In his description of the spiritual life, Santayana refers to the mystics John of the Cross and St. Francis of Assisi. Neither was a stranger to humor. In addition to the laughing and cheerful saints Santayana commonly refers to, the Gnostic attitude toward laughter seems especially significant for understanding his own laughter. Not only did Christ laugh in the Gnostic tradition, but also the salvation it offered can be explained in terms that remind us of Santayana's own approach:

The process of acquiring salvific knowledge in Gnosticism was akin to solving a riddle or seeing the point of a joke. In opposition to the wisdom tradition, which had a more static conception of knowledge, the Gnostic approach was dynamic and incorporated the laughter of insight or understanding. (Gilhus 1997, 70)

Finally, a contemporary source of mystical thought that may enlighten Santayanan laughter is Osho. Originally called Bhagwan Sri Rajneesh (1931–1990), Osho is associated with a new religious movement that systematically includes techniques of laughter and develops a jocular and playful attitude towards life. Osho is an extreme example of the way Indian religion has been reinvented and transformed in a Western context (Gilhus 1991, 125; see 125–34). For Osho, to be a sannyasin or a holy man, clearly means to be in a festive mood. He sees laughter as a primary state of the holy nature and it is therefore encouraged and cultivated. “The moment you laugh,” he writes, “it does not come from your mind, it comes from the beyond, from your inner spirit” (Rajneesh 1989, 98; quoted in Gilhus 1991, 127).

Many insights from the mystical tradition's rich association with laughter resonates with Santayana's own attitude toward laughter. More than the philosophical tradition does, the mystical tradition of laughter helps us understand the role Santayana assigns laughter within the good life, its function as a liberator of the spirit that enables us get the joke that reality is.

However, none of these traditions holds a view of a laughing nature that constitutes the grounds for the injunction to emulate her laughter. Although Eastern religions are much more prone to laughter than Western ones (Morreall 1999) and there are signs that playful levity are a form of ritual in some forms of Hinduism (Raj and Dempsey 2010), I did not find Santayana's views about laughter among these traditions.

Thus, no tradition, philosophic or religious, Western or Eastern, can account for the idea that self-laughter is an emulation of the laughter of nature. Although Santayana is keen to ascribe this laughter to Democritus, he may be the only commentator to see Democritus' laughter as associated with his naturalism in that way. This original reading of Democritus does highlight his recommendation of self-laughter that all commentators have missed,²³ and ascribes to nature a playfulness to which I do not know if he would subscribe.

The thesis of laughter that Santayana advances, as we have seen above, helps in the Santayanan goal of creating between Democritus and normal madness the

²³“You people do not laugh at your own stupidity but each laughs at another's,” Democritus says (Hippocrates 1990, Letter 17, line 5).

same relations that hold between Brahman and illusion. He assigns to the laughter of his Democritus a crucial role in uniting West and East, matter and spirit, reality and illusion.

This view of nature as laughing can be associated with the more famous and no less original Santayanan idea that all existence is comical. According to Benjamin Fuller (1946), one of the earliest commentators on this view, the reason most philosophers have disdained the aid of the comic value in exploring the nature of reality lies in the all-important philosophical assumption that the universe is amenable to explanation. In the universes described by philosophers, nothing undetermined, paradoxical, or startling can really take place. The comic value rests upon a failure on our part to comprehend the intelligible pattern of the real due to the limitation of the human mind, rather than upon any lack of intelligibility in the pattern itself. More profoundly viewed, the seeming whimsicality of the behavior of things will be found to be completely explicable, and therefore humorless. When we laugh at it, we are really laughing at no more than our own misunderstanding or inadequate comprehension of its essentially rational character.

To admit that the comic value may have a cosmic significance and that it may be utilized as a possible guide to the nature of things is to admit that reality itself may possibly be irrational and unintelligible at heart, or at least that undetermined, unpredictable, spontaneous, and capricious elements may enter into its essential structure.

However, other philosophers before Santayana have admitted this much without finding existence intrinsically comical. The only philosophers I know that gave cosmic value to the comic and believed that it can be used as a possible guide to the nature of things follow Santayana. They are the French philosophers Georges Bataille and later Clément Rosset, both working under Nietzsche's influence.²⁴

Possible explanations within Santayana's philosophy

Santayana is honest enough to reveal the need for his maneuver in his autobiography and to doubt its justness in the *Idler and His Works*: Through the Stranger in "On Immortality," Santayana asks, "Hoary deity...you laugh? Or is it I that am laughing at myself?" (IW 209).

Santayana expresses both that it is important that his laughter be a real feature of reality and that he nevertheless still doubts it. This may account for his irony, at least as it bears on the significance of his own laughter, but I believe it is indicative of a much deeper ambivalence. Thus, to conclude this long analysis, let us leave the precedents we may find either in philosophy or in religion be them Eastern or Western to consider some possible explanations for ascribing laughter to nature in Santayana's own thought.

²⁴ For these French philosophers, see Amir's forthcoming manuscript, *The Legacy of Nietzsche's Philosophy of Laughter: Bataille, Deleuze, Rosset* (Routledge).

A. Does Santayana promote laughter as a principled value in life? If yes, can this be the reason he ascribes it to nature? Since principled values are the products of natural forces, it could explain the grounding of laughter in nature: “The germination, definition, and prevalence of any good must be grounded in nature herself, not in human eloquence” (RM 131).

B. Is it because laughter shares in the pleasure that is distinctively aesthetic? This pleasure is further qualified in *The Sense of Beauty* as intrinsic (or immediate) and as “objectified,” in the sense of being experienced as a quality of a thing and not as an affection of the organ which apprehends it.

C. Is laughter the work of free active imagination, towards which Santayana maintained a dual attitude? On the one hand, imagination must not be allowed to impose itself as a literal rendering of what exists, as it all too often attempts to do. On the other hand, the life of reason is the life of the imagination, and its function of idealization and symbolic transformation yield the highest and purest enjoyments of the mental life. Is this ambivalence partly resolved in the case of laughter by ascribing it to reality?

D. Is laughter part of religion, which for Santayana is a poetic transformation of natural life in the interest of the moral ordering of that life? Religion is myth, and must not be judged by the inappropriate standard of literal truth, but rather on the basis of the imaginative richness and comprehensiveness of its reorganization of our moral experience. Is laughter part of the true value of religion, which is encouragement to live in imagination? Is it a part of true religion, which stimulates piety and spirituality? Santayana defines piety as “man’s reverent attachment to the sources of his being and the steadying of his life by that attachment.” Spirituality liberates us from the harsh realities of animal need and desire by interposing an ideal meaning—one that assigns to the goods of this world their proper and subordinate place. Is spiritual laughter, conceived as an answer to the laughter of nature, the Hermesian glue that holds piety and spirituality together?

E. Finally, is it a fear of egotism—his lifelong nemesis—that drove Santayana to ground his laughter in nature? Recall, Santayana wrote of egotism:

Egotism—subjectivity in thought and willfulness in morals—which is the soul of German philosophy, is by no means a gratuitous thing. It is a genuine expression of the pathetic situation in which any animal finds itself upon earth, and any intelligence in the universe. It is an inevitable and initial circumstance in life. But like every material accident, it is a thing to abstract from and to discount as far as possible. The perversity of the Germans, the childishness and sophistry of their position, lies only in glorifying what is an inevitable impediment, and in marking time on an earthly station from which the spirit of man—at least in spirit—is called to fly. (EGP 7–8)

Maurice Cohen has nicely showed Santayana’s lifelong engagement with Romanticism, from his early book on aesthetics to *Three Philosophical Poets*, later to become his struggle against egotism in *Egotism in German Thought* and the rest of his writings (Cohen 1966). Let me add that the quarrel with egotism—which he conceives as the *hubris* of the (Modern) West—is the unifying idea behind his work. It lies behind his association of Indian thought with Greek philosophy in

order to humble the moderns and his devising a system that is justified by common sense and science rather than willfulness.

It may have been difficult for Santayana to set himself and his project apart from the Romanticism of his era, as can be gathered from his complex relationship with Nietzsche, another disciple of Schopenhauer. He (justly) lampoons him in three chapters of *Egotism in German Philosophy* (Heney 2017), yet in a later letter, he attests to the “great comfort” that he finds in this kindred spirit:

He is not explicit, he is romantic, but he *implies* my world of two or more storeys, if he does not draw its plan and elevation, as my architectural propensities lead me to do—without, I admit, any technical accuracy; because I am really a self-indulgent impressionist, like Nietzsche himself, and wish to sketch my buildings in perspective. (L 342)

“Normal Madness” tells the story of an angry child, who refuses to let go of calling things (*rea* in Latin) by their names, thus refusing realism, to the dismay of the botanist who points to their true reality, while the child insists instead on calling them love and such... that is, in idealizing them. If the angry child is killed, the Stranger tells us, no one is there to listen to the botanist’s lessons. That story seems to convey that only by flying from reality Santayana is ready to learn about it. And what better flight than laughter, that plays with truth and untruth, and says both that illusions are and are not?

Santayana does acknowledge that in updating the virtues of antiquity to bear on present needs he adds something to his amalgam of Heraclitus and Democritus, of Plato and Aristotle. Apart from Christian virtues, it is Indian thought, which he considers akin to Greek philosophy, and of which he finds traces in various heresies. Now, is the sense of humor, which for Santayana is an element of wisdom while at the same time falling short of it, part of this mixture, or does it come from Indian or from Greek thought?

True, some of its flair can be found in Plato, who famously wrote in the *Laws* (644 D, E and 803 B) that we are divine puppets, toys of God, and that this is the best in us. Some can also be traced back to Aristotle, who made of wit a (minor social) virtue (1973) and wrote about the human being as the sole animal that laughs (1961). Indian philosophy and religion is much more conducive to laughter than Western religions, and the Gnostics had both a laughing Christ and the idea that understanding reality is akin to understanding a joke. However, all fall short of the view Santayana offers.

To sum up, Santayana explicitly acknowledges in his autobiography that it was important that his satirical impulse would not be his, but that nature would be laughing at its own forms (PP 448). This vision of laughing nature Santayana ascribes to Democritus thereby associating Democritus’ materialism with the laughter that legend had assigned to the Abderian. This has not been done before or after him, and the view of laughing nature has not been found in any other Indian, Greek, or Gnostic sources. The same impulse lies behind his view that the comic is ontologically grounded or that the comic characterizes all existence. Santayana is the first philosopher, as far as I know, to maintain this, although later thinkers will reprise this idea.

That the comic is not a human or a Santayanan projection onto the world, but an “objective” quality of existence seems to be important to Santayana. Once again, the objective and the (inter-)subjective, the material and the ideal have to be united, albeit through laughter, but for no good reason yet not out of sheer willfulness. This impossible task may account for the Santayana’s ironic smile.

Conclusion

I have traced the originality of Santayana’s view of laughter within his multifaceted opinions about the comic, laughter and its cognates, within his own philosophy and the history of thought. It lies in his view of nature as laughing, as mocking her own forms and inviting the child and the philosopher to laugh with her at others and at themselves. This original view has been identified as the source of his more famous view of the comic as the response to the unexpected, which is existence itself. It has also been associated with the heart of Santayana’s liberation, which is the injunction to transcend ourselves through laughter and self-laughter.

We have seen that Santayana is honest about ascribing irresponsibly this view to Democritus to answer his need of not being silly in initiating his satirical project, which is none other than laughing at the world. The way he has chosen enables him to locate spiritual liberation within the reality of nature. Thus, laughter epitomizes the relation between matter and spirit, between nature and illusion, between West and East, Greece and India that Democritus was made to voice.

Many know of the adage, “When you smile, the whole world smiles with you.” Is this Santayana’s message? Or is it, “The whole world smiles, smile with it.” Because Santayana believes the latter while knowing he can only assert the former, his smile is ironic.

LYDIA AMIR

Tufts University

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My Visit to Daniel Cory

In 1967, Daniel Cory and I began to correspond following the publication of my anthology *George Santayana's America: Essays on Literature and Culture*. He was pleased that I had brought these uncollected early essays together. For the most part, the essays were written during Santayana's days at Harvard as a student from 1883 to 1889 (including two years on a graduate fellowship to Berlin in 1886-1888) and during his tenure as a Harvard professor from 1899 to 1912, after which he left the United States to live in Europe. He never returned to the States. The essays are responses to his personal encounters with life in America. I also included later essays on America that had been published in *The New Republic*, *The Dial*, and elsewhere, prompted by remembrances of his days at the Boston Latin School and his life in New England.

Cory had known Santayana since 1927. He was twenty-three and had been living in England for a year when Santayana, who was then sixty-three, paid his fare to come to Rome so that they could talk about an essay on Santayana's philosophy that Cory had drafted and sent to him. This occasion and their relationship for the next quarter of a century is detailed in Cory's *Santayana: The Later Years: A Portrait with Letters*, published in 1963, eleven years after Santayana's death. Even before Santayana became a subject for my own writing, that book interested me primarily for its candid account of Santayana and Cory's friendship. It also helped answer the question of why Santayana would have taken on the rather youthful Cory as his secretary and later made him his literary executor. There were likely better-known scholars of his philosophy who had not dropped out of undergraduate school, as Cory had done from Columbia University, even though he had studied philosophy and had continued to study on his own while in England. Since his undergraduate years at Columbia, Cory had been a devotee of Santayana. In *Santayana: The Later Years*, he explains the effect that reading *Scepticism and Animal Faith*, published in 1923, on him:

Although I had studied philosophy for several years at Columbia University, and was therefore acquainted with its main problems, it was not until I opened the pages of *Scepticism and Animal Faith* that I realized fully what philosophy, at its best, could still be. Perhaps it was the perfect marriage of form and matter that won me over so utterly. Poetry and Philosophy had joined hands, as in Plato, and their union was irresistible. (Cory 15)

For Santayana, Cory represented a quality in the American spirit that interested him and which he found more agreeable than what Santayana termed the Genteel Tradition or the Puritan strain of thought that prevailed in the intellectual and moral character of the States. Cory displayed in his own life some of the characteristics that Santayana understood to be the inevitable result of living in the natural world. When early in their friendship Cory hesitantly revealed to Santayana that he had contracted gonorrhea, Santayana replied in an avuncular manner:

You must make the best of this accident . . . I don't mean to lead you to give up the cult of Venus altogether, which might not be possible or desira-

ble, but cause you to regard it as a weakness and not as something to be proud of. It has seemed to me sometimes that you encouraged yourself to pursue the fair sex even when there was nothing inevitable or romantic about the affair: and you are old enough and experienced enough not to need that sort of self-challenge, to prove to yourself that you are a little man. (Cory 75, LGS 10 May 1931).

Santayana's patience with the young Cory's indiscretions extended to Cory's sometime difficult involvement with the epistemologist Charles Augustus Strong. Strong was more demanding of Cory than was Santayana. But with Santayana's encouragement, Cory continued to be a correspondent and sometime companion for Strong, even though Strong's panpsychism did not appeal to him. Cory felt much more comfortable with Santayana, with whom he would share meals with wine and walks and conversation about philosophy. While Santayana himself had his differences with Strong, he continued to urge Cory to continue to work with Strong, who, as he got older, became less easy to be around. Nevertheless, Strong, who died in 1940, bestowed on Cory a life-long fellowship.

I began a correspondence with Cory after my anthology of Santayana's early essays had appeared in 1967. Soon I was preparing for a sabbatical year in 1969-70. This extended period was to begin with my visits to places where Santayana had lived in Europe and to Cory, who had invited me to meet him and his wife in the South Tyrol. It also would be a trip that my son, who was approaching 14, and my daughter, almost 12, would find interesting, I believed. Their mother, who was a teacher, and I sat down to plan a two-month summer trip to various countries, beginning with those where Santayana had lived and traveled during his life in Europe. I wrote to Cory to tell him of my plan, and he immediately invited us to come to see him and his wife Margot in the South Tyrol in August where they were staying above Merano, Italy, at the Castle Brunnenberg, owned by Boris and Mary de Rachewiltz, the daughter of Ezra Pound and the violinist Olga Rudge. The South Tyrol would be our final destination on the trail of Santayana before heading off to visit friends in the Netherlands and stopping in Paris, prior to returning home from Madrid.

Our trip began in Madrid, where we felt comfortable and enjoyed walking the city and visiting the Prado, even though it was a bit unsettling to see the caped and armed Garda Civil at almost every corner. We soon left for Avila, where Santayana lived with his father during the first eight years of his life, after having been born in Madrid. He also returned there many times to visit his father and half-sister, Susana. In the beautiful walled city of Avila, we spent several days staying at the Parador, walking the streets, visiting various religious sites, including those of St. Teresa of Avila, and walking the fields that Santayana had traversed. We also enjoyed good restaurants and a nearby public swimming pool.

After Avila, we commenced our journey to Rome, stopping first in Barcelona and Tarragona. The journey by train to Rome through the south of France and northern Italy kept us pleasantly occupied enjoying the scenery. In Rome, we settled into a small hotel but a short distance from the Spanish steps. After a few days of exploring the neighborhood of historic sites, we visited the Blue Nuns

Hospice on the Via Santo Stefano on the Monte Celio where Santayana spent the final years of his life from 1941 to 1952. There, he was visited through the years by many writers including Edmund Wilson and Robert Lowell. We were shown his apartment where he continued his writing through WWII, apparently not terribly fazed when the Allies began a bombing assault of Rome in 1943. When it was safe for him to go out, Santayana would take solitary walks throughout the neighborhood for as long as he was able.

The one instance I most remember of that visit was that the young nun who guided us through the convent remarked as she ushered us from Santayana's former apartment that he never entered the door to the chapel just across the hall. "He was a terrible old atheist," she said. I knew, of course, that it was not as simple as that. In one of his first letters to Cory in 1944 when communication between them resumed as the Allies began the occupation of Italy, Santayana wrote of how happy he had been in the home of the sisters. He was also busy writing *The Idea of Christ in the Gospels*. And he concluded his letter by saying, "We must see heaven in the midst of earth, just above it, accompanying earth as beauty accompanies it. We must not try to get heaven pure, afterwards or instead. Christ is *essentially* a spirit of the earth. He is a tragic hero. *Basta.*" (Cory, 249).

The final pilgrimage we made in Rome was to the Campo Verano, the cemetery where Santayana is buried in the area designated for citizens of Spain and where Cory read Santayana's poem, "The Poet's Testament" at the burial. Later Cory was to tell me that for him there was a moment of humor that he and Santayana would have shared. When the casket was set on its end and lowered into a vertical hole, mourners could hear his frail body collapse to the bottom. The story from Cory, who venerated Santayana, indicated to me the sense of humor they shared through the years of their friendship.

Soon we were on a train again, headed to Florence. We were enchanted by the city, its surroundings, and the towns of Fiesole, where Santayana often visited Charles Augustus Strong, whose villa was deeded to Columbia University by his daughter. We spent an afternoon in nearby Settignano, where Bernard Berenson's former villa I Tatti has been the center for Harvard Renaissance studies since Berenson's death. Upon leaving Florence, we made a trip to Venice, which also helped me prepare for conversations with Cory, who often went there in later life where he and his wife Margot could swim from the Lido beaches.

As we were leaving Venice, I felt that I was better prepared to talk with Cory about his friendship and service to Santayana for over a quarter of a century. When we arrived, we settled into a cabin that Cory had found for us. It was only a short walk from the Castle Brunnenberg through a vineyard. Cory showed up to greet us, looking dapper in hat, suit, and carrying a cane that completed his appearance. I had not removed my own suit and tie that I had worn on the trip from Venice. My son took a photograph of us dressed as though we had just stepped out of an office together. Cory wasted no time in asking whether I would like to ride the funicular down into Merano to buy some cigars and, perhaps, to have a drink. Cory and I, accompanied by my son, rode down into the city, where my family would spend a great deal of time during the next few days, when not strolling the slopes above Merano with Cory and Margot. One evening, Mary de

Rachewiltz invited our family to the Castle where we were entertained in a drawing room that contained some of Ezra Pound's manuscripts and work that Mary, herself a well-known poet and translator, was engaged in doing. While we had refreshments, Mary's son came into the room and played the recorder for us. It was a magical evening that Cory might have helped to arrange.

Cory and I did have a chance to talk about his long involvement with Santayana. I had brought along a draft of an article that I was writing on Santayana, and he helped me with it. I titled the article "George Santayana: An Intellectual Traveller." It was published a year later in *The Dalhousie Review*. In discussing my draft, Cory clarified for me that Santayana considered intellect to be a "phase of spirit." This observation made me understand my thesis more clearly by simplifying Santayana's view that imaginative discourse is a means of finding the truth of human experience.

Santayana not only appreciated Cory for his help with many of his later works, including *The Last Puritan*, *Persons and Places*, *Dominations and Powers*, and *The Idea of Christ in the Gospels*, but also for Cory's engagement with the things of this world. Cory told me while we were walking one day that he would have liked to have become a professional baseball player but did not quite have the skills. Perhaps he was thinking of Lou Gehrig, who also had been at Columbia University before signing a contract at the age of nineteen with the New York Yankees in the summer of 1923. Cory's own desire to play baseball would have interested Santayana, although he did not approve of the mercenary aspect of professional ball. In his essay "Philosophy on the Bleachers," published in *The Harvard Monthly* in 1894 and included in *George Santayana's America*, Santayana explained his interest in college sporting events and the passion with which spectators respond to them, and concluded that the spectacle of sports offered a respite before the long years ahead when the human spirit would be subdued by meaningless work:

It may seem a ridiculous thing, and yet I think it true, that our athletic life is the most conspicuous and promising rebellion against this industrial tyranny. We elude Mammon only for a few years, which the Philistines think are wasted. We succumb to him soon after leaving college. We sell our birth-right for a mess of pottage, and the ancestral garden of the mind for building lots. That garden often runs to seed, even if we choose a liberal profession, and is overgrown with the thistles of a trivial and narrow scholarship. But while we are young, and as yet amount to nothing, we retain the privilege of infinite potentiality. (GSA 129)

Cory's decision to live independently of an "industrial tyranny" and to pursue his own interest in poetry and philosophy no doubt gave Santayana reason to engage him as his secretary and to befriend him. Offering Cory an ongoing stipend allowed Cory to continue to live in England and Europe, within a day's journey of Rome. It was also Cory's personality, I believe, that intrigued Santayana who was still eight years away from completing *The Last Puritan* when they met. In no way did Cory resemble Oliver Alden, the Puritan hero. He did, however, have a similarity to the two foils to Oliver: Jim Darnley and Mario Van de

Weyer, the latter an exemplar of intelligence and spirit that Santayana identified with Mediterranean cultures. Both Mario and Darnley, whose life was awash in misbehavior, offered an alternative to the Puritan culture. While Santayana had already drawn these characters from personal observations in the States and in Europe, Cory could have helped focus his depictions of the characters. In any case, Santayana found in the young Cory a spirited interest in life, as well as a devotion to naturalism in philosophy and to poetry. These qualities remained evident in the elder Cory my family and I visited in the South Tyrol.

We left Cory and Margot after about a week. They would soon be on their way to Venice to swim at the Lido. But before we left, Mary de Rachewiltz invited me to spend the rest of the year during my sabbatical at Brunnenberg. It was a generous offer, but I had to accompany my family back to the Midwest where they would return to school and where I would continue my research. Cory and I continued to correspond until his sudden death in 1972, only three years after our visit. It was a shock to find that such a vigorous man of sixty-eight had died. Margot, of course, was devastated. She and I kept in touch for the next few years, and she wrote once hoping that I would bring my family back to Italy for a visit. That did not work out.

JAMES BALLOWE

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James Ballowe and Daniel Cory
Photograph by Jeff Ballowe

Cory's death moved me to write this poem, published in the *Southern Review* in October of 1973:

Travel

—for Daniel Cory
d. 18 June '72

In the country there are orphans looking
for the graves of their fathers,
And the three crosses with no graves under
them invade the fading light.
We walk home to wine and bread through the stubble,
pass Saint Teresa's convent,
Enter the walls like a dream, fortunate to be
in Avila.

Later in Madrid the arthritic waiter
pours brimfuls of Fundador and wine
Every evening until, feeling good, we walk
into the neighborhood and are accused
of being different.

Not so along the Mario di Fiori in Rome after
the incident with Mary, a name the Romans
came to know.

There only the purveyor of Jesus wanted his palm
crossed and looked on with shifting eyes.

Avila leads to the Tirol as death and dream
to life, though we didn't know it then.

Now, looking back, they are fixed points,
Teresa dead and Dan
So alive that – as he would say – they'll
never put his finger in a phial.

And that's the only difference between spirits
and saints when you travel among them
without a guide.

JAMES BALLOWE

The Legacy of Humanism in the Works of George Santayana: Modest Philosophical Investigations On a Rational Animal's Humanism¹

Newton P. Stallknecht wrote about George Santayana that “although he hesitated to use the word . . . we may do well to think of him as a humanist, perhaps the greatest humanist of his period” (Stallknecht 6). This paper try to explore why Santayana hesitated to use the notion of humanism in the same manner as his contemporaries did. While Santayana rejected some forms of humanism, the humanism that he actually embraced, his real humanism rooted in Epicurean humanism but was progressed by his revolutionary thoughts on the rational animal's humanism. Santayana's letters can give a shaded picture on his feelings of the use of the notion of humanism.

Three questions are crucial in relation to Santayana's supposed humanism: What does it mean to be human? What does it mean to be a humanist? What is human and what is animal in us? In the second part of my paper I would like to focus on the importance of the philosophical approach of the body in Santayana's philosophy. His investigation on the body makes him a forerunner of the body-focused philosophical theories of our times.

We should be careful with the use of these words (humanism and humanists) because Santayana expounds his opinion on the diverse meaning of them. Santayana's ideas on humanism are in very close relation to his theory of naturalism thus the philosophical problems of humanism in his works are also the central points of his naturalistic theory on animality.

Besides Epicurean humanism and classical humanism, Santayana mentions and discusses the notion of naturalistic humanism², non-humanistic naturalism, and metaphysical or cosmological humanism in his letters.

It is very difficult (and useless) to put Santayana into one philosophical category. He was not a pure pragmatist and he declined this label but according to his aesthetic ontology one could recognize him as a forerunner of pragmatist aesthetics. He was a naturalist but Platonist philosophy influenced his thoughts on beauty, love and essence. He was a Spanish Catholic, but he called himself an “aesthetic Catholic” or a “Catholic atheist”. He lived among Puritan Bostonians, and because of the Protestant milieu he always felt as an alien or an outsider.

¹ This paper is an extended version of Horváth's lecture at the XXIV World Congress of Philosophy in Beijing, China, 2018. The title of the session was “What Does It Mean to Be Human in the Pragmatist Tradition?”. Horváth is an associate professor at Széchenyi István University, Győr, Hungary.

² In one of his letters to Warren Allen Smith from 1951 Santayana declares that he cannot accept the theory of naturalistic humanism even if it is in the works of Dewey, Julian Huxley, Thomas Mann or Erich Fromm. See LGS 9 February 1951.

Santayana was not religious, as he confesses in his autobiography: “I had never practiced my religion, or thought of it as a means of getting to heaven or avoiding hell, things that never caused me the least flutter. All that happened was that I became accustomed to a different Weltanschauung, to another system having the same rational function as religion: that of keeping me attentive to the lessons of life” (PP 419). This “different Weltanschauung” was Santayana’s “vital philosophy”, a critical approach, a “modest Epicureanism” or a sort of stoicism. He thought that his eclecticism was firmness besides openness. He thought that his philosophy was like that of the ancients, a discipline of the mind and heart, a lay religion.

George Santayana was born in Spain in 1863 and he died in Rome in 1952. He grew up in the USA and he wrote his works in English but he never gave up his Spanish citizenship. Santayana’s European roots had a great impact on his thoughts, according to Herman Saatkamp, Santayana was the first and foremost Hispanic-American philosopher. Harvard was Santayana’s school and his workplace for years. He started his philosophical career with Royce, Pierce and William James. Santayana taught philosophy at Harvard University for twenty-two years before returning permanently to Europe. Santayana was a real cosmopolitan, travelling was his favorite activity—“travels in space and travels in time, travels into other bodies and into alien minds”—as he wrote in his autobiography (PP 447). His first book was a book of poems in 1894 and in 1896 he published *The Sense of Beauty*—this work was the first aesthetic treatise in the history of American philosophy. Santayana’s only novel, *The Last Puritan* became a bestseller in the 1930’s. According to Irving Singer, Santayana was a literary philosopher. Santayana, tried to extricate himself from the academic practice of teaching. He did not want to be a professor; he was always averse to the Harvard milieu. The possibility of an honest philosophy is one key element in Santayana’s thoughts. In *Scepticism and Animal Faith*, Santayana declares that he stands in philosophy exactly where he stands in daily life and he would not be honest otherwise (SAF vi). He also emphasizes in other writings that everything that a philosopher thinks or utters will accordingly be an integral part of his or her philosophy, “whether it be called poetry or science or criticism” (POEMS xii-xiii). Life and work are equally important parts of the integrated whole.

Though now obscured by Dewey and other pragmatists, Santayana was widely read in the first part of the twentieth century. His contemplative philosophy of life constitutes an aesthetic life, one whose Arnoldian, Paterian and ancient heritage are far closer to the postmodern aesthetic ethic than those of his contemporaries. The thought of self-training and self-creation connect Santayana’s philosophy with ancient philosophical ideas and with the current philosophical theories. The good life to Santayana, as to the Greeks and to the followers of the Greek philosophical tradition, is both an art to be practiced and an ideal to be contemplated. Philosophy for Santayana is an attitude toward life and an understanding of nature. According to him, it is nature that underlies all visions and all ideals. In the universe, as Santayana views it, the life of man is an episodic thing and nature can destroy man and his values any time. As William Arnett concludes, “if one means by humanism a theory that the world is designed or suited primarily for the creation and conservation of human values” then

Santayana had never been a humanist. According to Santayana because of one's instinct taboos something, the whole universe will not taboo it for ever. Such an egoistic philosophy—he suggests—would be foolish (Arnett 220, 221).

Santayana's Epicurean humanism and the importance of classical humanism

In "Apologia Pro Mente Sua" Santayana concludes that his aestheticism is indeed "a modest Epicurean humanism that invited mankind to profit morally as much as possible by the course of natural events, without pretending to subject them to any secretly moral principle" (PGS 503). In his "General Review" at the end of the *Realms of Being* Santayana observes that his philosophy "is like that of the ancients a discipline of the mind and heart, a lay religion" (RB 827). One of the main purposes of this lay religion is his spiritual liberation. The discipline of the mind and heart do not have to exclude the spiritual liberty. Santayana's writing on Lucretius in the *Three Philosophical Poets* shows his sympathy for ancient philosophy: in my opinion in his remark on Lucretius, Santayana formulated his own characteristics: "His materialism is completed by an aspiration towards freedom and quietness of spirit" (TPP 5). Santayana's enthusiasm for the Hellenic idea in his essay on the philosophy of Lucretius is obvious:

This is one complete system of philosophy, materialism in natural science, humanism in ethics. Such was the gist of all Greek philosophy before Socrates, of that philosophy which was truly Hellenic and corresponded with the movement which produced Greek manners, Greek government, and Greek art . . . (TPP 5)

Santayana observed that the same thing recurred with the Renaissance, in the philosophy of Bacon and Spinoza. According to Santayana their naturalism looked "to science for its view of the facts, and to the happiness of men on earth for its ideal" (TPP 5). In relation to Lucretius, Santayana speaks with a great respect on Epicurus who withdrew to his private garden with his friends and disciples in searching for the possibilities of a peaceful life. Santayana praises Epicurus' generosity and his ability to defend free-will. Santayana accentuates that Epicurus did not want to swim with the current (TPP 30).

The thoughts of Santayana on pleasure and desire revive the main points of the Epicurean philosophy. Santayana appreciated in Epicurus that he did not force philosophers to be active in public affairs. We read frequently that Santayana was not a public philosopher because he did not shoulder the burden of public espousals. As I see it, his writings contain strong critical observations on crucial questions about democracy, liberalism, the family, and in general about the fundamental problems of human existence, which compel his readers to reconsider their own inveterate opinions. He himself wrote in *Reason in Common Sense* that a philosopher "is the chronicler of human progress, and to measure that progress he should be equally attentive to the impulses that give it direction and to the circumstances amid which it stumbles toward its natural goal" (LR1 5). In accordance with this, a philosopher has to be aware of the global changes around him that shape the personalities of humans. Santayana wanted to be an observer, a

chronicler, and not a reformer or activist. Santayana's works are like musings done aloud, intentionally trying to influence the reader's mind. He insists on self-knowledge and he offers the shaping of such an attitude that resists any whirlwind's force. In a time when America fought for the leading role in world's industry he proposed and propagated the ideal of a harmonious, calm and ascetic life based on the individuals' own aesthetic faculties and critical thoughts.

"In my old-fashioned terminology, a Humanist means a person saturated by the humanities: Humanism is something cultural: an accomplishment, not a doctrine. This might be something like what you call 'classical humanism'," wrote Santayana to Warren Allen Smith in 1951 (LGS 9 February 1951)). His cultural humanism reveals itself in his views on the aim of education:

Education . . . may be regarded as a means to economic work; reading, writing, and arithmetic are necessary for tradesmen. But when they are thought and learned only for that purpose, they are diverted from their natural use, which is to merge into liberal arts and be intrinsically liberal, since they employ and liberate the spirit. They should be taught, even in their elements, as arts, as games, as occasions for delight; and then their utility in the business world will not prevent them from remaining essentially liberal (Arnett 218).

Santayana admired learning for its own sake. He realized his lifelong purpose, on which his "heart was naturally set" in 1886 in Germany under a joyful cultural journey: he learned only what sufficed for his secret purpose:

This was not at all to be proficient in languages or to be a professor of philosophy, but to see and to understand the world. For this purpose our month or six weeks in Dresden was not merely a good preparation. It was a culminating point, one of the happiest episodes in my whole life (PP 256).

This was the period when Santayana wrote most of his verses. He was attached to that kind of humanist tradition that after the model of the ancients gave a particular role to poetry because poetry was the best way to help man's inner self-enrichment. Under the era of renaissance ancient poetry turned intellectuals' attention to the beauties of human studies that were able to give men the feeling of intellectual freedom. The confession of Santayana on the last pages of *Persons and Places* concludes the real nature of the philosopher "saturated by the humanities": what he wanted "was to go on being a student, and especially to be a travelling student." He loved speculation for itself, as he loved poetry:

I might have been a wandering student all my life, at Salamanca, at Bologna, in Oxford, in Paris, at Benares, in China, in Persia. Germany would be a beginning. If I never became a professor, so much the better. I should have seen the world, historical and intellectual: I should have been free in my best years (PP 241).

The rational animal's humanism

According to one of Santayana's letters from 1949 (to Rimsa Michel) Santayana felt himself entirely a humanist "in the sense of thinking that the human psyche is, in each case, the only possible judge". As he says:

Naturally each psyche [is] the only possible judge, for its own satisfaction, of the satisfaction that it finds in the satisfactions of the others. But what I don't believe, or seriously ever did, is that any human authority, private or social, has any absolute control or jurisdiction over what "ought" to be done or praised. (LGS 22 September 1949)

This point of view explains his decided protestation against the violence of religious systems and knowing his intellectual detachment it is clear that he was always against 'absolute values'. According to his *General Confession* his "matured conclusion has been that no system is to be trusted . . . but all systems may be used and, up to a certain point, trusted as symbols" (PGS 8). In 1914 Santayana wrote his brief treatise entitled *The Logic of Fanaticism*. At the end of this essay he concludes: "Those who think they have held on an absolute good must necessarily be ruthless A "truth," a "salvation," a Kultur, which wars and persecutions hope to diffuse is presumably spurious" (LF). Santayana states that there are no permanent values and ideals, or any absolute truth; the only eternal thing is the creativity of imagination. In Santayana's most famous declaration against new-humanists, entitled *The Genteel Tradition at Bay* Santayana suggests that "the humanists of the Renaissance were lovers of Greek and good Latin, scornful of all that was crabbed technical or fanatical: they were pleasantly learned men, free from any kind of austerity." (GTB 155). Santayana could accept Humanism as a taste but not as a system: "those who make a system of it are obliged to explain away what is not human in the universe as a normal fiction"- this was the reaction of Santayana in a letter to Corliss Lamont's new book entitled *Humanism as a Philosophy* in 1950 (LGS to Corliss Lamont, 6 January 1950).

As Santayana remarked in *Realms of Being* he always appreciated the Greeks and he aspired "to be rational animal rather than a pure spirit" (RB 65). In my opinion the crucial feature of Santayana's humanism that it respects the animal side in human beings. "I believe profoundly in the animality of mind," says Santayana in "Apologia Pro Mente Sua" (PGS 601). He created his fantastic theory on animal faith. As John Lachs concluded, Santayana innovated a new philosophical method: he established his philosophical theses on the basis of animal faith. That was a gorgeous novel in Santayana's philosophy (Lachs 8). According to Herman Saatkamp with the concept of animal faith, "Santayana brings human beings back into the animal kingdom by making reason and consciousness aftereffects of our physical development". In this regard human nature is animal nature and people make decisions without reason playing a deciding role (Saatkamp 12). With the notion of "rational animal" Santayana accepted our commonality with animals who make decisions without rationality. Santayana with this gesture started to change one of the oldest traditions in

philosophy: he dismissed underrepresentation of the body. Santayana felt and declared the untearable link between body and mind:

Mind is the body's entelechy, a value which accrues to the body when it has reached a certain perfection. . . . While the body feeds the mind the mind perfects the body, lifting it and all its natural relations and impulses into the moral world, into the sphere of interests and ideas. No connexion could be closer than this reciprocal involution, as nature and life reveal it If we isolate the terms mind and body and study the inward implications of each apart, we shall never discover the other. (LR1 125-126).

Our thoughts cannot be independent of the mechanism of our body, from the desires of the body. Santayana's most astonishing analyses on the duality of human nature are in his writings on love and beauty. Santayana claims that two things need to be admitted about love: "one, that love has an animal basis; the other, that it has an ideal object" moreover he concludes that "in truth. . . . man is an animal" (LR2 3). Santayana gives most attention to sexual desire in *The Sense of Beauty*, before he treats the crucial role of idealization. A very important trait in Santayana's beauty-theory is that "the capacity to love gives our contemplation that glow without which it might often fail to manifest beauty; and the whole sentimental side of our aesthetic sensibility . . . is due to our sexual organization remotely stirred" (SB 38). According to Santayana beauty is an objectified pleasure and the sense of beauty is instinctive and immediate. Discussion of these concepts, can lead to a conclusion similar to Richard Shusterman's concept on thinking through the body. Santayana did not extend his ideas into practical methods of body consciousness as the somaesthetics of Shusterman but from a special point of view sometimes he seems like a proto-somaesthetician.³ Herman Saatkamp concludes himself the essence of somaesthetics when he accentuates one of the central tenets of Santayana:

Conscious thought is not a causal agent in human activities but a result of physical activities in our bodies and sometimes the result of the physical interaction of our bodies with entities in our physical environment. (Saatkamp 13).

In French philosophy Gilles Deleuze created a concept in animals' honor with his theory on animal instinct that shows some similarities with Santayana's thoughts. And there is another fascinating meeting point: when analyzing the role of the body in Deleuze's philosophy, the best place to start is his reading of Spinoza. The interesting web of relations among these philosophies should be the topic of another paper.

I think that the concept of this psyche-based humanism and the concept of animal life in Santayana's philosophy are not contradictory but complementary whereas Santayana writes in a letter that the human side of animal life is the life of reason (LGS to Corliss Lamont 8 December 1950). With this, reason (as the

³ See my paper on the relation between Santayana and Shusterman: "Santayana on Embodiment, the Art of Living, and Sexual Aesthetics", in Richard Shusterman (ed.) 2018. *Aesthetic Experience and Somaesthetics*. Leiden: Brill. 180-196.

organized thinking, that provides meaning and structure to our experience) gets its honorable role in human life. In 1905-1906 Santayana published one of his main works, *The Life of Reason* in five volumes. He gave a naturalistic philosophical point of view of human reason and declared that “the life of reason a name for all practical thought and all action justified by its fruits in consciousness” (LR1 2). The life of reason is an activity, a method in living, a means to harmony. Santayana claims that man is able to select the ideals he will pursue and the impulses he will obey. In several essays he explains that there is no single recipe to reach a perfect or happy life, because people and their circumstances are different. Santayana holds that everyone can choose her own aims and ideals of happiness through the guidance of reason; that every philosophy must work out an ethical point of view with the relation of man to the world at its center (SB 160).

Finally—Against a metaphysical or cosmological humanism

In a letter of 1951, Santayana formulated his deep aversion of metaphysical or cosmological humanism. According to Santayana, this kind of humanism (or moralism) maintains “that the world is governed by human interests and an alleged universal moral sense. This cosmic humanism for realists, who believe that knowledge has a prior and independent object which sense or thought signify, might be some religious orthodoxy, for idealists and phenomenologists an oracular destiny or dialectical evolution dominating the dream of life. This “humanism” is what I call egotism or moralism, and reject altogether” (LGS to Warren Allen Smith, 9 February 1951). Santayana praised the original Humanists, the old ones, and the successors of the “real” Humanists. In *The Genteel Tradition at Bay* Santayana says that Humanism is indeed the revolutionary spirit in open minds against old prejudices (GTB 155-156). According to his later letters his non-humanist naturalism is of Democritus, Lucretius and Spinoza and in *The Genteel Tradition at Bay* Santayana affirms that “the principle of morality is naturalistic”. In this regard he was wedded to naturalism in every respect.

In relation to the notion of humanism one can find a wide range of philosophical explanations in Santayana’s work. The main point is that humanism cannot be a concept but something cultural, an attitude that appreciates humanities as well as the natural world. This kind of humanism can accept the instinctive side of human nature, it sees our existence in being-in-nature. So Santayana’s humanistic mission includes the mission against hypocrisy that tries to separate our noblest thoughts from human corporeality’s messiness. Through the treatises of Epicurean humanism and the rational animal’s humanism Santayana created a healthy balance for the valuation of body and mind in philosophical texts. With the gesture that attributed an important role to body in philosophy Santayana extended our vision on the traditional meaning of humanist legacy.

NÓRA HORVÁTH

Széchenyi István University, Győr, Hungary

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Forming Harmony: The Rhetoric of George Santayana

This essay, for which the author won the Angus Kerr-Lawson Prize for 2018, is a revised version of a paper delivered before the George Santayana Society at the annual meeting of the Eastern Division of the American Philosophical Association on 9 January 2019.

Verse, writes Santayana, “is a form of rhetoric, as is all speech and even thought . . .” (POEMS xi). But how, precisely, is thought rhetorical, and what does this mean for Santayana, someone who is not given to treat rhetoric as a topic of special significance?¹ Santayana’s immediate elaboration gives a clue as to what he has in mind: thought is rhetorical because it is “a means of pouring experience into a mould which fluid experience cannot supply, and of transmuting emotion into ideas, by making it articulate” (POEMS xi). In this context, we may infer Santayana means reflective thought—that is, thought that gives shape to experience and feeling. Rhetoric, on this view, would thus constitute that form-giving force which gives shape to subjective thought and thereby makes possible its outward expression to others.

While Santayana’s body of work offers any number of avenues for carrying out such an interpretation, in light of the connection he draws between rhetoric and effective form (or forming) the most obvious point of departure is his aesthetic theory and its emphasis on the imagination. Santayana’s aesthetics helps to construct a model of rhetoric in which effective symbolic expression serves as a creative and generative root of the imagination, at once celebrating the emotions as a means to engage our world and using them to conceive of, and deliberate among, alternatives within a life of reason. In its creative capacity, rhetorical form would employ beauty—as Santayana understands the term, that is, as “the art of assimilating phenomena, whether words, images, emotions, or systems of ideas, to the deeper innate cravings of the mind” (IPR 162) and the harmonization of goods (e.g., “Union” in *The Realm of Spirit*). Beauty in this sense could elevate rhetoric, regardless of the medium employed (e.g., by word, image, etc.) as a means of arresting attention and, ultimately, of influencing the particular values, attitudes, and beliefs of a community. Notwithstanding Santayana’s general neglect of the art of rhetoric, rhetoric, he acknowledges, must have a part in the occupation of philosophy, to which he remains committed: for raw experience is in itself unintelligible, requiring articulation (i.e., the construction and shaping of one’s experience) to be understood by its owner—or experiencer—and to enable its communication. In isolation, philosophy would be hard-pressed to share that

¹ Irving Singer, for example, remarks that Santayana “was not particularly interested in the principles of rhetoric. For better or worse, his criticism avoids both exegesis and linguistic analysis. He shows how the Homeric Hymns, for instance, exemplify the imaginative function of religion, but he largely ignores the poetic devices they employ. He defines religion in terms of myth and metaphor, but he never provides a thorough analysis of either myth or metaphor” (Singer 2000 128). Singer’s view of rhetoric is far narrower than the one I am using here. His comments imply a simple reduction of rhetoric to tropes and figures, whereas I use the term to consider symbolic forms of expression.

knowledge or transform it into actionable beliefs, attitudes, and values that could be shared and lived by others.

In this essay, I argue that Santayana's work offers us new considerations of rhetoric where rhetoric may function as the principal means of creating and articulating experience within the individual and, simultaneously, of transmitting that experience to others within a given community. Crucial to this understanding is the preservation of the end of harmony, in no small part because Santayana explains that "Such congruity would render a being stable, efficient, beautiful" (LR5 133). Thus, the creative articulation and rhetorical rendering of experience that aims to promote concord both within the individual and between the individual and its community enables rhetoric to acquire a distinctively aesthetic quality, to serve an aesthetic function in combination with the more practical-productive ends of persuasion and influence (i.e., a largely Aristotelian conception of rhetoric).² Conceiving of rhetoric aesthetically, i.e., as constitutive of harmony, yields a perspective wherein rhetoric consists of the means of providing form to thought, but in such a manner that aims to render its ends as stable, efficient, and beautiful. Because Santayana's understanding of the imagination, the emotions, and beauty—according to his various commentaries—aim at harmony, this essay points up their significance to an understanding of an aesthetic rhetoric. Further, I argue that for Santayana, at least implicitly, rhetoric is essential to engendering and maintaining the reciprocal influence of the individual and the community within a harmonious life of reason, not least because rhetoric aims to manage moments of disorder and disagreement with efforts to bring about balance and does so at its best when made fitting and beautiful.³

² Rhetoric, of course, has extended well beyond Aristotelian roots. Yet, as noted rhetorical theorist Thomas M. Conley points out, there are four basic rhetorical models (motivistic, controversial, dialectical, and problematic); these models "persist throughout the history of rhetoric" (Conley 24) and continue to rearticulate themselves. Nevertheless, because the study and practice of rhetoric is largely influenced by his conceptualizations in the *Rhetoric* and because the essay form has space limitations, I do not (and cannot) include a larger body of rhetorical representation. This offers a feasible starting place, though it would indeed be interesting to see how these views compare with those of others, e.g., within the Roman rhetorical tradition—i.e., Cicero's canons that Santayana certainly performs well but does not explicitly address and Quintilian's educational program, or more contemporary scholars (e.g., Kenneth Burke, Richard Weaver, Richard McKeon, etc.).

³ While I elaborate on these claims throughout the paper, I offer this early disclaimer that this view should not suggest that Santayana's individualism lacks significance, nor should it suggest that the aim is for "good" citizens or enhanced public life (e.g., Aristotle, Dewey, etc.), though that could be a potential result. Rather, this view offers a means to show how Santayana enables us to consider rhetoric outside of its more dominant eristic understanding. Within the Santayana interpretation, we tend to see the individual as the originator of rhetoric and, understood as such, rhetoric is both prior to any possible outward expressions and rooted in emotion, both neglected positions in authoritative rhetorical scholarship. In other words, the ends of outward expression go beyond mere argument for the sake of such enhanced public life while nevertheless allowing for a stability and beauty that harmony affords.

Imagining Santayana Vis-à-Vis Classical Rhetoric

Santayana enables us to extend rhetoric beyond Aristotle's influence on rhetoric. On Aristotle's view, rhetoric may be conceived as the ability to determine the available means of persuasion in efforts to make the most persuasive case. Certainly, Santayana acknowledges *ethos*, *pathos*, and *logos*—the artistic proofs Aristotle discusses—but does not relate them specifically to rhetoric. Santayana, like Aristotle, emphasizes reason and rationality. And while he avails himself of the Aristotelian modes of persuasion (*ethos*, *logos*, and *pathos*), he parts company with Aristotle in several ways. First, Santayana does not necessarily or always use the same rhetorical vocabulary as Aristotle. Second, he does not hierarchically arrange the terms in the same way that Aristotle does. For example, Santayana does not share Aristotle's aversion to the volatility and transience of emotion. While Aristotle stipulates that the emotions are a necessary part of rhetoric, this necessity is born out of the fact that they are part of the human condition, not out of a desire to include emotions in a rhetorical project. Santayana also acknowledges that the emotions are an integral part of the human condition but celebrates them even while recognizing that they may be used non-rationally. Finally, Santayana extends the scope of rhetorical concepts beyond persuasion, aiming toward harmony instead, though they remain in the service of discourse, reason, and human well-being. Further, other accounts of rhetoric as a mere contrast and debate of ideas limit its potential to render stability, efficiency, and beauty—i.e., harmony. Harmony, used in this sense contains within it rational congruity—an idea rooted in the ancient Greeks, who considered rationality as both the goal and the means toward progress. Rationality, then, may be conceived of as a means of connection between the senses, experiences, and values.

The way in which Santayana situates rhetoric suggests it has the capacity both to shape and communicate these connections as what I call points of articulation, which capture both lived and borrowed experience (e.g., through literature, poetry, etc.). This, in turn, stimulates the imagination to consider new possibilities, shifting the emphasis away from situational persuasiveness to possibilities of what Aristotle calls that which could be otherwise (*On Rhetoric* 1357a 2-7). Significantly, the more appealing the symbols that are felt and expressed, the more beautiful we perceive that which the symbols represent. Beauty, Santayana insists, influences individual preference: when we perceive beauty in a thing we are more attracted to it. This attraction creates a preference—a preference that ultimately produces values, expressible and in competition with other values in a community. This, in turn, requires us to consider both what *is* (i.e., the status quo) and what *is possible* (i.e., what could make a thing more beautiful).⁴ Because beliefs rely on subjective preferences—which *ipso facto* means conditional and subject to change—they remain rhetorically negotiable. This raises the question, however,

⁴ If considering something rhetorical, then we must consider Aristotle's claim that in any instance of rhetoric, regardless of genre, certain things "admit of issuing in two ways" (*On Rhetoric* 1357a 2-3). Also see Aristotle on possibility and probability (*On Rhetoric* 1357a 7-40 – 1357b 1).

of how influence can occur if preference itself relies on individual perceptions of beauty.⁵ Rhetoric thus functions as a kind of intervening force, enabling the modification of aesthetic belief or preservation of belief over the long range. Santayana recognizes that something less tangible allows humans to break free of material constraints, pointing to the significance of rhetoric, which makes use of language and its indeterminable capacity as “a living . . . perpetual creation” (SAF 261). Circumstances can help to shape language without necessarily determining it, thus leaving open what is possible, that is, the possibility of further alternative, undetermined significations. Further, language, Santayana states, is “not temporal or dynamic. It is an infinite field for selection” (RB 15). While language itself may not be temporal or dynamic, what we do with it can serve to effect change within time or motion. Rhetoric can actualize potentiality by using both reason and the imagination to envision alternatives with a view toward harmony.

The imagination has two specific functions within an aesthetic model of rhetorical effectiveness: 1) reconstructing the thoughts and feelings of others (literary psychology) and 2) conceiving of new ways of acting, being, and saying. In the first place, while we cannot understand the mental life of others through direct intuition, we can use our imagination to interpret others’ thoughts and feelings, albeit with the added problem that we might interpret inaccurately or incompetently, which suggests a need for appropriate taste and good judgment.⁶ The second function of imagination lies in conceiving of ideas and actions that go beyond the restrictions of customary thinking. This function starts with the storehouse of common ideas and opinions (i.e., *doxa*) and then constructs more advanced, more satisfactory, or loftier ideals that lead to the production of novel ways of being, doing, and saying.⁷

⁵ Indeed, Santayana on the whole seems primarily interested in the individual. As Jerome Ashmore states, “For Santayana the interests of the collection of individuals comprising a social group reduce to fundamentally separated individual interests. It is the single human organism that is the point of contact with value, with reason, with happiness (Ashmore 5). Others, however, like Will Arnett suggest Santayana’s philosophy, and what he claims philosophy should be in general, “consists of the exposition and clarification, in the light of experience (‘a fund of knowledge gathered by the living’) of the basic principles and practices pertinent to the existence of highly complex organisms – principles and practices, that is, which cannot be ignored without probably tragic consequences for the individual and society” (Arnett 6). Timothy Sprigge offers further justification: “It seems to be a just criticism of Santayana’s philosophy that it is in some sense too individualistic. For all his emphasis on the biological foundations of knowledge and consciousness he leaves its social context very little explored. Nonetheless most of his main tenets are compatible with a fuller realization of this side of things” (Sprigge 62). Thus, while Santayana himself may not robustly explore the individual within the larger community, his general principles allow us to make that move.

⁶ See also Coleman’s prefatory remarks to the “Literary Psychology” chapter in the *Essential Santayana* (Coleman 104).

⁷ Igor Sikorsky, the inventor of the modern helicopter, is an interesting example. Inspired by Jules Verne’s *Clipper of the Clouds*, in which Verne imagined the future of flight, Sikorsky borrowed Verne’s literary idea to create the modern helicopter in reality. Citing Verne as the primary reason he achieved such a feat, Sikorsky quoted Verne as having stated, “Anything that one man can imagine, another man can make real” (Ryan, CN13). Thus, this function of

Despite its propensity to exceed real-world limitations, the imagination nevertheless remains grounded in material reality. Every person shares in the capacity to imagine circumstances other than their current ones, while those same circumstances impose constraints that prevent the imagination from running wild: “We fail in practical affairs when we ignore the conditions of action and we fail in works of imagination when we concoct what is fantastic and without roots in the world” (LR4 134). The imagination amplifies the possibilities we can entertain, while materiality prevents imagination from becoming irrational. Santayana maintains that philosophy emerges from the imagination of individuals, but raises the question about which philosophical question to trust, concluding that, “All systems may be used and, up to a certain point, trusted as symbols” (PGS 8). So long as philosophical systems’ chief concerns are expressing “the human will and imagination,” they remain part of a life of reason, but require a choice among them in which to participate (PGS 13). For that reason, philosophic systems must persuasively articulate the particular beliefs, principles, and ideals they embody, while those same factors must simultaneously appear to express the larger *doxastic* beliefs that are representative of a community. For example, in the United States both the Republican and Democratic Parties claim to serve the principles of democracy, yet each group proposes a different, more or less conflicting, set of ideas regarding which policy agendas will best subserve the ends of a democratic constitution. The party most capable of persuasively articulating whether and how its platform will best promote democracy will ultimately (though not eternally) attract more believers in any given election. This competition strongly links philosophy to rhetoric, because to gain any attention or have any influence, a philosophic system must be presented with some rhetorical force, implying the ability to navigate through the various beliefs, values, and attitudes that comprise the *doxa* of a community at any given time. Consequently, creating or sustaining such navigation requires formal articulation and communication of those principles. Santayana writes, “Now in philosophy there is a medium which plays a great part, namely thought It identifies, connects, and describes its objects not according to their intrinsic natures but according to their names or images in discourse, and to the dialectical relations of these names or images” (OS 197). Santayana tells us, “Thinking is another name for discourse,” which connects the ability to measure beliefs, principles, and ideals with language and its external expression (SAF 291). His comments raise a significant point, because, as Santayana states, “Thought can be found only by being enacted” (SAF 254). For Santayana, a thought could contain the essence of chaos; nevertheless, thought—or discourse—must be given external form by being made articulate before it can be persuasively communicable to others. A chaotic thought will unlikely succeed to produce action or change within an individual or her community. Rhetoric as thought, however, as Santayana told us in the preface to *Poems*, gives articulate form to ideas, which we can assume provides for effective external expression. In other words, thought as rhetoric can be enacted but not taken up by a community unless given outward *articulate* form.

the imagination closely relates to rhetoric’s need to consider what else is possible because it sparks the imagination, which in turn has the potential to create something more appealing.

This is not to say, however, that all expressions are equal. Indeed, we are more attracted to beautiful form. Beauty, for Santayana, is not a fixed aspect of things and will depend on the perceptions of the perceivers. Extending the above example, even when particular people's rhetoric within political parties appear ugly or even hideous to some people, that same rhetoric strengthens commitment to those within that community and attracts those outside it when made beautiful and offers an appearance of harmony for individual interests within the larger political community. It does not necessarily matter what kind or form beauty takes, so long as the subject perceives it *as* beautiful. For instance, in the current political climate President Donald Trump, despite many claims of discordant rhetoric, was able to appeal both to the Republican Party and voting communities that had largely felt out of concord. In other words, Trump's rhetoric appeared beautiful and sparked the imagination and possibility that conditions within any given community could improve.⁸ When made beautiful, discourse draws attention to ideas and helps to stimulate the imagination of such possibility and beautiful—or more beautiful—alternatives. This imaginative spark, in turn, enables the recognition of possibilities beyond one's individual constraints or experiences. Nevertheless, while the imagination may serve to prompt alternatives, "A civilized imagination," Santayana argues, "has to understand and to serve the world" (LR4 126). Therefore, any individually imagined possible alternative, along with its subsequent external—that is to say, rhetorically formed—expression ought to serve the collective. Making possible alternatives *appear* more or less in the service of the world relies on the use of elevated—i.e., more poetic and beautiful—form.

Emotion, Form, and the Harmonization of Parts

The appeal of poetic discourse consists in enabling us both to see our own lived experience in a new light and to imagine and entertain alternatives to those experiences.⁹ By articulating real or imagined experience, poetic works spur new creative and imaginative thoughts. By supplementing real experience with those an author imagines, for example, the comparison expands the reader's horizon. As Santayana remarks, "The possibilities of love or glory, of intrigue and perplexity,

⁸ Importantly, as Ashmore points out, it is possible to experience sensation without experiencing beauty. Ashmore says the crucial test of beauty for Santayana asks: is the valuing organism aware of the totality of elements it is perceiving? If not, then it is merely experiencing a sensation. If yes, then the organism is experiencing a perception of form. Not only does this relay the importance of beauty from form, but it also reveals why one individual might view an object as beautiful when another may not, reinforcing the notion of evaluation within human measure and experience (Ashmore15).

⁹ I use "poetry" here as a shorthand for poetry, literature, and drama, as Santayana often does throughout his works. Indeed, Santayana makes a point of writing that poetry as only a literary form is limiting: "[If] we drop the limitation to verbal expression, and think of poetry as that subtle fire and inward light which seems at times to shine through the world and to touch the images in our minds with ineffable beauty, then poetry is a momentary harmony in the soul amid stagnation or conflict, – glimpse of the divine and an incitation to a religious life" (IPR 171).

will be opened up before us; if he gives us a good plot, we can readily furnish the characters, because each of them will be the realization of some stunted potential self of our own” (IPR 166). This identification with character flaws marks an opportunity for correction—to pursue an alternative way. Santayana says that in this function “flows the greatest opportunity of fiction,” in it, “[w]e have, in a sense, an infinite will; but we have a limited experience, an experience sadly inadequate to exercise that will either in its purity or its strength. To give form to our capacities nothing is required but the appropriate occasion; this the poet, studying the world, will construct for us out of the materials of his observation” (IPR 166). The audience, then, *vis-à-vis* the poet both observes and creates. Though the spectator may have limited or different experiences, the poetic stimulates her imagination, leading to the possibility of creation—that is, novel ways of expressing real or imagined experience. Because any given interpretation has the potential to enter into collective discourse, and thus in the collective conscious, it also has the potential to stimulate, maintain, or alter community beliefs, values, and attitudes. Poetry’s beautiful form heightens the effect because it attracts—it influences—our attention, persuading us to stop and take notice, opening us to more possible articulations.

For Santayana, the emotions influence both our sense experience and our expression of it. Emotions, on Santayana’s view, offer a “natural joy in thinking freely, and the self-assertion of each mind against all others” (RB 509).¹⁰ Intuition can guide our experience and enable a freedom for belief and action. Yet, because it is rooted in preference we also need the capacity to make judgments beyond mere preference, raising several observations: First, because intuitions stem from preference, they cannot establish authority or validity. Second, in addition to intuition’s inability to measure appropriately, our intuitions cannot serve as the focus or basis of genuine (i.e., productive) debate and must account for emotions because debate and rational argument will not produce persuasion toward a subjective taste that a person does not have. Nevertheless, Santayana, like Aristotle, understands that individuals are more attracted to beauty and the good than their opposites, suggesting that if a common understanding of beauty or the good exists, that this may indeed influence individual preference and the accompanying perceptions of beauty and of goodness. Third—and the more radical—implication suggests that emotions pre-exist any deliberation that may follow from outward experience. A felt emotion like anger is itself already a deliberative engagement with the world, albeit, and perhaps obviously, at a preconscious level. For all thought, as Santayana claims, *is* rhetoric and is composed of essences, all that are or can be communicated. Santayana’s remarks implicate emotion as a constitutive rhetorical moment that precedes any outward (and secondary) deliberative experience. Emotion, Santayana argues, accompanies perception and in doing so revitalizes the possibility of enjoyable creation while stimulating the imagination. In

¹⁰ While obviously Aristotle attends to emotions a great deal, identifying *pathos* as an important rhetorical appeal and dedicating Book 2 of the *Rhetoric* to emotions, it often gets overlooked or deprioritized as part of a rational form of rhetoric, especially when emphasizing the deliberative or political genre of rhetoric which both he and those who follow him consider the most rhetorical of the genres (the others being forensic/judicial and ceremonial/*epideictic*).

order to articulate ideas, we must draw from our experiences. However, when we transform conventional ideas into unconventional, poetic, and beautiful ones, the remaking carries with it the potential to arrest attention. This pause enables time both to enjoy our created image and to rekindle (again and again) the inner workings of the imagination. Santayana claims that our desire for beauty helps us to select and create beautiful material, and that: “The link that binds together the ideas, sometimes so wide apart . . . is most often the link of emotion” (IPR 157). The desire for beauty initiates an orderly and pleasing form, whereby the emotions secure and assemble ideas in the service of the imagination. Emotions do not merely influence individual preference; they also gain in strength when and where they originate in an intersubjective space—an inter-experiential field—that binds together people’s ideas and thus preserves the ties of the community.

Aesthetic Rhetoric: Beautiful, Formal, Influential

Aesthetic rhetoric is both an instance of thought and a capacity to formalize, always with a mind to beauty, as a means to encourage meaningful and transformative communication. Thought in this regard encompasses both emotion and sense perception, placing greater emphasis on beauty as a relational factor between rhetoric and aesthetics. “The stuff of language,” Santayana attests, “is words, and the sensuous material of words is sound; if language therefore is to be made perfect, its materials must be made beautiful by being themselves subjected to a measure, and endowed with a form” (IPR 152). The potential of language affords an unending possibility of expression, encouraging creative and beautiful use. Art, Santayana maintains, colors human happiness and expresses the mind’s internal habit more influentially than anything else (LR4 111). Because our internal habits of mind are encompassed in thought, which Santayana makes equal with rhetoric, it is safe to conclude that rhetoric, too, contains these characteristics of art. Further, if this is the case, then, thought given form must be made beautiful at its most influential. “The choice of those visionary essences,” Santayana claims, “which meantime visit the mind, though regular, is free; they are the transcript of life into discourse, the rhetorical and emotional rendering of existence, which when deepened and purified, becomes poetry or music” (RB ix). When rhetoric articulates the emotional rendering of our conditions and existence at the height of its creative and influential possibility, it becomes equivalent to a poetic or aesthetic translation of life into discourse.

Aesthetic rhetoric provides form both to thought and emotion, prompted by our own sensuous experience, making possible harmony vis-à-vis appropriate judgment because we aim to shape and modify the particulars and appearances within our own experience. Viewing rhetoric as aesthetic, emphasizing the imagination, suggests virtually limitless possibilities. Communities have beliefs (*doxa*) as a result of the underlying aesthetic preferences and sensibilities that the individuals within those communities experience. While everyone makes choices, judgments about those choices occur based on probability and tendency—markers of rhetoric—contrasting actions and ideas to those that came before or to possible alternative outcomes. As Santayana claims: “tendency, no less than movement,

needs an organised medium to make it possible . . .” (LR1 27). While rhetoric forms those possibilities, simply having choices is not enough, for it does not equate to a position from which to deliberate about those choices. Before such deliberation can occur, speakers need to provide form based in and inspired by the passions, even when used non-rationally (even irrationally). Following Santayana, without form we could not focus on any one point long enough to assign value or discuss it. Where deliberation begins is arbitrary, but deliberation as an active process requires formalized ideas, else they remain as mere possibilities, essences without form, in a state of flux. As Santayana argues, “The absolute flux cannot be physically arrested; but what arrests it ideally is the fixing of some point in it from which it can be measured and illumined” (LR1 27-8). Since rhetoric provides form, it follows that rhetoric creates the points of articulation that enables measurement and illumination. By formalizing points of impact, we make those points relevant, measurable, and (potentially) persuasive. Unlike the beautiful embodied in rhetorical form, conventional means would be hard-pressed to interrupt any ordinary way of viewing the world and her events.

Rhetorical form considers both individual symbols and the arrangement of words into ideas, but transcends mere effective arrangement to consider a *harmonization* of formulized parts.¹¹ The arbitrary and contingent nature of language suggests that each articulation represents only a part of any whole. The form rhetoric provides to such parts increases the productive capacity of any good represented in the ideas expressed, so long as we attend to beauty and expectations. Beauty certainly provides style, attending to standards of the times and communities, while also offering something beyond mere stylistic pleasure. On the one hand, Santayana makes clear that style without appropriate content is vulgar, like “An old woman in a blond wig, a dirty hand covered with jewels, ostentation without dignity, rhetoric without cogency, all offend by an inner contradiction” (LR4 120). On the other hand, the style itself can provide a means of influence, quite apart from the influence of content: “arrangement of words is still undetermined, and by casting our speech into the moulds of metre and rhyme we can give it a heightened power, apart from its significance” (IPR 153). Each part, then, requires precision and attention, but only insofar as it contributes to the whole of rationality, order, unity—in a word, beauty. Arranging the different parts appropriately and beautifully gives presence to ideas and provides unity among them. Santayana writes: “To embody or enact an idea is the only way of making it actual; but its embodiment may mutilate it, if the material or the situation is not propitious. So an infant may be maimed at birth, when what injures him is not being brought forth, but being brought forth in the wrong manner” (LR4 104).¹² Deviat-

¹¹ See Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* 1414a33-1420b and Cicero’s *De Inv* 1.7 and *De Or* 1.31.143.

¹² As one of the major rhetorical canons, arrangement helps to organize the parts into an effective piece of discourse (See Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* 1414a33-1420b and Cicero’s *De Inv* 1.7 and *De Or* 1.31.143). Santayana extends the idea of arrangement beyond that of effectiveness, emphasizing how arranging the different parts appropriately and beautifully gives presence to ideas and provides unity among them. This is but one instance of how Santayana conforms to the rhetorical canons (i.e., Invention, Arrangement, Style, Memory, and Delivery) but also points beyond them. Indeed, it would be interesting to explore the various

ing from normative (*doxastic*) expectations would constitute one way of bringing forth in the wrong manner. This deviation does not mean to avoid challenges to potential alternatives or even the *doxa* that gives rise to expectations. Indeed, the opposite holds true in the sense that so long as we bring forth the idea in the right way, at the right time, for the right reasons (as Aristotle would have it), we provide for the possibility of increasing the goods represented in thought and word.¹³ Instead of creating or re-creating the repetitive forms already in existence, the forms may be used as guides or measurements and, considered in a rhetorical frame, form creates an interruption that enables us to critique, to judge, and to spectate with the ends of expedience (deliberative rhetoric), justice (judicial/forensic rhetoric), and honor (*epideictic* rhetoric) in mind. In order for us to take notice, the expression must transcend convention and repetition of ideas. Santayana favors the term poetry or philosophy over rhetoric and thus does not explicitly argue for rhetoric; rather, he demonstrates aesthetic rhetoric throughout his work enabling us to imagine its necessary contribution to a harmonious philosophical, poetic, and rhetorical way of being.

Conclusion

This orientation to the world provides an ongoing source of possibility that champions the imagination, the emotions, and our sensuous experiences born out of beauty. While the imagination promotes the transcendence of material conditions by way of conceiving of better alternative ideals, our capacity for reflection and creation stimulates our imagination and simultaneously encourages its continued articulations. This novel view demonstrates how rhetoric is at once an instance of thought and emotion and the means to give them form. In creating points of articulation, rhetoric requires us to stop and take notice—to what degree we direct our attention to matters will depend on how we perceive a thing's beauty or relevance. Moreover, viewing form from this standpoint points to the significance and requirement of discourse and discussion in traditional rhetorical manner. Even considering the potential involvement of persuasion, the end of aesthetic rhetoric remains that of harmony—both with oneself and with the alternatives one encounters.

Harmony, on Santayana's view, does not exclude the potential for disagreement. However, instead of focusing on rhetoric as the point at or through which we debate disagreements, it functions as a way to provide form to thought and emotions. In so doing, rhetoric may not only create new possibilities but also harmonize them within individuals and communities. Santayana, in a letter to Charles Augustus Strong, remarks, "Of course, I like agreement, it warms the heart, but I don't expect it; and I like disagreement too, when it is intelligent and carries a thought further, rather than contradicts it *a priori*, from a different point of departure. These different points of departure make discussion futile and un-

instances of how Santayana makes use of the canons even while he does not specifically address doing so, though the scope of such a project would be better served in its own essay.

¹³ Aristotle remarks, "But having these feelings at the right times, about the right things, toward the right people, for the right end, and in the right way, is the intermediate and best condition, and this proper to virtue" (*Nicomachean Ethics*, 1106b 22-23).

pleasant” (LGS 15 Septmeber-1939). Thus, as much as Santayana advocates for agreement, he does not suggest that agreement always occurs or that disagreement never occurs. Rather, he states:

Life is a form of order, a great rhythmic self-responsive organization in parcels of matter: but it arises in a thousand places and takes a thousand forms. If reason or spirit or any mystic influence whatsoever attempted to impose on each living creature the contrary impulse of all the others, it would induce to universal harmony but universal death. It would solve the moral problem only by dissolving all goods, all arts, all species and all individuals (RB 477).

Different conceptions of the world, of our environments, and of our ideas circulate to such a degree and in such a way that we cannot avoid disagreement. Nevertheless, imposing those same things in hopes that disagreement will create some efficacious end will only eliminate our moral problems by eradicating all of the parts that make a harmonizing whole possible. Yet, “Even the most general and tolerant of moral standards—harmony—is not a good in itself. There must be actual will directed upon harmony in order to render harmony a good. Harmony demands many a sacrifice” (RB 483). Santayana thus helps show us that form is the will directed on harmony in order to render it a good. Form articulates the emotions and the senses that embody ideas and ideals. Essences, according to Santayana, make up an inexhaustible catalogue of possible symbols and arrangements that have no power over the existing world. Thus, something—and it is my argument that this something is indeed rhetoric—needs to give those essences power—form—in order to grant a modicum of control over events and order. Although this sometimes requires sacrifice, it also always requires cooperation for any authentic act of expediency, justice, or honor. As Santayana argues, “In the realm of matter, this harmony is measured by the degree of adjustment, conformity, and co-operation which the part may have attained in the whole; in a word, it is measured by *health*. In the realm of truth, the same natural harmony extends as far as do capacity and pleasure in understanding the truth: so that besides health we may possess *knowledge*” (OS 288).

While I have argued for Santayana’s inclusion in the rhetorical tradition—resulting in novel ways of understanding his work as well as rhetorical ideas—my argument also suggests possible ways of using these ideas to examine practical affairs or applying the ideas in ways that Santayana (or Aristotle) could not account for as we move beyond the textual and oral traditions of rhetoric. Santayana’s ideas about imagination, emotion, and beauty can and should attend to the visual rhetoric that encompasses a variety of media (e.g., television, film, internet, etc.) and their technological advances. We ought use these ideas as tools for better understanding how and why people believe and act as they do and for using that knowledge to create balance and harmony, with and without rational argument. Angus Kerr-Lawson once wrote, “Although this has been claimed more than once, it would be incorrect to say that Santayana *never* puts forward arguments in support of his positions” (2004, 29 emphasis added). Thus, Santayana’s formal articulations *exemplify* both rationality and beauty. Even if argument for rhetoric is absent, Santayana appeals to us through its means: the formal and beautiful articulation of ideas that arrests our attention while demonstrating a harmonization

of philosophical, poetic, and rhetorical parts, guiding us rationally, and beautifully, within and toward the life of reason.

BRITA STONEMAN

Hillsdale College

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Getting on Terms with Elusive Reality: Nature's "Irresistible Dictation" and Grammars of Understanding in Emerson, Santayana, and Cavell

This article is a revision a paper delivered before the George Santayana Society at the annual meeting of the Eastern Division of the American Philosophical Association on 9 January 2019

Santayana's rather off-handed note in his essay "The Genteel Tradition in American Philosophy" (1911) that Ralph Waldo Emerson was, in the face of nature, "cheery" and "impervious to the evidence of evil" may be the most oft-repeated quotation of Santayana's about Emerson, as it has been cited at least a dozen times, in publications ranging from *The Atlantic Monthly* in 1923 to Stanley Cavell's *In Quest of the Ordinary* in 1988. Santayana's more nuanced and often affirmative assessments of Emerson's naturalism—within the "Genteel Tradition" essay itself, and in Santayana's first notable, public writing, "Emerson's Optimism" (1886)¹ and in the "Emerson" chapter of *Interpretations of Poetry and Religion* (1900)—are less often cited and mulled over by scholars than these lines from "The Genteel Tradition" are tossed off with the implication that Santayana may not have read Emerson closely, let alone sympathetically—but he did. Cavell himself is often quoted in his judgment that Santayana is crucial to an American "repression" of Emerson. In Cavell's lecture at Berkeley in 1983 called "Emerson, Coleridge, Kant (Terms as Conditions)," (published as part of the book fully titled *In Quest of the Ordinary: Lines of Skepticism and Romanticism*), he says Santayana reduced Emerson to a "pillar" (Cavell's word) of the genteel tradition in Santayana's address (also at Berkeley) in 1911 (published as "The Genteel Tradition in American Philosophy") to the detriment of Emerson's academic stock. Cavell offers a reading of Emerson's essay "Fate" and states his convoluted goal as to work "within an aspiration of philosophy that feeds, and is fed by, a desire to inherit Emerson" as a "thinker" (presumably rather than considering Emerson as a belle-lettrist or prophet of the American self-help industry) and he then reads Emerson the way Emerson reads nature, as symbolic of his own interests.

Early in the essay "Emerson, Coleridge, Kant (Terms as Conditions)," Cavell identifies an idea he associates with Wittgenstein—the "grammar" of experience, which Cavell describes as the "conditions" of knowledge which he then relates to the "limitations" implied by Emerson's natural conditions of fate. By associating a

¹ Santayana's "The Optimism of Ralph Waldo Emerson" was entered in 1886 in the Bowdoin Prize competition at Harvard. Perhaps reflecting Emerson's alma mater's ambivalence about the Sage of Concord (their annoyance over his anti-dogmatic "Divinity School Address" in 1844 smoldered for decades), Santayana's essay did not win. Nonetheless, it has many of his later stylistic and philosophical qualities in recognizable form. It was first published in the *Emerson Society Quarterly* in 1964 and in 1967 appeared in the collection *George Santayana's America*.

"condition" of knowing with what Emerson in "Fate" called the "irresistible dictation" of nature (a limitation "dominating our lives" that needs to be undone), Cavell overlooks, or represses for dramatic reasons, the ways in which established conditions of knowing are occasionally functional or comfortable, not just exploitative or constraining. He also abandons any point of rest or contemplation for a nervy, critical vigilance against the possibility of verbal "knots" tying one to the rafters of history.

Cavell reads Emerson's "Fate" (1860) willfully—that is, strictly in line with his conclusion that human destiny is linguistic rather than material. In defense of a wished-for, paternal Emerson, Cavell avoids reading historically or in close attention to Emerson's rock-ledge, peat-moss, and earthquake specifics. The result is an ornate piece of litigation and autobiography in the guise of analysis. Here I put Santayana in dialogue with Cavell's essay and show that a) Santayana does *not* define Emerson as a "pillar" of the genteel tradition, but as a counter-figure to it who bore some of its traits as atavisms and b) Santayana had already inherited large parts of Emerson's work with fair gratitude and that c) Santayana supplies within "The Genteel Tradition" (and in three other essays he wrote on Emerson, unacknowledged by Cavell) more historically astute and nuanced analyses of Emerson than Cavell does and that d) Santayana advances a crucial aspect of Emerson's thought, an observant intelligence that stands back from both nature and the "grammar" that frames common sense understandings of it to the advantage of philosophy. Santayana's criticism of philosophy is thus conditioned to avoid reversion to transcendental metaphysics, a regression Cavell risks in his reduction of Emerson's fate to structures of language and philosophy to "scripts" of nature's dictation apart from literal nature.

Cavell's case against Santayana begins in the claim, "Of all the moments in the history of what I am calling the repression of Emerson in American philosophy, none seems to me more decisive, apart from the professionalization of philosophy itself, than Santayana's making of him a pillar of the Genteel Tradition" (QO 34). Also, without anything approaching a careful review of what Santayana's argument about the genteel tradition and Emerson is, Cavell quotes the notorious phrase cited above and claims that nowhere else does Santayana argue for a better understanding of Emerson's optimism than this; Cavell strives, here and in his 1987 lectures on Emerson's essay "Experience" (UA) to define Emerson as a model of postmodern skepticism rather than a nineteenth century optimist.

Cavell is thus related to Emerson, but not in the way he primarily proposes. He argues that he is extending Emerson's skeptical implications, but he is more obviously extending a transcendental, romantic line. Cavell's essay prioritizes a scrutiny of language that casts the philosopher in a drama of captivity, as though he were Byron's prisoner of Chillon, and language itself were the tower in which he is held against his will. Emerson speaks figuratively of "the elemental order" of "rock-ledges, peat-bog, forest, sea and shore" as comprising "the terms by which our life is walled up" ("Fate," E&L 951)—Cavell takes these "terms" as verbal, so that when Emerson refers to natural events, he means linguistic situations. Cavell writes a brief history of philosophy that parallels Frederic Jameson's *Prison-House of Language* (1974), a historicizing study of structuralism.

But in "The Genteel Tradition in American Philosophy," Santayana does *not* argue that Emerson is a "pillar" of the "genteel tradition." The "genteel tradition" as Santayana carefully defines it is a strain of absolutist, anti-humanist idealism derived from Calvinism. Santayana sees it as strongly influential into the current age of academic philosophy, and its prime example is Josiah Royce—a systemic metaphysician with a Calvinist strain—not an Emersonian figure. The core of the genteel tradition is a variant of the Calvinist "agonized conscience" that registers "a fierce pleasure in the existence of misery, especially of one's own, in that this misery seems to manifest the fact that the Absolute is irresponsible or infinite or holy." Emerson, who is repeatedly called "optimistic" by Santayana does not manifest this sort of "agonized conscience" (WD 189).

A careful reading of Santayana may reveal Cavell's misreadings of Emerson (and of Santayana), especially Cavell's projections and distortions in his article "Terms as Conditions." These projections on Cavell's part may amount to a peculiarly Emersonian vice, the mapping of personal concerns onto ciphers that may bear no obvious relationship to the reader (of the book of nature) who elaborates their importance to their soul's progress.² Further, I will highlight Santayana as an inheritor of Emerson who tends to correct, expand, yet not exaggerate, Emerson's strategies.

Cavell says Santayana "harps on Emerson without quoting a single line of him." This note on Santayana's lack of quoted evidence is almost true of Santayana's review of Emerson in "The Genteel Tradition," but these two claims distort Santayana's other published opinions of Emerson. And within "The Genteel Tradition," Santayana does quote Emerson's line "Why so hot, little sir?" (from "Spiritual Laws" E&L 307), nature's joshing consolation in a social melee. Emerson, Santayana says, "had no system; and his coveting truth had another exceptional consequence: he was detached, unworldly, contemplative. When he came out of the conventicle or the reform meeting, or out of the rapturous close atmosphere of the lecture-room, he heard Nature whispering to him: 'Why so hot, little sir?'" (WD 199); This idea of nature's amused whisper appealed to Santayana enough that he also quoted this line within his 1886 essay on Emerson.

The Emerson who is a connoisseur of the nature that supports the self's assertion of its own absolutism³ is not an example of the "genteel tradition" but of an individualistic counterpoint to Calvinist, self-abnegating idealism; Santayana explicitly says that Emerson was "too keen, too perceptive, and too independent" to "retail the genteel tradition" (WD 192). Only in Emerson's incidental echoes of Protestant theology does Santayana see him participating in the genteel tradition; Emerson's role in the essay is to show that beginning with him, there have been counter-currents to the genteel tradition that are visible in Emerson, Walt Whit-

² A brief version of Emerson's mandate to read nature as symbolic is here: "I find that the fascination resides in the symbol . . . nature the symbol, nature certifying the supernatural, body overflowed by life which he worships with coarse but sincere rites" ("The Poet" E&L 453).

³ "It is the universal nature which gives worth to particular men and things . . . Absolve you to yourself, and you shall have the suffrage of the world" ("Self-Reliance" E&L 238).

man and William James, each of whom evince a naturalized spirituality, and to varying degrees, a "bohemian" non-conformity.

The more complex part of Santayana's argument about Emerson is that he is transcendental in two senses of the word. Emerson's variant of transcendentalism is also only partially related to, and not a primary expression of, the Calvinist "genteel tradition." The first sense of the word is of transcendentalism as a critical *method*:

Transcendentalism is not a system of the universe regarded as a fact, or as a collection of facts. It is a method, a point of view, from which any world, no matter what it might contain, could be approached by a self-conscious observer. Transcendentalism is systematic subjectivism. It studies the perspectives of knowledge as they radiate from the self . . . lest you should think later that I disparage transcendentalism, that as a method I regard it as correct and, when once suggested, unforgettable. I regard it as the chief contribution made in modern times to speculation. But it is a method only . . . (WD 194)

The potential philosophical detriment of transcendentalism is that it has no investigative answer for the problem of what is the ground and condition of being, what are the real conditions of existence. Transcendentalism "is no answer, and involves no particular answer, to the question: What exists?" (WD 194). Santayana issues a similar criticism of Emerson, for lacking attention to the fundamentals of the physical world that condition, shock, and support any coherent value system. In *Interpretations of Poetry and Religion*, Santayana bluntly states that "reality eluded" Emerson, but that in his openness "to all philosophic influences" he constructed "a free and personal religion" (IPR 132). In other words, Emerson's transcendental method verged on being a transcendental system.

This second sense of the word *transcendentalism* arises from an "abuse" of the transcendental *method* which facilitates the insight that knowledge depends on a point of view; the abuse arises from the idea that an ideal point of view is itself generative of reality; thus transcendentalism becomes a mythology or a bogus metaphysics, and can involve the identification of the self or ego and nature. Santayana's point is less that Emerson is a mystic or transcendental metaphysician, but that his methodological transcendentalism was partial, and his ontological claims were often too loosely pantheistic:

A conscientious critique of knowledge was turned into a sham system of nature. We must therefore distinguish sharply the transcendental grammar of the intellect, which is significant and potentially correct, from the various transcendental systems of the universe, which are chimeras. (WD 195)

Emerson participates in "systemic" (not just "critical") transcendentalism inasmuch as the transcendental method embodied "the spirit of Protestantism as distinguished from its inherited doctrines" and as transcendentalism may suggest "that will was deeper than intellect" (WD 196), that the will posits the values that make the world, as in Fichte's classic example of German idealism.

Cavell does not review Santayana's historical reading of transcendentalism and Emerson at all, nor does he recognize that Emerson's role in the essay is not to stand as a "pillar" of the genteel tradition, but as an anti-Calvinist innovator who

cut the new wood that Whitman and William James would further carve. The interpretive distortions and willful tone of Cavell's essay are due in part to its being a professional autobiography in the guise of a textual analysis; to make the evolution of his concerns clear requires a fair amount of projection on Cavell's part, as Emerson's emphasis on physical forces in "Fate" are read as a masked insistence that destiny is somehow textual.

In a key portion of this autobiography, Cavell neglects an opportunity to correspond with Santayana on the issue of grammar. Early in his career, Cavell recounts, he traced lines of influence from Kant to Wittgenstein: "what Wittgenstein means by grammar in his grammatical investigations—as revealed by our system of ordinary language—is an inheritor of what Kant means by Transcendental Logic" (QO 38). This genealogy of influences is especially interesting, because Santayana is also concerned with Wittgenstein-like "grammars" of understanding, and frequently uses the word "grammar" in just this sense. Within his 1900 essay on Emerson, he says that Emerson's mystical inclinations at times made his attempts at revolutionary thinking

fleeting, because the human mind had long before settled its grammar, and discovered, after much groping and many defeats, the general forms in which experience will allow itself to be stated. These general forms are the principles of common sense and positive science, no less imaginative in their origin than those notions which we now call transcendental, but grown prosaic, like the metaphors of common speech, by dint of repetition. (IPR 132)

Cavell, in turning his reading of "Fate" into a romantic lament about language, evades the sense of grammar as a "general form of common sense" and sees it primarily, or even essentially, as an instrument of constraint. In an elegant conundrum typical of Cavell's style of analysis, the effort of philosophy should be to abandon itself⁴ (or relinquish authority to gain authority, he also says) in an attempt to better find self-understanding and the transformation of philosophy's foundational terms. He abandons the literal Emerson to argue for a symbolic one. In this way Cavell writes something closer to fan fiction than criticism, more provocative sophistry than lucid explanation. The game that Cavell is playing here is engaging as interpretive acrobatics but dubious as historical scholarship, as it does not accord with any summary of what Emerson actually argues within "Fate"—Cavell's reading depends on his reader's taking it on faith that his argument about Emerson is like a polymerase chain reaction, or chemical amplification of a tiny sample of genetic material into a picture of a suspect, and not just a wishful projection or a vellum overlay of 1980s linguistic obsessions onto Emerson's 1860s argument—an argument about the value of heroic thought facing new terms of geology, genetics, and geopolitics which threaten to overwhelm the individual. The sample Cavell amplifies is this statement by Emerson: "But if there be irresistible dictation, this dictation understands itself. If we must accept Fate, we

⁴ "I characterize the thinking that Emerson preaches and practices in terms of abandonment, abandonment of something, by something, and to something" (Cavell 28).

are not less compelled to affirm liberty, the significance of the individual, the grandeur of duty, the power of character" ("Fate" E&L 943).

That fate can take the form of a "dictation" inspires Cavell to read Emerson's images of natural compulsions or ineluctable forces as signs of, in Cavell's phrase, "old scripts" that can "dominate our lives." The analysis of repressed influences or calcified "scripts" of ancestral or social command (that are literally *verbal*) seems more obviously a Freudian than an Emersonian enterprise, but I will not deny Cavell the right to amplify evidence.

But in turning up the volume on Emerson's brief use of the words "terms" or "dictation" to metaphorize the effect of the physical environment, Cavell hits distortion levels and misreads Santayana in Cavell's development of a "linguistic" vision of fate in Emerson. Ironically, given Cavell's book's stated quest for "the ordinary," Cavell makes Emerson out to be more of an exotic, a metaphysical transcendentalist than he is, especially in the context of "Fate." Cavell reduces Emerson's insistently physical world to a pure play of words; Cavell codes Emersonian liberation not as a new understanding of nature, but as a reworking of terminology. This could be good for academic business (and was—writing like this helped promote a latter day or postmodern idealism, by suggesting that words make the world), but it is dubious as scholarship of Emerson. Cavell's reading oddly confirms Santayana's analysis in "The Genteel Tradition in American Philosophy" of transcendentalism's tendency to slide from a critical *method* to a metaphysical *system*, or even to a "sham system of the universe" as it takes ultimate reality to be verbal or ideal rather than physical.

Also significant is that Cavell approaches, and then swerves from, a component of pragmatic insight in Emerson—Emerson's apparent (or potential) concern with grammars of understanding. Cavell, as his essay's subtitle stresses, is interested in Kantian "terms" or "conditions" of knowing, how Emerson may reflect on these, and how philosophy may become a means of undoing the terms or "old knots" (Emerson's word for natural fate that Cavell takes to mean "terms" of understanding) that philosophers have agreed or conspired (in Cavell's terms) to tie. This analysis roughly maps out a path for philosophy parallel to power studies and nominally "psychoanalytical" hermeneutics in literary studies, as it suggests the goal of analysis is to discern ratios of compromise, control, or exploitation and potentially rewrite them. But if the actual conditions of life are un- or under-reported, these new liberatory scripts are likely to be new forms of transcendental metaphysics rather than imaginative solutions to actual problems.

However, in his own various analyses of Emerson, Santayana observes what Cavell represses or neglects: nature itself, and the possibility that some "terms" of understanding are common sense structures amounting to ordinary poetry that do not need abandonment, vigilant suspicion, or persistently nervy reworkings. Further, Santayana performs a more specific and textually apt analysis of Emerson's influences ("terms" that condition Emerson's expressions and thinking) than Cavell does. In each of his major reviews of Emerson, Santayana notes religious atavisms in Emerson that amount to terms that shape (and sometimes distort) the evangelical rhetoric of the self's relation to nature. Finally, though, Santayana argues that that Emerson "kept his mysticism . . . within bounds" (IPR 136) and

so became not merely a prototype of suspicious interrogation but a model of meditative observation.

In each of his readings of Emerson, Santayana composes a fugue with counterpoints of criticism and sympathy. Rarely does Santayana dismiss or repress Emerson's work or its major ideas. Santayana creates a commentary in which major points are: Emerson was a poet of nature, and a thinker who could observe nature with a mature calm, but he felt compelled by his religious influences to speculate about non-natural "causes" for experience; his expressions of joy, which occasionally distorted his descriptions of nature, were also trained by religious language. This narrative is consistent in all of Santayana's critical commentaries on Emerson. Even in the "Genteel Tradition in American Philosophy," Santayana is sympathetic to Emerson's spirituality, as Santayana affirms that there are categories "other than science" to which the imagination may aptly appeal. Interestingly, it is in Emerson's poetry that Santayana sees the most equilibrium between rational candor about physical reality and a spirituality that challenges the arbitrary structure of the material world. Santayana affirms Emerson's spiritualized relation of fact and metaphor in his 1903 essay on Emerson's poetry; an animating feature in both thinkers' rather stoical identification with Nature is metaphor:

These woodnotes [poems] are full of tenderness, humor, and a pleasing mythical fancy, perhaps a tendency to trace rather fantastic analogies and to proclaim identity in things tolerably remote from one another; but we are free . . . from mystical negations and artificial dilemmas. The dominant note of exaltation is not the forced optimism of the doctrinaire; it is natural joy in joy, in variety, in harmony, in the affinities and wide suggestion of things; the observation is the observation of fact. (GSA 87)

Santayana reminds us, countering the reputation of the Emerson of "Self Reliance" as a prophet of sentimental egotism, that Emerson was more properly considered stoical and impersonal in his optimism, and the "optimism" of his work was less a property of the philosophy itself than of his style, tone, and character. Santayana distinguished what he shared with and what he wished to outgrow in Emerson in each of his essays about Emerson (1886, 1900, 1903), and in "The Genteel Tradition in American Philosophy." Santayana particularly shared a tone of restrained optimism and a critical habit of dialogue with other thinkers within his own writing. The optimistic qualities of Santayana's writing are often a matter of tone and character, as the substance of his thought, like Emerson's, is often fairly stoical, as they share a recurrent appeal to natural conditions as frames of spiritual possibility, while the tone of their writing stresses wit, sympathy, and a flexibility legible in the ways that both authors conversationally indulge in ornate commentaries and reflections of other writers that ambiguously blend paraphrases into their own narration. This strategy of Santayana's may be most explicit in his 1886 essay "Emerson's Optimism" and the stylistic prototype of a career-long strategy of embedded and sometimes ambiguous paraphrases (he almost never used formal citations) that suggest Santayana's dialectical relationship to influences, evincing appreciation and competition by turns.

The relationship of values to a candor about physical conditions (the literal subject of Emerson's "Fate") is the most ambiguous territory in Santayana's relationship to Emerson, because in some places Santayana criticizes thinkers (including Emerson) for not being candid enough about natural "reality" and in others he criticizes Stoics (in general) for being too conformist to nature:

Nature neither is nor can be man's ideal. The substitution of nature for the traditional and ideal object of religion involves giving nature moral authority over man; it involves that element of Stoicism which is the synonym of inhumanity. Life and death, good and ill fortune, happiness and misery, since they flow equally from the universal order, shall be declared, in spite of reason, to be equally good. True virtue shall be reduced to conformity. (LR3 83)

In his first public essay, in fact, though it is occasionally laudatory of Emerson, he rates his predecessor in naturalized spirituality as too conformist in his understandings of nature, in a fatalistic acceptance of natural standards, in ideas of organic wholes that erase human scales of meaning, or in the numinous elaboration of the idea of organic whole into a pantheistic universe—these Emersonian ideas were ultimately ethically and causally problematic for Santayana; in the 1886 essay, Santayana criticizes Emerson's stoical distance from ordinary life and suffering: "He listens to the hum of human life as to the humble-bee, and looks on wars as on the bursting of thunderclouds" (GSA 83). A similar criticism appears in the 1900 essay; if Emerson is "hypnotised by the spectacle of a necessary evolution . . . evil is not explained, it is forgotten; it is not cured, but condoned. We have surrendered the category of the better and the worse, the deepest foundation of life and reason" (IPR 137).

Santayana, unlike Cavell, reads Emerson closely for atavisms or "terms" than may bind or prejudice Emerson himself. Santayana reveals the ratios of mythology (Christian) embedded in an allegedly natural account of life. Santayana, in his own philosophy, is more likely to be local (rather than universal) in his vantage point than Emerson is, as in his criticism of stoicism. Emerson's "fate" in Santayana's view is in fair part that the

spirit of conformity, the unction, the loyalty even unto death inspired by the religion of Jehovah, were dispositions acquired by too long a discipline and rooted in too many forms of speech, of thought, and of worship for a man like Emerson, who had felt their full force, ever to be able to lose them. The evolutions of his abstract opinions left that habit unchanged. (IPR 137)

Santayana's reading of Emerson is much more nuanced and historical than Cavell's in "Terms as Conditions" and especially takes into account Emerson's ambivalent relationship to Protestantism. Far from bluntly dismissing Emerson as a sunny optimist, he agrees with Emerson's natural spirituality to a point and then carefully argues that Emerson's "optimism" at times reworks a reflex of evangelical joy which Emerson then projects onto nature. Examples of Emerson in this mode of mapping Christian enthusiasm onto nature are common, especially in "The Over-Soul" where

there is no screen or ceiling between our heads and the infinite heavens, so is there no bar or wall in the soul where man, the effect, ceases, and God, the cause, begins. The walls are taken away. We lie open on one side to the deeps of spiritual nature, to the attributes of God. Justice we see and know, Love, Freedom, Power. (E&L 387)

In "The Over-Soul," Emerson also demonstrates simultaneous self-awareness of the momentum of religious traditions and his embrace of them: "Everywhere the history of religion betrays a tendency to enthusiasm. The rapture of the Moravian and Quietist; the opening of the internal sense of the Word, in the language of the New Jerusalem Church; the revival of the Calvinistic churches; the experiences of the Methodists, are varying forms of that shudder of awe and delight with which the individual soul always mingles with the universal soul. The nature of these revelations is the same; they are perceptions of the absolute law" (E&L 393). This tendency to translate individual consciousness into an image of pantheistic continuity or even the universal will is a key part of "Fate:" "Our thought, though it were only an hour old, affirms an oldest necessity, not to be separated from thought, and not to be separated from will. They must always have coexisted. It apprises us of its sovereignty and godhead, which refuse to be severed from it. It is not mine or thine, but the will of all mind" (E&L 956). Emerson's explicit appeal to universal consciousness to bolster the individual will, and its obvious religious precedent, is unreported in Cavell's analysis of the essay, suggesting, again, that Santayana, far from cavalierly "repressing" Emerson, has a more patient analysis of these significant religious dynamics than Cavell ventures, and more equipoise between extremes.

Each of these thinkers—Emerson, Santayana, and Cavell—at various points assert the priority of physical substance or nature but also remain committed to a transcendental epistemology which affirms that we only have access to appearances and to our interpretations of appearances. Confronting what may register as an unsettled controversy within his own work, Santayana nonetheless maintains a calm like Keats's "negative capability."⁵ One of the ways Santayana suggests this equilibrium is through commentary on others' work that reflects his own views with some dialectical tension. Santayana's commentaries on Emerson are often simultaneously reflective of his sympathy and of his objective distance. Within "The Genteel Tradition in American Philosophy", Santayana says of Emerson:

No doubt the spirit or energy of the world is what is acting in us, as the sea is what rises in every little wave; but it passes through us, and cry out as we may, it will move on. Our privilege is to have perceived it as it moves. Our dignity is not in what we do, but in what we understand. The whole world is doing things. We are turning in that vortex; yet within us is silent observation, the speculative eye before which all passes, which bridges the distances

⁵ *Negative Capability* . . . is when man is capable of being in uncertainties, mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact and reason. Coleridge, for instance, would let go by a fine isolated verisimilitude caught from the penetralium of Mystery, from being incapable of remaining content with half-knowledge" (Keats 93).

and compares the combatants. On this side of his genius Emerson broke away from all conditions of age or country and represented nothing except intelligence itself. (WD 199)

In noting Emerson's break "from conditions of age," Santayana lauds Emerson here for not being a functionary of the "genteel tradition" or the tendency of philosophy to serve academic forms or industrial growth as Calvinism and idealism continued to do, in Santayana's assessment, into the twentieth century. This passage of his 1911 address plainly shows that Santayana not only appreciates, but shares a version of Emerson's natural spirituality and his contemplative attitude toward the forms displayed by dynamic events. It is thus with Emerson the poet-in-prose that Santayana most sympathizes; with Emerson the metaphysician, Santayana most disputes.

Ironically, it is when Emerson discusses religion or literature that he is most likely to embrace ordinary reality and anchor values in natural experience. When he tries to be metaphysical, he often becomes pantheistic, idealistic, or both. When Emerson says that the miraculous is not an otherworldly supernaturalism or "monster" but rather a daily event "one with the blowing clover and falling rain" ("Divinity School Address" E&L 80), we detect a precedent for Santayana's aesthetics of a local, rather than total, reality, as when he says, "The love of all-inclusiveness is as dangerous in philosophy as in art. The savour of nature can be enjoyed by us only through our own senses and insight" (COUS 80).

At the same time, Santayana also inherits from Emerson a sense of the provisionality and limited efficacy of language to express truth. In "The Poet," Emerson says:

Here is the difference betwixt the poet and the mystic, that the last nails a symbol to one sense, which was a true sense for a moment, but soon becomes old and false. For all symbols are fluxional; all language is vehicular and transitive, and is good, as ferries and horses are, for conveyance, not as farms and houses are, for homestead. (E&L 463)

With a similar emphasis on pragmatic purposes and historical contingencies, Santayana observes language "is significant in proportion to the constancy in meaning which words and locutions preserve in a speaker's mind at various times, or in the minds of various persons. This constancy is never absolute. Therefore language is never wholly significant, never exhaustively intelligible" (LR3 157). Significantly, though, while both thinkers acknowledge language's contingency, this does not mean that language has no clarity or is a conspiratorial trap. There are degrees of translucency in language, not just a doctrinal obscurity (related to Calvinism, potentially) caused by the absence of a central referent or access to total truth.

In the face of this source of potential philosophical insecurity, Emerson and Santayana share a knack for amusement and for reflection. Santayana emphasizes the value of meditative detachment from the outset of his career, as in his 1886 essay on Emerson, Santayana stresses not only the relation of ideals to a natural ground, but an emphasis on contemplation, which Santayana calls "reflection" (a consideration of life in a context of natural or universal—in the sense of *the phys-*

ical universe—truth). He places reflection above sympathy, which is more likely to simply project feeling into nature, and reads Emerson as more likely to indulge in reflection. It is in this meditative, reflective emphasis that Santayana inherits a significant portion of Emerson that eludes Cavell. Santayana glosses Emerson:

If we try to put ourselves in the place of every creature that has ever lived, and thus form a notion of the sum of all experience, we approach the universe through *sympathy*. If, on the other hand, we are more inclined to *reflection*, our idea of the universe will be formed by looking at our own experience, as well as on that of others, from the outside . . . this is what Emerson means by looking at things [contemplatively] from the point of view of the intellect, or as truth. (GSA 76; emphasis added)

Stepping forward several decades in the Emersonian tradition, we find a handy illustration of this argumentative tension between "sympathy" or "reflection" in Wallace Stevens's poem "The Snow Man," in which the poet instructs that one must be careful and, after apparent winter training, "cold a long time" to avoid the melodramatic projection of one's own "misery" into the "sound of the wind/ in the sound of a few leaves." In alternative to this anthropomorphic lament, the primary consciousness in the poem, the "listener" has a calm, reflective "mind of winter" and, instead of projecting egotistical concerns into the landscape,

listens in the snow,
And, nothing himself, beholds
Nothing that is not there and the nothing that is. (CP 9)

That is, the thinker, for some still moments at least, adds nothing to what is observed in the winter landscape, a place which invites pathetic fallacies that the "snow man" meditatively resists. I would not argue that this detachment is the only activity of philosophy, but it is a crucial one, because it reminds us that thinking is not only suspicious scrutiny of the environment (or of our impressions of it), but a calm consideration of its appearances. Cavell neglects this aspect of the Emersonian tradition not only within "Terms as Conditions," but in a later comment on Wittgenstein: when Cavell reads Wittgenstein as saying philosophy "leaves everything as it is," here too he writes a species of fan fiction in an interpretive guess that Wittgenstein means that "desire" (a concept unmentioned in this section of Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*) "be manifest and be obeyed" (UA 45). This vaguely romantic mandate to "obey desire" is not likely what Wittgenstein intends. Rather, given his stoical tendency to demystify, Wittgenstein surely invokes a philosopher who, like the snow man in Stevens's poem, observes "nothing that is not there."

While Cavell claims the "desire" to inherit Emerson in "Emerson, Coleridge, Kant (Terms as Conditions)," he tends to reenact the movements of projection and idealization that Santayana had analyzed as metaphysical transcendentalism: the mapping of the ego onto experience. This enterprise indicated that the hermeneutics of suspicion common in the 1980s in English departments was becoming interdisciplinary and professionally de rigueur across the humanities. Yet the hermeneutical path that Cavell takes in his suspicious confrontations with the "book" of fate is not new, as his interpretation becomes a version of metaphysical

transcendentalism, as it simultaneously takes, and leaves, reality for words. Cavell's reading of "Fate" also is dubious analysis, because it has no point of rest or conclusion, but encourages a hovering vigilance. Cavell's analysis confirms Santayana's assessment that methodological transcendentalism can transform into metaphysical transcendentalism. Cavell loses contact with nature and with the natural emphases, and their historical contexts within Emerson's "Fate" in order to read Emerson's essay as a post-Freudian guide to suspicious scrutiny of language.

Cavell thus neglects the ways that Emerson, rather than being the harbinger of a post-modern linguistic skepticism, stays within a Christian framework or net of influences when he evokes the transformative power of character or thought in confrontation with natural fate. Cavell briefly considers an interesting point of intellectual association in considering "fate" as a species of what Wittgenstein called the "grammar" of experience. But this too is met by the post-Freudian analytical reflex that "grammar" is a "knot" to be untied: the words "fate, freedom, and foreknowledge . . . like every other in the language" (Cavell QO 38) are to be, in Cavell's extension of the knot-metaphor, unraveled by philosophy.

Thus, in addition to his nuanced readings of Emerson, Santayana discerns when to hold and when to fold common sense in the game of philosophy, instead of unraveling every word "in the language", an anxious stance that avoids the calm not only of Wallace Stevens' observant snow man but of daily common sense in familiar spaces. Santayana saw that Emerson, speculative and adventurous, "chose to descend again to common sense and to touch the earth for a moment before another flight" (IPR 134). Santayana has, independent of Emerson, many similar affirmations of common sense in his own terms: "I think that common sense, in a rough dogged way, is technically sounder than the special schools of philosophy, each of which squints and overlooks half the facts and half the difficulties in its eagerness to find in some detail the key to the whole. I am animated by distrust of all high guesses" (SAF v). In fact, one of Santayana's criticisms of Emerson in the 1900 essay is that he sometimes did not reckon that the general "grammar" of human understanding in many situations, depends on "forms" of "common sense and positive science, no less imaginative in their origin than those notions which we now call transcendental, but grown prosaic, like the metaphors of common speech, by dint of repetition" (IPR 132).

Finally, Cavell and Santayana alike, like mountain climbers generations apart, trace the same territory in Kant as it may apply to Emerson in using the term "understanding" relative to a grasp of basic principles of existence. In Santayana "conditions" are both linguistic and material. The understanding of "conditions" is a study of our criteria or grammars of knowing. Santayana acknowledges that "understanding is something human and conditioned, something which might have been different" (IPR 135), but by acknowledging the meditative attitude of observation, of nature and its appearances, and of our understandings of it, Santayana makes it less likely that a criticism of knowledge will sail compulsively into a new version of transcendental system-making or toward a linguistic solipsism, but rather act in a dialectical consideration of nature and intelligence in its historical situation and influences. Santayana is thus related to Emerson especially in the aesthetics of common experience: When Emerson observes the snow fall (in

gratitude), and ignores the sermon (in annoyance at its tedium), when he asks for a poetry of log-rolling (local and exciting), not of princes and courts (long ago and dull), he is trusting a common experience requiring only basic language "natural" structures of understanding and the grammar of ordinary experience. This line of literary influence is visible in the fiction of Ernest Hemingway and in the poetry of Wallace Stevens.

There are different "grammars" of knowing—including those innocuous, beneficial, or pernicious. There are corrupting grammars of social conditions, like racism and sexism, and these obviously deserve, and people benefit from, their being undone, abandoned, and rewritten. But not all "grammars" of understanding are even social or conversational. Some are social and spatial, but not verbal, like the protocol for driving a car according to conventions and laws (now being translated into the grammar of automated driving software); or, more mundanely, carrying a full glass in a crowded room. Other grammars of understanding are purely spatial—as we register how much force it takes to conduct most movements—whether typing on a keyboard or throwing a baseball—given our internalized, formal understanding of earth's gravity. These "grammars" of movement are part of innocuous common sense and can themselves be calmly appreciated. But Cavell avoids the meditative, neutral context of what Santayana calls the realm of essence, which could mean that an observant, non-manipulative attention given to the steam above a coffee cup could be similar to the attention given the grammar of getting on, and moving among one's fellow citizens, on a subway, or to the attention given the ideal, literary circumstance of the frost on the junipers in Stevens' poem "The Snow Man." Cavell's insistence on the interrogation of every word overlooks that some words, and some grammars, better bear meditation than interrogation, or may simply comprise elements of common sense.

The argument Cavell makes in "Emerson, Coleridge, Kant (Terms as Conditions)" has some things in common with Derridean poststructuralism, which reads reality as a collection of signs that can only refer to each other, and with Jameson's *Prison-House of Language*. In expressing his romantic eagerness for categorical leave-taking as an utter "relinquishment" (QO 29) of conventional philosophical authority or in an "abandonment" (QO 40) of standard epistemologies (they may be conspiratorial "knots"), Cavell abruptly commits to a half-known world made out of words, or to what Richard Poirier called "the soap opera of theory" (Poirier 97). The irony of this position is that this movement replays several elaborate acts of transit, from skepticism to new surety, in philosophical history. The first may be the Cartesian, rationalist turn that doubts many conventional metaphysical concepts but clutches at several others (God, the Mind, etc.) for the arbitrary reason that the world does not make sense at this point in history without them. The more obvious historical precedent for Cavell's turn (similar to other poststructural or post-pragmatic turns) is recounted by Santayana in "The Genteel Tradition and American Philosophy": it is the turn from methodological transcendentalism to metaphysical transcendentalism. Without some candor of a Kantian variety, or even what Santayana calls the "positive science" of empirical probability, criticism of science may commit itself to an abstruse idealism like Derrida's, as any values articulated on the other side of an absolute

skepticism will be arbitrarily asserted, and unrelated to the natural conditions known at least as they are reported by current science. It is one thing to acknowledge, as both Emerson and Santayana do, the provisionality of language. It is another to claim, as Cavell does in his essay on "Fate," that all one can know, or contend with, is language. Santayana roots ideals in nature, not in free-floating desire or in hypostatic ideals, and while he tries to demystify them by revealing their relationship to the past, he acknowledges, as in his reflective criticism of Emerson, that his ideas are shaped by, and bear the influences of, a philosophical tradition, without being captive to it.

PHILLIP L. BEARD

Auburn University

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Emerson, Santayana, and the Two Phases of Transcendentalism: Comments on Beard

Philip L. Beard's essay, "Getting on Terms with Elusive Reality: Nature's 'Irresistible Dictation' and Grammars of Understanding in Emerson, Santayana, and Cavell," is a searing critique of Stanley Cavell's views on Santayana and Emerson. Beard shows that Santayana's commentaries on Emerson are far more sympathetic and nuanced than Cavell would have us believe. He also shows that, contrary to Cavell's conspiratorial notions, Santayana is not party to a "repression of Emerson in American philosophy" by "making him a pillar of the Genteel Tradition." (QO 34) Santayana certainly perceived, as have many other critics, the vestiges of Calvinist theology threaded through Emerson's thought; but he held that "[i]t was not Emerson's vocation to be definite and dogmatic in religion any more than in philosophy" (IPR 134). Beard also forcefully challenges Cavell's reductive thesis that "when Emerson refers to natural events, he means linguistic situation" or verbal "terms" (p. 106 this volume). On this point, Cavell's ideas appear to have little affinity with Santayana's. For Santayana, Emerson is a philosopher who acknowledges the primacy of nature over the linguistic categories or terms we use to talk about nature. He argued that

Emerson's transcendentalism...might have given him a technical right to treat nature as a figment put together by man's ingenuity for man's convenience; but he respected her too much to impute to her so much respect for man; he saw her as she really is and loved her for in her indomitable and inhuman perfection. (EP 273)

The reference to transcendentalism raises the question of what Santayana means by this philosophically rich term. The question is important since Santayana's analysis of transcendentalism informs his broadly sympathetic assessment of Emerson's thought. Beard draws our attention to this issue with his keen observation that "The more complex part of Santayana's argument about Emerson is that [Emerson] is transcendental in two senses of the word" (p.108 this volume) The two senses are transcendentalism understood as a *method* of philosophy and transcendentalism understood as a *system of* philosophy derived from the method. Taken as a method, it is neutral with regard to what exists, for it is only a "reversion, in the presence of any object or affirmation, to the immediate experience which discloses that object or prompts that affirmation" (RB 200). However, the method is open to abuse in system building. As Beard succinctly puts it, "the abuse arises from the idea that an ideal point of view is itself generative of reality" (p.108 this volume). The result is the egotistical transcendentalism for which the world, the past, the future, and other minds "do not and cannot exist otherwise than in their capacity of things posited by the ego." (EGP 60-61)

Beard holds that Emerson practiced the transcendental method without ever fully lapsing into mysticism or dogmatism. Instead of becoming a dogmatic transcendentalist, he became, to quote Beard, a "model of meditative observation"

and so a source inspiration for Santayana. (p.111 this volume) I believe Beard's position is essentially correct, for it is precisely the meditative, observational side of Emerson that Santayana most appreciated. In what follows, we look more closely at this claim and what Santayana intends by *transcendentalism*. Taking our cue from Beard, the purpose of doing so is to see how Santayana's appeal to transcendentalism in developing his own system of philosophy helps explain his treatment of Emerson.

Just as pride is a cardinal sin in Christianity, egotism for Santayana is a cardinal mistake in philosophy, for it is the insidious source of several other philosophical mistakes. Santayana defines egotism in philosophy as "subjectivity in thought and willfulness in morals" (EGP 6). From his earliest writings he maintained that when this attitude drives philosophical speculation it tends toward non-naturalistic and therefore, in his judgment, spurious metaphysical ideas such as the denial of matter, teleological history, and moralism. Santayana traces the source of epistemic subjectivity in thought, if not willfulness in morals, back to the empiricism of John Locke, who he claims "first thought of looking into his own breast to find there the genuine properties of gold and of an apple". Locke may have planted the seed of egotism in modern Western philosophy; however, it is the great German philosophers, most notably Kant and his followers, who are for Santayana the true exemplars of egotism in philosophy. For they are the ones who most conscientiously practiced the transcendental method of "looking for reality in one's own breast" and aspired to find in "memory and subjective experience" ultimate truths of reality. (EGP 32-33)

There is no doubt that Santayana regarded German transcendental philosophy as a work of imaginative genius. However, in his view, it is genius unmoored from the physical world. Speculatively adrift in subjective experience rather than anchored in physical facts, it advances sophisticated accounts of human life and thought. Santayana dismisses Kant's *a priori* categories and universal forms of intuition, for example, as "all pompous titles for what Hume had satirically called tendencies to feign" (SAF 300). More troubling is egotistic transcendental philosophy's tendency toward moralism. "There is something sinister in this transcendentalism," Santayana remarked (SAF 303). Although he explicitly denied that egotistic transcendental philosophy was the cause of Germany's destructive belligerence during the first half of the twentieth century, he did see the subjective, romantic attitude of egotistic transcendentalism as a "symbol and omen" for the country's "practical attitude". "It is hardly necessary to point out," he wrote from England during World War I, "how completely this theory justifies any desperate enterprise to which one happens to be wedded" (EGP 67).

Given Santayana's strong antipathy toward egotistic transcendentalism, one would expect to find a similar antipathy from him toward one of its most famous American incarnations in the philosophy of Emerson. Yet, in Santayana's running criticism of transcendental philosophers, including his former mentor and colleague Josiah Royce, Emerson stands conspicuously apart from the pack. This presents us with an apparent anomaly in Santayana's philosophical criticism. For despite Emerson being the titular head of American transcendentalism and trumpeting the reality of supernatural notions such as the *Over-Soul* or the *eternal ONE* universal consciousness and karmic principles of compensation that insure

“every act rewards itself,” Santayana nevertheless found much to praise and appreciate in Emerson’s essays and poems (RWE 237, 159). Indeed, Santayana went so far as to deem Emerson a “fixed star in the firmament of philosophy”, albeit not a star of the “first magnitude” (IPR 140)—coming from Santayana, this constitutes high praise. Significantly, this pronouncement was no passing mood of generosity on Santayana’s part. Although he never again wrote at length on Emerson after his address “Emerson the Poet,” delivered in 1903 at Harvard during Emerson Memorial Week, his fondness for Emerson never diminished. Some thirty years after his address he reported in a couple of letters that he had “procured an immense volume of Emerson’s works” (LGS to Nancy Saunders Toy 24 May 1937) and that he was once again “reading Emerson with pleasure” (LGS to Daniel Corey, 12 May 1937).

What accounts for Santayana’s abiding appreciation for the man he once called the “Puritan mystic with a poetic fancy” (IPR 138)? One main reason mentioned by Beard is the fact that *both* Emerson and Santayana were strongly influenced by Kant’s transcendental turn in philosophy. This is an important insight. It might sound odd given that we have just seen that Santayana rarely missed an opportunity to dismantle the pretenses of egotistic transcendental philosophy. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that both Emerson and Santayana were strongly influenced by Kant’s method. Where they part ways, at least from a Santayanan perspective, is the degree to which transcendentalism is combined with scepticism and naturalism. Santayana’s appeal to transcendentalism includes a form of scepticism that is more thorough and impactful than Emersonian fallibilism; for it leads in the opposite direction from the subjectivity in thought and willfulness in morals characteristic of egotistical transcendental philosophy.

In *Scepticism and Animal Faith* and its sequel *Realms of Being*, Santayana explicitly appeals to the transcendental method. Crucially, he sees the method as comprised of two phases: the sceptical and the assertive. The sceptical phase is itself divided into two parts: *empirical criticism* of knowledge and *transcendental criticism* of knowledge. The purpose of the former, Santayana states, is to “reduce conventional beliefs to the facts they rest on” and thereby “clear our intellectual conscience of voluntary avoidable criticism”. (SAF 3) This is the sort of criticism that would undermine, say, a belief in astrology by an appeal to scientific facts. Transcendental criticism, on the other hand, is more “drastic” since it questions not which empirical facts support which beliefs, but also all “principles of interpretation” and all “habits of inference” that justify beliefs concerning empirical facts. “To disentangle and formulate these subjective principles of interpretation is transcendental criticism of knowledge.” (SAF 4) The function of Santayana’s sceptical reduction is to demonstrate through transcendental criticism that “[b]elief in the existence of anything, including myself, is something radically incapable of proof, and resting like all belief, on some irrational persuasion or prompting of life”, that is, on animal faith (SAF 35). By demonstrating that all belief rests on animal faith, Santayana exposes the voluntary and avoidable dogmatism of egoistic transcendental systems and, moreover, defuses the standard epistemic objections to naturalism.

Emerson never engages in the sort of totalizing scepticism found in *Scepticism and Animal Faith*. As a result, he imports into his philosophy, though on a lesser

scale than other transcendentalists, “many uncritical assumptions” (SAF 4). One of these, already mentioned, is Emerson’s pantheistic notion of an Over-Soul. In Santayana’s view, such a notion is incoherent. Commenting on Royce’s absolute idealism in which our thoughts are but fragments of a divine mind’s omniscient unity, Santayana objects:

The assertion [that our individual thoughts are parts in a single unitary consciousness] becomes absurd when it is understood to suggest that an actual instance of thinking, in which something, say the existence of America, is absent or denied, can be part of another actual instance of thinking in which it is present and asserted. (COUS 75)

Santayana also regards Emerson’s karmic laws as a pernicious form of mystical teleology since evil “is not cured, but condoned.” By accepting the view that every evil has a good, Santayana writes, we “have surrendered the category of the better and the worse, the deepest foundation of the life of reason” (IPR 137). More generally, when Emerson states that “[a]ll things are moral. That soul which within us is a sentiment, outside is a law” (RWE 159), he is guilty of the cardinal sin of philosophical egotism by projecting into the universe moral and spiritual realities that are, for a naturalist like Santayana, dramatic localized spiritual episodes of human life. Despite the fact that Emerson rejected the idea of inevitable social progress, his quasi-religious belief in spiritual laws nevertheless made room for a kind of optimism with regard to personal moral growth. “We must remember,” Santayana wrote of Emerson, that his “[quasi-religious, personal] optimism is a pious tradition, originally justified by the belief in a personal God and in a providential government of affairs for the ultimate and positive good of the elect, and that the habit of worship survived in Emerson as an instinct after those positive beliefs had faded into a recognition of ‘spiritual laws’” (IPR 138).

The second phase of the transcendental method according to Santayana is assertive. This phase might appear to lead directly to the sort of egotism he abhorred. But the assertive phase for him does not begin with a subjective metaphysical conceit, such as the existence of an abstract ego. Instead, the assertive phase begins with naturalism: it is the phase “by which objects of belief are defined and marshalled, of such a character and in such an order as intelligent action demands” (RB 200). So, it is naturalism, along with scepticism, that prevents Santayana’s appeal to the transcendental method from devolving into transcendental metaphysics (naturalism for him not being a form of metaphysics). He asserts

[i]t is by boldly believing what transcendental necessity prompts any hunting animal to believe, that I separate myself from that arrested idealism [i.e. of egotistical transcendentalism], and proceed to inquire what existences, what substances, and what motions are involved in the case. (RB 201)

By beginning the assertive phase of transcendentalism with animal faith in the physical world, Santayana is able to clarify what he takes to be the (practically) universal existential commitments of common sense.

Instead of presenting a common sense, naturalistic view of the world, egotistic transcendental systems are at their core expressive of a philosopher’s intellectual idiosyncrasies and moral prejudices. Since these systems are ultimately expres-

sions of subjective thought, they cannot aspire to be complete or universal. This is why, Santayana explains, each “disciple of Kant accepts what Kant taught as he taught it, but each rises from the study of the master having irresistibly formed one or more systems of his own” (EGP 42). Thus, there can be no final or universal egotistic transcendental system, only more and more cognitive autobiography.

This endlessly renewable aspect of egotistic transcendentalism partly explains Santayana’s attachment to Emerson. Emerson never formed an architectonic system of philosophy, such as we find in Kant’s *Critique of Pure Reason* or Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Santayana notoriously said of Emerson that “[a]t bottom he had no doctrine at all” (IPR 131).¹ This remark has its positive side, since it indicates that Emerson’s imaginative transcendental speculations never terminated in the tremendous dogmatisms found in Kant or Hegel. “[H]is mind,” Santayana wrote of Emerson,

was endowed with unusual plasticity, with unusual spontaneity and liberty of movement...He was like a young god making experiments in creation: he botched the work, and always began again on a new and better plan. Everyday he said, “Let there be light.” and every day the light was new. His sun, like that of Heraclitus, was different every morning. (IPR 132)²

Here we might say the “assertive phase” of Emerson’s transcendentalism is never conclusive, never terminating, but always imaginative and experimental. And for Santayana, such is Emerson’s great virtue. “The source of his power,” he wrote, “lay not in his doctrine, but in his temperament, and the rare quality of his wisdom was due less to his reason than to his imagination” (IPR 132). Though without a definite system of philosophy, he surpassed the system makers by not representing “his poetry as science” or by defending “the universal implication of his ideas” and thereby avoided transcendentalism’s “greatest danger” (IPR 134). The greatest danger is the cosmic hubris that is generated when subjectivity in thought and willfulness in morals drives philosophical speculation.

GLENN TILLER

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi

¹ Years later Santayana tempered this assertion. Commenting on his reexamination of Emerson’s essays he wrote: “I also feel that the skeleton of his philosophy is discernable, in spite of a hopeless inconsecutiveness and literary freedom on the surface” (LGS to Daniel Corey 12 May 1937).

² Here Santayana echoes Melville’s statements about Emerson, although Melville (somewhat predictably) opts for a whaling metaphor:

Now, there is something about every man elevated about mediocrity, which is, for the most part, instinctively perceptible. This I see in Mr. Emerson. And, frankly, for the sake of argument, let us call him a fool; - then I’d rather be a fool than a wise man. —I love all men who *dive*. Any fish can swim near the surface, but it takes a great whale to go down stairs five miles or more. (EHT 36)

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Santayana's Critique of Modernity and His Repression of Emerson ¹

David Dilworth's article on Santayana and Wallace Stevens in our 2017 issue (Dilworth 2017) serves as introduction to his three-part analysis of Santayana's criticism of literary and philosophic trends that emerged following the eighteenth-century Enlightenment. His particular focus is on Santayana's criticism of Emerson and Goethe. In this issue, we present the first two parts: Dilworth's general analysis of Santayana on modernity and his assessment of what he sees as a repression of Ralph Waldo Emerson. The third part, on Johann Goethe will appear in our 2020 issue.

Santayana's Critique of Modernity

James Seaton and others have drawn attention to Santayana's role as a critic of culture (Seaton 2007). A *propos* of that important theme, in a previous issue of *Overheard Heard in Seville* (Dilworth 2017), I focused on one strain of Santayana's cultural criticism by way of drawing the contrast in career trajectories between Santayana's professed anti-romanticism and Wallace Stevens's professed new romanticism. This current writing takes its point of departure from the same feature of Santayana's career-text. Santayana in effect conjoined the concepts of *modern* and *romantic* into his own rhetorically charged term *romantic modernity*. My paper's first part will thematize his anti-romantic (alternately, anti-modern) agenda in the perspective of his eyewitness—or better, memoirist—criticism of the representative American philosophers of his generation; its second and third parts will probe deeper historically by outlining his reactive criticism of the two major icons of romantic modernity: Emerson and Goethe. (The Goethe section will appear in the next issue of this *Bulletin*.)

Santayana, who never saw Emerson in person, *tracked* him so-to-speak from the beginning. After coming to America he attended the same Boston Latin School in 1873 from which Emerson had graduated in 1817; he matriculated in the same Harvard College from which Emerson had graduated in 1821, and in effect harbingered his anti-establishment philosophic career by penning a senior year undergraduate essay in 1886 that challenged the reputation of the now celebrated Emerson, the “Sage of Concord.” (Emerson had died in 1882 at the age of 79.) Santayana presumably knew from his undergraduate studies, and to a greater degree from his own graduate school sojourn in Germany, that Goethe loomed large as perhaps the major formative figure of European intellectual modernity and had directly influenced Emerson and the transcendentalist movement as far back as the 1840s. (Goethe had passed away in 1832 at the age of 82.)

¹ The present paper augments and recomposes the author's paper “Interpretaciones de poesía y religión: Santayana sobre Goethe y Emerson con la guía del romanticismo tardío postmoderno de Stevens,” pp. 245-260, in *Santayana: Un Pensador Universal*, ed. José Beltrán and Manuel Garrido, Sergio Sevilla 2011.

But first, fast-forwarding to the post-Harvard career trajectories of Santayana and Wallace Stevens, it is symbolic for my present purposes to note that Santayana eventually (1922) wrote a polemic against the “penitent artists” of the early 20th century with as much vehemence as their art-conservative detractor, the hard-charging President Teddy Roosevelt.² On the other hand, Wallace Stevens, direct heir to the poetic cosmology of Emerson, in the same time frame was a regular participant in the Arensberg Circle in Manhattan, a leading conduit for the introduction of impressionism and abstract art in America at the time. Stevens not only participated regularly in that circle, he read his own poetry at sessions of the group. Thus, while Santayana was writing from afar in Rome, assuming the role of a cultural critic of *avant garde* trends, Stevens sought to produce “the poems of our climate”³ in analogy with the new trends of modern art and literature. A collector himself, he championed the range of French painters from Picasso to Duchamp, and was a keen reader of Baudelaire, Valéry, and Mallarmé.

Santayana gathered dedicated readers of an opposite sensibility. He increasingly intertwined his materialistic aestheticism with a many-pronged skeptical Platonism,⁴ much of which centered in contemporary culture criticism broadly conceived. He not only *critiqued* what he also called Protestant romantic modernity, including the pioneering work of the new artists, he physically *traveled away* from it, ending up back in the Eternal City of Rome (“among the broken statues,” as Stevens characterized him in one of his later poems). The trajectory of Santayana’s outlander life reveals him as a kind of literary impresario of egress from European and American modernity—in his early professional years, he quipped, with overtones of the Gospel, that he was “in Boston but not of it,” finally going back to his roots in southern Europe away from the positive historical developments of the times. Ensnared in Mussolini’s Rome he enacted the role of the Epicurean sage, retired from the world while remaining in the world, while enjoying international plaudits from his continuing stream of publications and nurturing a spiritual ataraxy of mind despite the contemporary theaters of business, action, and war. As he once mused, he walked “the primrose path of Epicurean wisdom,” while producing a considerable legacy of intertwined philosophical articulations and cultural criticism.

The cultural criticism of Santayana’s Harvard days targeted Protestant America. As he prepared to leave America in 1912, never to return again, his *parting shot* was his California lecture, “The Genteel Tradition in American Philosophy,” featuring four representative American thinkers, Emerson, Whitman, William James, and Josiah Royce. In the 1920s, from across the pond, his *Character and Opinion in the United States* re-echoed his 1912 *parting shot* against the “Genteel

² See Santayana’s essay “Penitent Art” (OS 151-161).

³ “Poems of Our Climate” is the title of a poem by Stevens.

⁴ The Platonism in *skeptical Platonism* refers to the realm of essence. Santayana’s essences like Plato’s ideas are eternal and unchanging, but unlike Plato’s ideas, essences have no moral hierarchy. Beyond that, Santayana’s Platonism is skeptical because he asserts that essences do not exist.

tradition.”⁵ Even into the 1930s he repeated that specific trajectory of cultural criticism in his 1931 publication “The Genteel Tradition at Bay.”

Now, as I will work out in this paper, Santayana, influenced by Henry James Jr., already launched this polemic in an undergraduate writing that targeted Emerson, whom he came to call “the puritan Goethe.” This epithet, though adroit, was no compliment but rather underhanded in nuance, as he also came to impugn Goethe, whose influence on Emerson was an important feature of 19th-century American transcendentalism and, through Emerson, the classical American pragmatists. Santayana’s repression of the iconic figures of Goethe and Emerson subtended his strategic stance against modernity and romanticism.

Santayana’s trope of the “Genteel tradition” might in fact be regarded as a kind of literary fiction—a recurrent trope of his own literary mindset. Sojourning first in England and then retiring to Rome, he continued to ring changes on this trope into his old age, as evidenced by such preoccupations in his three volume autobiography, *Persons and Places*, and in his novel, *The Last Puritan* with its significant subtitle *A Memoir in the Form of a Novel*—“memoirs” he produced when his actual years on American soil had long receded into the distance. Against the Puritan heritage of early America he sometimes posed as a defender of the moral symbolism of the old faith of Dante; and he found a deeper differential identity in the pagan cultures of Greece and Rome. As we learn from *Three Philosophical Poets* and *Dialogues in Limbo*, his self-referent narrative retreated backward toward the classical naturalism of Epicurus, “the truest of the pagan philosophies” with its background in the Greek philosopher Democritus and its poetic expression in the Roman poet Lucretius.⁶

Ironically, Santayana’s professed anti-modernity extended to his critique of “English liberty” in favor of (partially) acquiescing to an older form of romanticism under Mussolini. But let us stick here to his formative philosophical years. Historical and chronological considerations suggest that, to the consternation of William James and other colleagues, the young Professor Santayana of the Harvard faculty made his professorial mark in playing the role of Old World critic of the young America establishment and its cultural icons.⁷

⁵ *Character and Opinion in the United States* and *Soliloquies in England, with Later Reflections* should be researched with respect to the kind of British and international audiences Santayana successfully appealed to in the early 1920s before he left England for the continent.

⁶ For Santayana’s Epicurean psychology, see “Mediterranean Aestheticism, Epicurean Materialism” (Dilworth 2014) and “Santayana’s Epicureanism” (Pinkas 2014) Both are chapters in Flamm 2014.

⁷ See COUS with references to William James and Josiah Royce and *Academic Life in America* (1920); a specimen of his exchanges with Dewey appears in DNM. For a fuller access to Santayana’s relation to the classical American philosophers, see the index entries for Emerson, James, Royce, and Dewey in McCormick (1988). For James’s consternation with regard to Santayana’s early works SB and IPR (which included his curmudgeonly treatment of Emerson) as “the perfection of rottenness” and his characterization of Santayana as “a representative of moribund Latinity,” see James 1920, 122 (a letter to George Palmer with instructions to forward to Santayana); Santayana’s wounded reaction to this silver bullet appears in LGS1, 212-213. It is significant that Santayana, long after in 1940,

Perhaps less known, but Santayana also had a run-in with Peirce, and left a “portrait” of him for the historical record. Now arguably the greatest of the classical American philosophers, Peirce’s work only gradually came to light in the generation after his death in 1914. Santayana was fourteen years younger, but outlived Peirce by thirty-nine years. Himself “in Boston but not of it,” Peirce does not appear in Santayana’s criticism of such establishment figures as James, Royce, and Dewey. But there was a point of personal contact between Peirce and his contemporary Santayana. Peirce wrote an ungenerous review of one of Santayana’s major early writings of his Harvard period; and Santayana, after retiring to Europe, impugned Peirce in a series of private correspondences and interviews (that he assumed would receive the public light of day).

Briefly told, Peirce reviewed the first two volumes of Santayana’s *The Life of Reason* in the June 8, 1905 edition of *The Nation*. Santayana’s publisher, Charles Scribner’s Sons, advertised the 5-volume series of *The Life of Reason* as having a place in the line of American pragmatism. Scribner’s went so far as to claim it had a “pragmatistic tinge.” Peirce’s review concisely drilled down into basic tenets of *The Life of Reason* and decidedly discounted Santayana’s pragmatist and/or pragmatistic credentials.⁸ His authoritative judgment came in the wake of his prodigious lectures on what he called “pragmaticism” in relation to the normative sciences (esthetics, ethics, and logic), his innovative speculative grammatology of signs (semiotics) in “a universe perfused with signs,” and his classifications of the “heuristic sciences” (sciences of discovery) that he had just elaborated in his seven Cambridge Lectures on the Harvard campus in the spring of 1903 and in a following eight Lowell Institute lectures in 1904.⁹ So, Peirce’s review in *The Nation*

before taking on a variety of contemporary critics in a volume dedicated to his philosophy, first returned to this exchange with James under the heading of “Early Criticisms” in the opening section of his *Apologia Pro Mente Sua* (PGS 498-99, 502-03), where he defend his “modest Epicurean humanism” against James’s moral estimation that his “aestheticism” was “corrupt.” See also John McCormick’s discussion of this exchange (McCormick 56, 88).⁸ In a brief preliminary manuscript (Robin Catalog MS 1494) and in the concise review in *The Nation*, Peirce provided his reasons for rejecting the advertised “pragmatistic flavor.” He characterized Santayana’s philosophy as “sensationalistic” and “hedonistic,” and an “eclectic philosophy” “likely to have more of a literary than scientific value,”—and here was Peirce’s silver bullet— with a “style highly polished, in parts too much so; so that we are bewildered and fatigued by a shimmer of rapidly passing thoughts that are hard to make out through a medium more glimmering than lucid.”

⁹ The almost consecutive 200 pages of *The Essential Peirce*, volume two (1992), provide the ample evidence of this prodigious theoretical work which surrounded Peirce’s brief review of *The Life of Reason*. These pages include Item 17, “What Makes a Reasoning Sound” (composed in the summer and delivered in November 1903); a large document supplementary to the Lowell Lectures of 1903, “A Syllabus of Certain Topics in Logic” which contains Item 18, “An Outline Classification of the Sciences,” Item 19, “The Ethics of Terminology,” and Item 20, “Sundry Logical Conceptions”; then, Item 21, “Nomenclature and Divisions of Triadic Relations, as Far as They Are Determined” and “New Elements” (probably written in early 1904); another essay on speculative rhetoric or semiotics, followed by Item 23, “Ideas, Stray or Stolen, about Scientific Writing” (written in late 1904); and his renaming of Pragmatism as Pragmaticism in the substantial Item 24, “What Pragmatism is” (composed in the middle of 1904). Just after the appearance of the *Nation* review in

counted as a serious rejection of Santayana's alleged pragmatistic credentials. And surgically, Peirce probed what he considered certain deficient features of Santayana's "sensationalistic and hedonistic" outlook.

Now, it happened that Santayana had met Peirce at a dinner party at William James's house on the night of 9 April 1903 before the third of the seven Cambridge lectures at Harvard's Sever Hall, the lecture in which Peirce elaborated his theory of signs. Years later Santayana remembered Peirce in a now famous caricature of Peirce's "very unacademic personality" in a letter to Charles Hartshorne (LGS 1 September 1928). Prior to that, this image was more vividly detailed in a letter to Maurice Firuski in 1926 in which Santayana's memory conjured up Peirce as having "a red nose, a straggling grey beard, and an evening coat that seemed lopsided and thirty years old" (LGS 23 December 1926). Then, in 1937 Santayana virtually repeated this image in a letter to Justus Buchler, again *remembering exactly* that "his evening coat kept coming out of his waistcoat" and that Peirce looked "rednosed and disheveled, and a part of his lecture seemed to be *extempore* and whimsical" (RLS 1937). Fast forward another thirteen years, in an interview with Bruno Lind in 1950 Santayana said of Peirce: "Well, nobody could hire him. He was a drunkard. But when he was sober!" (RLS 1950). In this 1950 interview, as earlier in his replies to Hartshorne (in 1928) and Buchler (in 1937), Santayana went on vaguely to imply that Peirce might have exerted some influence on his theory of signs; but this is unconvincing in view of the status of his doctrine of essences, the surface lights of consciousness in his substantive materialist ontology.¹⁰ It is Santayana's curmudgeon imaging of Peirce that remains today. In his review for the *Nation* of 8 June 1905 Peirce had dealt honestly, publicly, and critically with a number of Santayana's published tenets. For his part, Santayana only replied, long-range over the years, with repetitions of a single image of Peirce's personal appearance on the night of 9 April 1903. Its net effect was to continue the pattern of his career-long "eyewitness memoirs" of the classical American philosophers. Although his Charles Dickens-like caricature of Peirce is limited in scope, it ranks with some of Santayana's more elaborate "portraits" of other philosophers, perhaps the most notable being his portraits of Locke, Royce, and Bergson.

Now, we come to understand the much more significant *historical* import of Santayana's animus against classical American philosophy when we place his career-long literary output in the broader context of the trans-Atlantic matrix of ideas that had developed in the 19th-century generations prior to his Harvard hey-

1905 Peirce published Item 25, "Issues of Pragmaticism (completed in June 1905); Item 26, "The Basis of Pragmaticism in Phaneroscopy" (August through December 1905); followed by Item 27, "The Basis of Pragmatism in the Normative Sciences" (January 1906); and Item 28, "Pragmatism" (composed March-April 1907).

¹⁰ For Santayana's remembrance of Peirce and a judicious discussion of whether Santayana drew positively from Peirce's semiotics, see Nathan Houser. "Santayana's Peirce" (1990), 10-13. The present writer provides a review of Houser's article, together with the full transcript of Peirce's manuscript version and his 1905 review in *The Nation* of Santayana's first two volumes of *The Life of Reason* in an article in the *Transactions of the Charles S. Peirce Society* (Dilworth 2019).

day. As Santayana came into professional prominence at Harvard, his writings ran pointedly against the grain of this burgeoning trans-Atlantic philosophic paradigm. In broad strokes, Santayana, who from his graduate school days was a serious student of European, and especially of German philosophy and literature, came into prominence by way of pointing his spear of cultural criticism against the new waves of northern European philosophy stemming from the *Jena-zeit* (c. 1800) revolution in post-Kantian idealistic thought.

Jena-zeit refers to the hub of creativity centered on the University of Jena that includes such writers as Goethe (centrally), Lessing, Fichte, Schiller, the brothers Schlegel, Schelling, and others. Their paradigms of innovative ideas were transmitted through Coleridge, Carlyle, and American students in Germany, and came to have an influential impact on the 19th c. American philosophic tradition as it eventually blossomed in Emerson, Peirce, Wm. James, and others. Santayana's almost heroic philosophic endeavor was to *resist* this burgeoning trans-Atlantic paradigm. And the immediate provenance of Santayana's philosophic resistance traces back to the anti-idealistic "metaphysics of morals" of Schopenhauer. To be sure, the painfully simplistic caricatures of the German philosophers in Santayana's war book, *Egotism in German Philosophy* (1916) included Schopenhauer. But in his later autobiography Santayana transparently acknowledged that his fundamental category of "the flux of matter" coincided with Schopenhauer's metaphor of the "world-will." Hewing to Schopenhauer, he resisted the *Jena-zeit* waves of idealism and post-idealism reaching the shores of North America in the generation before his professorial ascendancy at Harvard.¹¹

While this account of Santayana's role of resistance is negative—contrary for instance to that of his "mentor" and colleague Josiah Royce—it is arguably an accurate estimation of his *place* in the history of philosophy. To be sure, Santayana's writings were stylish, exemplarily civil, gentle and ironically whimsical, in their "portraits" of philosophical adversaries and in their displays of critical acumen. As Santayana evolved as a gifted writer expressing his own "literary psychology," he gradually refashioned the intuitive reflections of his *Sense of Beauty* (1898), *Interpretations of Poetry and Religion* (1900), and multivolume *Life of Reason* (1905-1906) into more explicit categorical coin, fashioning a unique phenomenology of matter, essence, spirit, and truth, first in his brilliant *Scepticism and Animal Faith* (1923), and then in his major opus, the four-volume *Realms of Being* (1930-1940). In net effect, against the *Jena-zeit* waves of idealism and their transformations on American soil, Santayana persevered in articulating a counter-cultural theoretical position consisting of Epicurean materialism combined with Schopenhauerian pessimism and skeptical Platonism.¹²

¹¹ It should be noted that *Egotism in German Philosophy* omits any mention of Schelling. Schelling's protean career went through as many as five pivotal stages. In retrospect, he should be regarded as the most innovative theoretical interlocutor with Kant, Fichte, Hegel, and others in the context of mid-19th century Idealism, as well as be recognized as among the thinkers who most impacted Emerson and Peirce. Peirce called himself "a Schellingian, of some stripe" (see p. 12).

¹² Santayana's relation to Schopenhauer requires a separate study. When Schopenhauer's ideas were first transmitted to 19th century America, his declared pessimism received

The historian of philosophy should recognize the theoretical accomplishments of Santayana's career-text. Indeed, Santayana may go down in history as the outstanding *proto-post-modern* philosopher of the times. He wrote somewhat in tandem with, if not also surpassing, Nietzsche's *agonistic* agenda against "the Germans of the old stamp," and he like-mindedly brought much of philosophic discourse down to a level of discussion of personal and national psychologies. Except that, in the final analysis, Nietzsche, who was initially a disciple of Schopenhauer, came to draw an affirmative strength from Emerson, whereas Santayana did not. Rather, Santayana appears to have suffered an "anxiety of influence" from Nietzsche, therewith especially targeting Nietzsche in his diatribes of anti-Teutonic displeasure, and to have suffered another anxiety of influence from Emerson.

Be that as it may, it was Charles S. Peirce who, acknowledging his good fortune for having grown up "in the Transcendentalist neighborhood,"¹³ became the chief theoretical conduit for the reception of the Idealistic and post-Idealistic strains of thought coming out of Goethe, Kant, Schiller, and Schelling. Peirce averred that he was "a Schellingian, of some stripe," while applauding "all the stages of Schelling's career." He characterized his own metaphysical writings of the 1890s as a "Schelling-fashioned objective idealism." But the seeds of this "objective idealism" derived from Schelling had already begun visibly to sprout in the former generation of Emerson, whose writings were replete with the ideas of Kant, Goethe, and Schelling. Santayana, for his part, though apparently unaware of Peirce's absorption and transformation of Schelling's ideas, came to oppose the entire heritage of transcendentalism and its provenance in the post-Kantian German Enlightenment.¹⁴

Now briefly to pick up the thread of my previous article on Wallace Stevens. Stevens rather positively inherited the transcendentalist tradition in the generation after Peirce's death in 1914, transforming it in his venue of "essential imagination" in "the poems of our [American] climate." But again, to the contrary, Santayana's "long way round to nirvana" finally became a thirty years stopover in Rome, where—as depicted in the poetic reminiscences of him by Wallace Stevens and Robert Lowell—he continued to *stage* his anti-modern Epicurean *persona*.¹⁵ This

straightforward rejection from Emerson, Peirce, and James. To the contrary, relevant in the present context, Santayana hewed close to Schopenhauer. Looking back in *Persons and Places*, he wrote "The 'Will' of Schopenhauer was a transparent mythological symbol for [my concept of] the flux of matter. There was absolute equivalence between such a system, in its purport and sense of reality, and the systems of Spinoza and Lucretius." (PP 239).

¹³ See *Guardiano* 216-45.

¹⁴ *Egotism and German Philosophy* (1916) sweepingly indicts "the one stout corpus of German Philosophy," in chapters on Goethe, Kant, Fichte, Hegel, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, et al., as so many "absolute egotists." But it should be again noted that there is no chapter on Schelling, arguably the key figure of them all, nor even a single reference to Schelling in the Index. Santayana republished his "war book" again, with a Postscript, in 1939.

¹⁵ Stevens, I think, shed light on Santayana's sublimated Epicurean aestheticism when he wrote in his prose essay, "Imagination as Value" (1948):

Most men's lives are thrust upon them. . . . There can be lives, nevertheless, which exist by the deliberate choice of those that live them. To use a single illustration: it may be

is a clear nuance of Lowell's poem on Santayana.¹⁶ As for Stevens' celebratory poem, "To An Old Philosopher in Rome"—which in fact does not mention Santayana by name—I have elsewhere indicated how Stevens' poetic "remembrance" of the old philosopher in Rome was as much a trope employing Santayana as a surrogate for expressing his (Stevens's) own condition. If we ponder this ambiguous nuance of the poem, the relevant lines here are:

assumed that the life of Professor Santayana is a life in which the function of the imagination has had a function similar to its function in any deliberate work of art, or letters.
(NA 147-48)

Santayana might have liked this characterization, as he often troped himself on "the stage of the world" in many of his favorite "spectator" metaphors about the theater. Indeed, it became a central trope in his later writings, as we learn from Lavador 2014.

¹⁶ Lowell's poem: "For George Santayana, 1863-1952"

In the heydays of forty-five,
 Busloads of souvenir-deranged
 G.I.'s and officer-professors of philosophy,
 Came crashing through your cell,
 Puzzled to find you still alive,
 Free-thinking Catholic infidel,
 Stray spirit, who'd found
 The Church too good to be believed.
 Later I used to dawdle
 Past Circus and Mithraic Temple
 To Santo Stefano grown paper-thin
 Like you from waiting. . . .
 There at the monastery hospital,
 You wished those geese-girl sisters wouldn't bother
 Their heads and yours by praying for your soul:
 "There is no God and Mary is His Mother."
 Lying outside the consecrated ground
 Forever now, you smile
 Like Ser Brunetto running for the green
 Cloth of Verona—not like one
 Who loses, but like one who'd won. . . .
 As if your long pursuit of Socrates'
 Demon, man-slaying Alcibiades,
 The demon of philosophy, at last had changed
 Those fleeting virgins into friendly laurel trees
 At Santo Stefano Rotondo, when you died
 Near ninety,
 Still unbelieving, unconfessed and unreceived,
 True to your boyish shyness of the Bride.
 Old trooper, I see your child's red crayon pass,
 Bleeding deletions on the galleys you hold
 Under your throbbing magnifying glass,
 That worn arena, where the whirling sand
 And broken-hearted lions lick your hand
 Refined by bile as yellow as a lump of gold.

So that we feel, in this illumined large,
 The veritable small, so that each of us
 Beholds himself in you, and hears his voice
 In yours, master and commiserable man,
 Intent on your particles of nether-do,
 Your dozing in the depths of wakefulness.
 In the warmth of your bed, at the edge of your chair, alive
 Yet living in two worlds. (CP 509)

Such lines have the ring of many of Stevens' poems of old age threatened by the mordant tooth of time but simultaneously possessed of "a vital assumption," "a blindness cleaned, exclaiming bright sight . . . in a birth of sight" ("The Rock" CP 526).¹⁷ Stevens, independently of any allusion to Santayana, expressed a similar affirmative sentiment in his late poem "An Old Man Asleep," and in his signature line "We say God and the imagination are one" in another poem of old age, "Final Soliloquy of the Interior Paramour." These sentiments might also be seen as resonating with the *visionary eschatology* of Stevens' elegy for the death of his best friend, Henry Church, in "The Owl in the Sarcophagus."

Finally, though in passing here, we should note that Santayana for a time became an unintentional ally of American left-progressive and Marxist cultural critics in his day—and now, perhaps, of various like-minded critics of our day—who defined themselves as "post-romantics." This trajectory, it goes without saying, involved Santayana's penchant for re-focusing the topic of aesthetic and philosophic romanticism into a discourse on cultural politics.¹⁸ Though Santayana came to reject any such progressive agenda, he left his anti-romantic, post-modernity brief on the table. In his trope of "My Host, the World," Santayana disingenuously set himself as capable of philosophizing "under any sky."¹⁹ In this

¹⁷ See also "Prologues to What is Possible" (CP 515), "The World as Meditation" (CP 520), and "St. Armorer's Church From the Outside" (CP 529).

¹⁸ Again the contrast with Wallace Stevens is instructive here. Stevens, in earlier long poems such as "The Man with the Blue Guitar" and "Owl's Clover," actually tilted with left-progressive and Marxist critics of his work. In this venue, Santayana and Stevens again parted company. As proponent of his "new Romanticism," Stevens embarked on his project of writing poetry of "the American sublime." He refused to "play things as they are" as demanded by his leftist progressive critics. His newer, post-*Harmonium* poems collected in *Ideas of Order* (1936), with its signature poem "The Idea of Order at Key West," as well as in *The Man with the Blue Guitar* (1937), rather expressed new glimmerings of an affirmative idealism during the oppressive social atmosphere of the 1920s and 1930s. Examples are "The American Sublime," "Mozart, 1935," and "The Sun This March." *Parts of a World* (1942), which sounded the note of an ascendant poetic liberation in such poems as "The Poems of Our Climate," "The Man on the Dump," and "The Latest Freed Man," followed suit. Gaining momentum in fresh imaginative sensibility, Stevens composed the poems of *Transport to Summer* (1947), which included even more intensive redemptive complexities in "Notes toward a Supreme Fiction" (1942), "Esthétique du mal" (1944), and "Credences of Summer" (1946). He then went further along this trajectory in *Auroras of Autumn* (1950), which included "An Ordinary Evening in New Haven." All these collections followed in the wake of that clash of ideas with the Marxist-realist progressives.

¹⁹ "In the past or in the future, my language and my borrowed knowledge would have been different, but under whatever sky I had been born, since it is the same sky, I should have the

Olympian perspective, he stood in critical judgment of German philosophy, French philosophy, British and American character and opinion, as well as the genteel tradition, English liberty, the last Puritan, and so on—a long list of labels that were the products of *his own* literary imagination. Santayana cultivated his self-image as a philosopher free of any of these cultural identities. (Even the Spanish, he quipped, were not Spanish enough for him.) His detached cultural criticism took the form of a self-styled cosmopolitan image in terms of which he claimed to be able to live and to philosophize under any sky, like an Epicurean deity on Cloud Nine—this is nice work if you can get it!—but in fact his later writings continued to be energized by his idiocentric temperament, which he expressed in tropes of disaffected neutrality ironically combined with an arsenal of cultural criticism.

Santayana's Repression of Emerson

Let me now particularize the discussion by keying on two of the major representative targets of Santayana's cultural criticism, namely, Goethe and Emerson, respectively. (They are both "representative men" in the sense of icons of civilization Emerson developed in his substantial work, *Representative Men* (1850), which included full-scale portraits of Plato, Shakespeare, Swedenborg, Montaigne, Napoleon, and Goethe.) Notwithstanding Santayana's own considerable career accomplishments, it is of critical importance for the responsible historian of ideas to *walk back* Santayana's cultural criticism of these iconic figures so as to resuscitate their significant places in the trans-Atlantic (Goethean, Kantian and post-Kantian) paradigm outlined above. Strategically, Goethe and Emerson stood for the German and American varieties of the paradigm (waves of which were carried on by Walt Whitman, Emily Dickinson, Peirce, James, Stevens, and other key figures), against which Santayana set his classical (Epicurean) worldview. So, the literary as well as philosophic stakes are high here.²⁰

The crux of this consideration will be seen to trace back to Santayana's skeptical Platonism. It is a two-sided problem. On the one hand, Santayana *seems* to have remained on the same page with Goethe and Emerson in promoting "the life of the spirit"—namely, his valuing of the contemplative life—the poetic enjoyment of the qualities found in the realm of essence, notwithstanding that the psyche is weighted in its worldly life. And in broader historical perspective, he *appears* to have shared this aesthetic orientation with many other genuine romantics such as Goethe, Schiller, Schelling, Wordsworth, Emerson, even Nietzsche, and with the poets such as Walt Whitman and Wallace Stevens. In the final analysis, however—as I have suggested above—Santayana self-consciously continued the

same philosophy" (SAF, p. x)—cited as frontispiece in Flamm 2007. See the review of this conference volume: Dilworth 2008.

²⁰ On the literary side, see Porte 2005 and Dilworth 2005, both in Ois 2005. But the philosophic stakes are much higher, as arguably Emerson reprised the Greek Stoic paradigm (of Zeno, Chrysippus, Cleanthes, and the rest) in tandem with strains of post-Kantian objective idealism, whereas Santayana reenacted the rival Hellenistic paradigm of classical Epicureanism.

theoretical line of Schopenhauer, for whom pure contemplation of aesthetic objects constituted a temporary “denial of the will.” Schopenhauer’s famous aestheticism of pure contemplation in Book Three of *The World as Will and Representation* rang pessimistic changes on Kant’s theory of the genius in his *Critique of Judgment*. Santayana bought into Schopenhauer’s metaphysics of art and morals, transmuted into his own bedrock materialism, in terms of which his “life of the spirit” remained an ambivalent doctrine—which is to say, in the logic of his own terms, there is no “life of the spirit”—“spirit” is supervenient on “psyche,” just as “virtue” is supervenient on “pleasure” in the Epicurean account.

Needless to say, the many shades of differences among the above list of genuine philosophic and literary romantics, idealists, and transcendentalists (including Wallace Stevens) has to be parsed and fine-tuned. But they shared the common factor of valorizing the *life of the spirit*. Emerson was a romantic in a trajectory more readily associated with Schelling and Wordsworth, but while tapping into further resonances of Plotinus, Hinduism, and the Persian poets. It remains extremely difficult to pin Emerson’s sense of “Nature,” “the Unattainable, the Flying Perfect,” down to any doctrinal tenet. He was essentially both a *poet and a philosopher* (not just a “philosophical poet”), and he rejected the univocal significations of the “mystics” in favor of the polysemic symbols of imaginative *poiesis*. Emerson’s transcendentalist declaration against the dogmatic mystics preceded Wallace Stevens in its emphasis on the poet’s role in providing endless “notes towards the supreme fiction.”²¹ At any rate, so elusive are the stylistically brilliant writings of Emerson that it is impossible to straitjacket them by a single philosophical bottom line.

In like manner, Goethe’s romanticism, which traces back to the German Enlightenment’s reprisal of Spinoza in new vitalistic terms, is equally saturated by his polymathic and lyrical genius, and resists a single philosophic summation. (Goethe and Emerson each wrote poems on the World-Soul which traces back before Plotinus and the Stoics to Plato’s *Timaeus*.) Goethe’s vitalistic sense of *Natura naturans* professed the *life of the spirit par excellence*. Inscribed in both his poetry and his Nature Studies—*Dichtung und Wahrheit*—it eluded any of its contemporary dogmatic frameworks, exhibiting rather his own contention as to the primacy of *poiesis* over philosophic dialectics (including, most notably, that

²¹ Emerson in “The Poet,”:

But the quality of the imagination is to flow, and not to freeze. . . . Here is the difference betwixt the poet and the mystic, that the last nails a symbol to one sense, which was a true sense for a moment, but soon becomes old and false. For all symbols are fluxional; all language is vehicular and transitive, and is good, as ferries and horses are, for conveyance, not as farms and houses are, for homestead. Mysticism consists in the mistake of an accidental and individual symbol for an universal one . . . And the mystic must be steadily told,—All that you say is as true without the tedious use of that symbol as with it. Let us have a little algebra, instead of this trite rhetoric.—universal signs, instead of these village symbols,—and we shall both be gainers. The history of hierarchies seems to show, that all religious error consisted in making symbols too stark and solid, and, at last, nothing but an excess of the organ of language. (Emerson 363-364)

of his neighbor, Hegel's) and even over the "regulative only" *a priori* restrictions of Kant's Third *Critique*.

Re-enter Santayana. Santayana appears to have first gone off the rails by pinning Goethe and Emerson down, making "doctrinal" and indeed "absolute egoists" out of them so as to fit his anti-romantic and anti-modernity narrative. As we have seen, on occasion he even joined them at the hip in the phrase "Emerson, the puritan Goethe."²²

Now, we should note here as well that the story of Santayana's treatment of Emerson requires a cameo appearance of the novelist, Henry James Jr. Santayana, who never saw Emerson in person, began writing on him as early as 1886. In a school competition under the pseudonym of Victor Cousin, his essay "The Optimism of Ralph Waldo Emerson" depicted Emerson as a "champion of cheerfulness" and "prophet of a fair-weather religion." The textual evidence shows the young 23-year-old Santayana worked with Emerson's three essays, "Compensation" (1841), "Experience" (1844), "Considerations By the Way" (1860), and the poem "Brahma" (1857).²³ From this evidence it is impossible to say whether he took into account Emerson's first great work, *Nature* (1836), his several volumes of poetry, or such celebrated essays as "The Method of Nature," "History," "Self-Reliance," "The Over-Soul," "Circles," "Nature," "The Poet," "Fate," "Power," "Beauty," and "Illusion," "Society and Solitude," "Poetry and Imagination," "The Natural History of Intellect," to name just a few of the Emerson's prose pieces which, together with as many celebrated poems, were well appreciated at this time. This school essay, however, became the precedent for his treatment of Emerson in *IPR* (1900), where he caricatured Emerson as a "dilettantish mystic" and "cosmic optimist," and again in "The Genteel Tradition in American Philosophy" (1911) where Emerson reenters as a cultural target in Santayana's literary construction of the "Genteel tradition."

The consistent and cumulative damage done by Santayana's curmudgeonly treatment of Emerson has been highlighted by Stanley Cavell:

Of all the moments in the history of what I am calling the repression of Emerson in American philosophy, none seems to me more decisive, apart from the professionalization of philosophy itself, than Santayana's marking him as a pillar of the Genteel Tradition. . . . What interests me here is that when, in "The Genteel Tradition," Santayana describes Emerson as "a cheery,

²² *Places*, p. 178:

Santayana: "The young Emerson, a sort of Puritan Goethe, the Emerson of Nature, before he slipped into transcendentalism and moralism and complacency in mediocrity, in order to flatter his countrymen and indirectly to flatter himself" ((PP 178)). Outrageous, unsubstantiated, sentences such as these, so many years removed from his earlier career in America, witness Santayana's continued failure ever to come to terms with Emerson's genius—namely, the full range of his prose and poetry articulated over 40 years! Santayana's writings were often on automatic pilot.

²³Santayana's youthful 1886 essay is currently available in Ballowe (71-84). In May of 1903, on stage with William and Henry James Jr., Santayana delivered a professorial address at Harvard during Emerson Memorial Week, "Emerson's Poems Proclaim the Divinity of Nature, with Freedom as His Profoundest Ideal," which also appears in Ballowe (84-96).

childlike soul, impervious to the evidence of evil," he does not show (there or anywhere else I know that mentions Emerson) any better understanding of Emerson's so-called optimism than, say, his contemporary H. L. Mencken shows of Nietzsche's so-called pessimism—he merely retails, beautifully, of course, but essentially without refinement, the most wholesale view there is of him.

In recent years this charge of "cheeriness" has been under attack by, among others, Stephen Whicher and Harold Bloom, and a more sophisticated picture has emerged according to which Emerson's early optimism is tempered by a mature or more realistic acceptance of life's limits and ravages, signaled most perfectly in "Fate," the opening essay of *The Conduct of Life*, published two decades after his first volume of essays. (Cavell 254)

Cavell's charge against Santayana's early skullduggery with respect to Emerson's alleged "cheery optimism" is essentially correct, and, I suggest, can be supplemented on two scores.

The first of these requires us to realize that Santayana's repeated interpretation of Emerson in his school essay (1886) and in *Interpretations of Poetry and Religion* (1900) in fact retails literary images traceable to Henry James. James had his own agenda in impugning Emerson and the American transcendentalists (Porte 2001, 608). In his novel *The Bostonians* (1886) he characterized feminist transcendentalists (such as Margaret Fuller and Elizabeth Palmer Peabody, colleagues of Emerson) in negative terms. He focused directly on Emerson in a review of James Eliot Cabot's two volume *Memoir of Ralph Waldo Emerson* (1887). This review, appearing in *Critical Portraits* (1888) extended the theme of his novel. The review begins by featuring Emerson as the "final," and "perfect flower of seeds of patriarchal rigidity going back through the generations of his Puritan ancestry." This heritage, James argued, transparently suffused Emerson's character and his writings. And in this context James bought into a contemporary strain of criticism Emerson's supposed optimism:

There he could dwell with ripe unconsciousness of evil which is one of the most beautiful signs by which we know him. His early writings are full of quaint animadversion upon the vices of the place and time, but there is something charmingly vague, light and general in the arraignment.

Stylishly but disingenuously, Henry James continued:

We feel that his first impressions were gathered in a community from which misery and extravagance, and either extreme, of any sort, were equally absent. What the life of New England fifty years ago offered to the observer was the common lot, in a kind of achromatic picture, without particular intensifications.

In such armchair-sketched observations, he glossed over Emerson's own literature of personal and philosophic grief as expressed in such essays as "The Tragic," "Experience," and "Fate," and in deeply affecting poems memorializing the death of his first wife (Ellen Tucker, 1831), his two younger brothers (Edward

1834, Charles 1836), and his five year old son Waldo (1842), as well as his engaged commitments to abolition and other critical issues.²⁴

Slightly to digress, Henry James's animus against the American transcendentalists came out in another context in his remarks on Thomas Wentworth Higginson (1823-1911), a minister and civil rights advocate who published a full-length biography of Emerson's beloved colleague, and co-editor between 1842-44 of the Transcendentalist journal, the *Dial*, the feminist Margaret Fuller, and who became the eventual editor of the first edition of the poems of Emily Dickinson in 1890. In 1862 Higginson had taken command of the first battalion of black soldiers to do battle for the North. Henry James's own brother Wilky fought in the 54th Massachusetts—the most famous black regiment—and was wounded in the massacre of Fort Wagner, in Charleston Bay. Yet James, who sat out the carnage in Newport, Rhode Island, years later characterized Higginson's activities as "agitations on behalf of everything, almost, but especially of the negroes and the ladies."²⁵

Now, however, a decade later, in "The Genteel Tradition in American Philosophy" (1911) Santayana brazenly *praised* Henry James for his "classical" criticism of Emerson and "the genteel tradition." James had his own reasons for his youthful revolt against Emerson.²⁶ The teachable lesson here is that the young

²⁴ Emerson also had an arduous life on the road in pre- and post-Civil War years. After leaving the ministry and joining the lyceum circuit, between 1833 and 1881 he gave nearly 1,500 lectures, traveling by rail, horse-and-buggy, and other bone-shaking conveyances, to hundred of towns in more than 20 states and Canada. These tours, which lasted from November to March, involved often hard feats of traveling and endurance. He came to dread private hospitality, fearing to be assigned the unheated spare bedroom. "This climate and people," he wrote from Milwaukee one February, "are a new test for the wares of a man of letters. All his thin, watery matter freezes; 'tis only the smallest portion of alcohol that remains good" (Wayne 2010, 17, 85).

²⁵ According to Charles R. Anderson, "Introduction" to *Henry James: The Bostonians* (1984), pp.7-31, James disliked the feminists and that seems also to reference his dislike for the people around Emerson. Anderson provides readings of the novel's characters' resemblances in real life which caused a controversy at the time. Even Henry's brother William James questioned the close resemblance of the characters of *The Bostonians* with real life persons.

²⁶ Santayana, "The Genteel Tradition in American Philosophy," lecture in California, August 25, 1911, published in WD (1913): "Mr. Henry James has done it [i.e. freed himself from the Genteel tradition] by adopting the point of view of the outer world, and by turning the genteel tradition, as he turns everything else, into a subject-matter for analysis. For him it is a curious habit of mind, intimately comprehended, to be compared with other habits of mind, also well known to him. Thus he has overcome the genteel tradition in the classic way, by understanding it. William James. . . eluded the genteel tradition in the romantic way, by continuing it into its opposite" (WD 54). Santayana's first literary reference to the genteel tradition is: "The American Will inhabits the sky-scraper; the American Intellect inhabits the colonial mansion. The one is the sphere of the American man; the other, at least predominantly, of the American woman. The one is all aggressive enterprise; the other is all genteel tradition." Later the chief fountains of this tradition he traced to "Calvinism and transcendentalism. Both were living fountains; but to keep them alive they required, one an agonized conscience, and the other a radical subjective criticism of knowledge." Santayana depicts

Santayana's account of Emerson, which remained with him all his life, had its provenance in the animus of the expatriate American (his brother William James said "country-less"), Henry James.

The second of these considerations of Santayana's mis-reading of Emerson's "cheery optimism" concerns his overlooking not only Emerson's "Fate" (1860)—one of his most powerful essays that drew inspiration from Schelling's *Investigation into the Essence of Human Freedom* (1809)—and the impact of which can even be traced from Emerson to Nietzsche's early writings on "History and Fate"—but also his neglect of Emerson's essay "The Tragic" of the early 1840s. "The Tragic" (1839-40 and 1844) was Emerson's "House of Pain" lecture that went through various redactions and formed the background not only of his essays "Experience" of 1844 and "Fate" and "Illusions" of 1860, but also of several of his heartfelt poems which dealt with the series of personal losses Emerson experienced in the death of his first wife Ellen (d. 1831, "To Ellen, At the South," 1847), the death of his two younger brothers, Edward (d. 1834) and Charles (d. 1836) in his poem "Dirge" (1845, 1847), and his long poem "Threnody" (1847) on the death of his beloved firstborn son Waldo (in 1842). The 1850 shipwreck drowning of Margaret Fuller off the shore of Fire Island, New York also devastated Emerson.

The evidence is that Emerson deeply experienced the fatalities of life in the various stages of his career (Arvin 37-58). Moreover, he philosophically addressed it very much in the spirit of Schelling's mid-career writings which had their point of departure in Schelling's deeply felt personal loss of his first wife. In both cases we see the genius, the representative of human nature, sublimating nature's cruel fates into philosophic coin.

Santayana's suppressive picture of Emerson, indebted to his mentor Henry James, needs to be understood for the self-serving polemics that it was. Indeed, in impugning Emerson's philosophic credentials by featuring him as a "cheery" icon of both Puritanism and transcendentalism, Henry James and his protégé the young Santayana, had different agendas for their own careers. Yet they both retailed strains of interpretation derivative from the critical refrains of Emerson's Concord neighbor, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and of Emerson's friend, Henry James Sr.—interpretations later repeated by Santayana's Harvard student T. S. Eliot who, also self-referentially in terms of his "waste land" poetic agenda, sought to dismiss Emerson. As mentioned above, the left-progressives of the 1920s and 1930s—such as Van Wyck Brooks, who like Eliot had also been Santayana's student at Harvard—eventually co-opted his remarks on the "genteel tradition" for their own political purposes.

The damage was already done. Henry James and Santayana were on record as damning Emerson, ostensibly lauding his "post-Puritan piety" while simultaneously downgrading him for his "cheery optimism" and for *not* having "a distinct

Calvinism and transcendentalism as opposites, but says he agrees with the second as a method. Earlier he stated that Emerson, Poe, and Hawthorne evaded the genteel tradition. He goes on to depict Emerson as in a "cheery, child-like soul, impervious to the evidence of evil," and who "had no system."

literary style” (as Henry James outrageously charged!), nor a coherent worldview (as Santayana charged!).²⁷

However—as I have observed above—the philosophic issue of interpretation implicated adjudication of Santayana’s own skeptical materialism. In his later-phase theoretical career, Santayana articulated his ontological categories of the realms of being which involved his constant oscillation between the two poles of matter and spirit. His realm of spirit played the twin (Epicurean) roles of supplying the transcripts of animal action and of care-free flights of the contemplative imagination. *Mutatis mutandis*, these polarities might be thought to correspond to Emerson’s binary of “power and fate.” Power for Emerson connoted the active forces of self-reliant intellect, aesthetic imagination, and moral character, as these could play *productive* roles in transforming the brutal resistances and random contingencies of the physical world. (The seeds of this view trace all the way back to Plato’s *Timaeus*, and have a nearer provenance in the cosmic “potencies” of spirit in Schelling’s writings, and return again in Peirce’s sense of the human mind’s connatural participation in the cosmic process.) But the point here is that the apparent symmetry between Emerson’s and Santayana’s polarities soon dissipates.

From his earliest writings Emerson set his *affirmative* humanism within the proliferating polarities of an “ecstatic” Nature (“The Method of Nature” [1839], Emerson 121). *Power* connoted his central transcendentalist teaching of the affinity—pro-ontological connaturality—of the human mind and nature, therefore of the human mind’s “consanguineous” ability thanks to its “congenial” evolutionary inheritances to discover and co-operate with the positive energies of Nature. Emerson’s theory of “interpollent” (interfusing) inspiration of mind and

²⁷ Here we should consider the countervailing judgments of Dewey and Peirce. Dewey hailed Emerson as “the American Plato.” Peirce wrote of “the ‘now undisputed greatness of Ralph Waldo Emerson’ who is ‘one of several enduring monuments to the shame of the city of Boston. We cannot hear the name of Athens without thinking of the death of Socrates: but we ought not to forget the golden crown it voted to Zeno the originator of the Stoic philosophy, nor the many other encouragements that the mass of its citizens extended to high thinking’” (Robins Catalog, *MS 1494*, c. 1905). William James appears to have directly had his younger brother’s negative characterization of Emerson’s literary style in mind when in his Address at the Emerson Centenary at Harvard 1903 (published by the Riverside Press for the Social Circle in Concord, June 1903), he wrote:

This is Emerson’s revelation. The point of any pen can be an epitome of reality, the commonest person’s act, if genuinely actuated, can lay hold on eternity. This vision is the head-spring of all his outpourings; and it is for this truth, given to no other literary artist to express in such penetratingly persuasive tones, that posterity will reckon him a prophet, and perhaps neglecting other pages, piously turn to those that convey this meaning. His life was one long conversation with the invisible divine, expressing itself through individuals and particulars:—“So nigh is grandeur to our dust, so near to God is man!”

. . . His words to this effect are certain to be quoted and extracted more and more as time goes on, and to take their place among the Scriptures of humanity. ‘Gainst death and all oblivious enmity shall you pace forth,’ beloved Master. As long as our English language lasts, men’s hearts will be cheered and their souls strengthened and liberated by the noble and musical pages with which you have enriched it.

nature traces back through such writers as Goethe, Schiller, and Schelling to Kant's articulation of the concept of the genius in the fine arts, as well as forwards to informing Peirce's pragmatism and pragmatism.

This development was again the trans-Atlantic paradigm I have outlined above. Spelled out in the radiating circles of Emerson's text, his doctrine of the life and potencies of *poetic spirit* can be read to encompass Santayana's dualistic doctrine of the substrative basis of "matter" and the "spasmodic" and inefficacious "episodes" of consciousness (SAF 273) that emerge from it. Thus, while Santayana's formulation of the role of the poet in *The Sense of Beauty* and *Interpretations of Poetry and Religion* appears to correlate with Emerson on the *poet's sublimations* of contingent existence, Emerson framed his binary of fate and power in *affirmative ontological* terms, whereas Santayana did so in dis-ontological Schopenhauerian assumptions, transmuted into the terms of his Epicurean hedonistic aestheticism.

Already in his maiden work, *Nature* (1836), Emerson framed the debate between idealism and materialism head-on. In "The Transcendentalist" (1842) and "Nominalist and Realist" (1844), he observed that idealistic *and* materialistic world-views are natural human dispositions; but (precedent to William James) he concluded that the former is to be preferred for its power truly to valorize the higher ontological potencies of the imagination.²⁸ Stevens, we saw, hewed to this Emersonian line.

For his part, Santayana, holding fast to his deflationary doctrine of the ontological inefficacy of spirit, repeatedly sought to impugn idealism for its "pathetic fallacy," namely, its projection of human consciousness and emotion onto the substrative nature of things. But it should be noted that in *Three Philosophical Poets* he also characterized the "naturalistic conception of things," which he found paradigmatically expressed in Lucretius's *De Rerum Natura*, as "a great work of imagination,—greater, I think, than any dramatic or moral mythology."²⁹ The issue, then, becomes one of kinds and degrees of imagination, and more specifically of the ontological vs. dis-ontological merits of the idealistic and materialistic imaginations, respectively. Their relation, according to Emerson, is asymmetrical. The materialist—Santayana is the perfect example—can be *on occasion* an idealist, but the idealist cannot reciprocate and be a materialist. In Emerson's words in "The Transcendentalist": "Every materialist will be an idealist; but an idealist can never go backward to be a materialist" (Emerson 1983, 193). Santayana's imagination was professedly deflationary in the classical Epicurean sense. My argument has been that Stevens' career-text traced a likeminded trajectory, prioritizing the ontological nobility of the higher, Emersonian, imagination.³⁰

Allow me my own final adjudication of these issues. I have noted that Emerson's onto-poetic idealism of the consanguinity of mind and nature carried over

²⁸ Emerson (1839), "The Transcendentalist," in *Essays and Lectures*, 1983, 193.

²⁹Here we might ponder Wallace Stevens who writes "It is not the individual alone that indulges in the pathetic fallacy. It is the race"

³⁰See Stevens's 1941 prose essay, "The Noble Rider and the Sound of Words" (NA 1-36), which can be read as ingeniously running against the grain of Santayana's skeptical Platonism.

Goethe's and Schelling's *Naturphilosophie* that in due course had its brilliant reformulation in the metaphysical writings of C. S. Peirce, who acknowledged Schelling's and Emerson's influences on his own objective idealism.³¹ Considering the issues in this perspective, I submit, Santayana's idea of the realm of matter essentially consisted in a descriptive phenomenology of "the field of action" in the intentionality of "animal faith." His field of dynamic action falls under Peirce's secondness category of the three irreducibly compresent, co-valent, categories of (1) firstness as spontaneous feeling (chance, randomness, novelty), (2) secondness as resistant, physically and psychological determinate, alterity, and (3) thirdness (continuity, growth, evolution). Peirce's three categories are anthropomorphic and cosmomorphic, which is to say, symmetrically subjective and objective. Santayana, like Hume, does not have a viable categorization of thirdness. His materialism did not, and could not, refute Emerson or Peirce. Animal faith and

³¹ Charles Sanders Peirce, in one of his most significant metaphysical essays, "The Law of Mind, referring first to his theory of spontaneous variation in nature, which he classified under the phenomenological rubric of Firstness, wrote:

I have given by showing that *tychism* must give birth to an evolutionary cosmology, in which all the regularities of nature and of mind are regarded as products of growth, and to a Schelling-fashioned idealism which holds matter to be mere specialized and partially deadened mind.

Peirce went on to acknowledge that his system had its provenance in the atmosphere of transcendentalism he had breathed as a young man:

I may mention, for the benefit of those who are curious in studying mental biographies that I was born and reared in the neighborhood of Concord—I mean in Cambridge—at the time when Emerson, Hedge, and their friends were disseminating the ideas that they had caught from Schelling, and Schelling from Plotinus, from Boehm, and from God knows what minds stricken with the monstrous mysticism of the East. But the atmosphere of Cambridge held many an antiseptic against Concord transcendentalism; and I am not conscious of having contracted any of that virus. Nevertheless, it is probable that some cultured bacilli, some benignant form of the disease was implanted in my soul, unawares, and that now, after long incubation, it comes to the surface, modified by mathematical conceptions and by training in physical investigations. (Peirce [1892] 1992, 1: 312-333)

The trail of transmission of ideas from Emerson to Peirce goes back to 1870, when we can presume that Peirce was well apprised of the contents of Emerson's "The Natural History of Intellect." As a step toward graduate education, the new young president of Harvard, Charles Eliot, took an existing program called University Lectures and reorganized it into two sequences of lectures, each running a full year, and costing one hundred fifty dollars, the equivalent of a year's undergraduate education. These series of courses ran sequentially. There were seven lecture courses in the philosophy series; besides Emerson, the other lecturers were Francis Bowen, John Fiske, James E. Cabot, Frederic Henry Hedge, George Fisher, and the young Charles S Peirce. Emerson was next to last; he gave three lectures a week starting April 26, under the title "The Natural History of Intellect" (Richardson 562-63). Emerson gave sixteen lectures between April 26 and June 3. Bowen led off on seventeenth-century philosophy, followed by John Fiske on Positivism, and Peirce on the British logicians. Cabot and Hedge came next with roughly concurrent lectures, Cabot's on Kant, Hedge's on theism, pantheism, and atheism. Fisher on Stoicism was the last. Emerson was paid \$8.75 for each of his sixteen lectures (Rusk 442).

animal action remain psychologicistic descriptions of pragmatic behavior, but fall short of satisfying the theoretical issues connected with Emerson's and Peirce's considerations of the connatural "conduct of life" in regards to the scientific, ethical, and aesthetic habit-formations of nature and mind. While his theoretical lance tilted against this core doctrine of transcendentalism and objective idealism, Santayana's "modest Epicurean humanism" left spirit's "episodes" of intuition of essences as "spasmodic and wind-blown." (SAF 273)³²

In the forthcoming third part, I will show that Santayana's repression of Emerson is deeply enmeshed in his treatment of Goethe, a writer whose influence on Emerson was profound.

DAVID A. DILWORTH

State University of New York at Stony Brook

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³² For a speculative approach to this adjudication of Santayana's doctrine, see Peirce's "Seven Systems of Metaphysics" (Peirce 1998, 2:161-162, 181-182); based on his three categories, Peirce's "metaphysico-cosmical elements" arguably lead to the classification of Santayana's fundamental *phenomenological binary* of immaterial *essence* and material *existence* as a species of what Peirce called *moderate nominalism*.

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Exchange on Propositions and Truth

Last year's issue contained an article by Richard K Atkins, "Santayana on Propositions." The issue also had commentary by Glenn Tiller, part of which addressed Atkins's article. In the course of preparing both the article and commentary for publication Richard Rubin sent Glenn Tiller some observations of his own in an email message. This message prompted an exchange, which we thought might be of interest to the general community of Santayana readers. We then invited Richard Atkins to send his reply to the exchange, which he did, and that reply is included in what follows. In editing this exchange for publication, we allowed each participant to alter phrasing and to delete whatever was irrelevant or unnecessary, but did not allow alteration or addition of content, as we wanted to preserve the sense that this was an exchange of letters and not a fully worked out article. A clarifying footnote could correct an assertion or offer supplementary material. Although there is much that could be said in response to what Atkins has said here, the editors have decided, for this year, to let him have the last word.

From: "Richard M. Rubin" <rmrubin@acm.org>

Date: Wednesday, October 17, 2018 at 5:00 PM

To: "Tiller, Glenn" <Glenn.Tiller@tamucc.edu>

Subject: Why I never get anything done

Dear Glenn,

I have finally been able to look at your comments on Atkins. I remember when I read the first version out loud in Savannah, it struck me that here is a breath of clarity and scholarly maturity blowing from warm Corpus Christi to icy Savannah. That's still my general assessment, but in reading over your comments on Atkins, I found something rather puzzling. I am not asking you to revise anything. It was just curious that I had a different take than either you or Atkins on the subject of unexemplified propositions and I thought, while it was fresh in my mind, to call it to your attention.

Before I say more, I'll tell you a story. Herbert Lamm was a colleague of Richard McKeon at the University of Chicago. Together they taught most of the courses in the Committee on the Analysis of Ideas and the Study of Methods, a committee caricatured in Pirsig's *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*. In my fourth year, I took a two-quarter course with Lamm on Hegel and Santayana. (I'd read *The Sense of Beauty* in one of McKeon's courses my second year, but this was the first time I had to tackle one of his more comprehensive works—in this case, *The Life of Reason*.) Lamm was a genial, jowly, rotund, sexagenarian (quite ancient to me then, but younger than I am now). He would throw questions out to the class which would be followed by a long meditative silence and if anyone ventured to attempt an answer, it was never good enough.

Before I go on, I need to tell you about another person, Steve Freer. Freer was in my class and a noticeable figure on campus. He was tall, perhaps 6'3", and thin, with shoulder length dark hair. He wore dark clothing and walked—no, strode—across campus accompanied by a small dog. He seldom spoke and seemed to stare

intently at whatever he happened to be looking at. In those days, he might easily have been stoned out of his mind most of the time, but I was not close enough to him to know.

Freer attended Lamm's Hegel class (as we called it, because Santayana was playing second fiddle) and never said anything. Never, that is, until sometime in the second quarter. In the midst of class, he suddenly spoke. It went something like this:

—We talk and talk and talk about this stuff—all these ideas. But what does it have to do with everything going on around us—with all the stuff that's happening?

—Well, Lamm responded, to begin to answer your question I'd have to know some more about what you mean. Hegel keeps pushing us to be as concrete as possible. Can you be more concrete?

So Freer said, —I guess I prefer to be diffuse.

—That, said Lamm, is an empirical report with which I cannot argue.

Freer never spoke again in class.

Lamm made use of the difference between describing what's on your mind and asserting something about the state of affairs. This difference manifests itself in the habit that some people have of preceding their remarks with "I think." Someone who does this tells us something about his or her state of mind, not about the state of the world, even though the latter is usually what is intended. In philosophy and criticism, we try to expunge this habit. We urge students to put forth their opinions forcefully, without warnings or hesitation. In other circles, it is considered impolite not to acknowledge that the ideas you are expressing are only your opinion. My inclination is with the expungers and I find that the confusion of external and internal reports underlies some of the confusion in Atkins's analysis of propositions.

My naïve view is that when Santayana wrote that truth is "the sum of all true propositions," he meant that statement to be equivalent to saying that the realm of truth consists of those essences that have ever or will ever be embodied by the material world or that have been intuited by some conscious mind. Looked at that way a proposition is exemplified whenever what it asserts occurs. In that sense, an unexemplified proposition is a false one.

Atkins, by assuming that propositions are verbal descriptions makes an exemplified proposition into one that has been thought, spoken, or written. This leads him to wonder whether a true proposition that no one has ever thought of belongs to the realm of truth.

The answer is simplified by making a distinction between the content of the proposition and the fact of its being entertained. Some people say that they worship the flying spaghetti monster (FSM) as a way of ridiculing religious belief. The proposition that the FSM monster exists— $\exists x (Fx)$ —is false, and therefore not part of the realm of truth. But there is another proposition—that people have conceived of the notion of the flying spaghetti monster—which is true and therefore belongs in that hallowed realm.

Atkins's explanation that Santayana can exclude unexemplified true propositions from the realm of truth because there are many common uses of the predicate 'is true' (like logical and mathematical truths) that he excludes from his truth realm is clearly a copout.

In your commentary, you adopt Atkins's notion of a proposition as a verbal construction, but then argue that truth cannot be applied to a proposition until it is not only thought of, but believed in—that is, judged to be true. Interpreted that way, an unexemplified true proposition is impossible, because until it is rendered in a judgment, a proposition is neither true nor false. The passage that you quote from RT seems to say that it "can be true or false only if it reports or contradicts some part of the truth: and in order to do this it must be other than an inert essence." But the antecedent of 'it' at RT 42 is not 'proposition' but 'opinion.'

Notice that those satirists do not actually believe in the FSM, they are merely putting forth the idea that it might exist or that somebody might worship it. That's what's Santayana meant by an inert essence. They are merely entertaining the opinion the FSM exists without actually holding it. They are not judging that opinion to be correct. But the proposition that the FSM exists is false even if no one judges it to be true.

So, if I read this right, you both have a quantum theory of propositions in that the binary status of a proposition is in limbo until some event happens. For Atkins, a proposition can be true, but is not part of the realm of truth until someone articulates it. For Tiller, a proposition is neither true nor false until someone judges that it is true—just as Schrodinger's cat is neither dead nor alive until someone looks in the box.

Maybe I am way off on this. Perhaps a proposition is an assertion about the relationship of a subject and a predicate and therefore must be put into that form before it can be a proposition. I think (damn, I'm doing it) you were right to start by saying that Atkins took Santayana literally when he was being metaphorical. Atkins confuses Santayana's analysis of grammar (RT 33) with an analysis of propositions. So, you were right to criticize Atkins's concept of unexemplified propositions, but I would have taken it in a different direction, which I think is simpler and more straightforward.

We can carry this discussion over into next year. It shows that the nuances of interpretation are challenging and may not have a final resolution.

Richard

On 10/31/2018 1:52 PM, Tiller, Glenn wrote:

Hello Richard,

I finally have some time and mental space to reply to your interesting email. Thanks for sending your thoughts. I appreciate the anecdotes and commentary. When I first read your email I said "you put your finger on a problem" and I still think it is true. However, I am unsure if it is a problem for my interpretation or for Santayana's realm of truth. I incline toward the latter, at least for now. For several years I have thought that there is a problem with Santayana's realm of truth. I

have raised the issue before (in *Under Any Sky*¹) and have been criticized for my criticism (in Brodricks's book, *The Ethics of Detachment in Santayana's Philosophy*, for example). To get straight to the point: from all I can gather from Santayana, neither a proposition or an opinion can be true of the world until it is asserted. If essences are intrinsically inert, they can have no indexicality and cannot be true until taken up in thought and discourse. In my view, this leaves the whole realm of truth unanchored, so to speak, and there is nothing to tell the realm of truth apart from the rest of the realm of essence. Sprigge had similar concerns, but he went full idealist and that took care of the problem of truth for him. The only way—at this time—that I can see a way out of this problem is for Santayana to adopt an Einsteinian view of time. This might be fine and would fit with much of what he says about time, truth, and Spinoza's view of truth.

Let me know your opinion and/or your contemplated but not asserted thoughts on this issue, if you get a chance.

Yours,

Glenn

From: "Richard M. Rubin" <rmrubin@acm.org

Date: Tuesday, November 6, 2018 at 12:13 AM

To: "Tiller, Glenn" <Glenn.Tiller@tamucc.edu>

Subject: If a tree falls in the forest and there is no one there to say so, is the proposition that it fell part of the realm of truth?

Glenn,

I found my copy of *Under Any Sky* and reread your article. I now see that you have observed something most curious about the realm of truth, though I would describe it differently. I think of it as the paradox of the realm of truth. The other three realms delineate aspects of being that have no such paradox. The oddity is that even though the realm of truth is independent of human or animal perceptions (except, of course, for the fact of those perceptions) it is only a realm worth distinguishing because animals or humans being have an interest in the truth.

Having noted that, we might consider other possible sub-realms: the realm of beauty, for example, or the realm of goodness. These are also infinite realms that, like the realm of truth, are subsets of the realm of essence. We could even conjure up an unlimited number of other possible realms. The realm of chocolate, for example, would include elements from all four of Santayana's the realms. It would include every possible taste of every variety of chocolate — the various percentages of cocoa butter and sugar; the various flavor additives: orange chocolate, chili chocolate, espresso chocolate; white, dark, and milk chocolate; the flavor of every item in a Whitman sampler box. It would include the chemical constituents of chocolate, the biology and evolutionary history of the cacao bean, the human history of the various ways to process and distribute chocolate. Add every instance of every human and animal chewing and swallowing of chocolate. Add the physiology of chocolate digestion. Add each moment of longing for and

¹ See Tiller 2007.

avoidance of chocolate (my grandmother used to say that chocolate was her nemesis).

We could go on and on, as, yes, it, too, is an infinite realm.

So, what's special about truth? Compare it with the realm of beauty or goodness (or even chocolate). The elements of these other realms depend on human interest for their content, whereas truth, having been conceived and even pursued with diligence, does not depend on our likes and dislikes. It is what it is.

The issue is why is truth one of the four big realms. Requiring that propositions be entertained and believed in order to be true or false seems to invent a problem where none exists. The RT is the "sum of all true propositions" Surely in that formulation GS did not mean only those propositions that someone once thought or said to be true.

Richard

On 11/10/2018 10:45 AM, Tiller, Glenn wrote:

Hi Richard,

Thanks for this. I agree with you when you say "Surely in that formulation GS did not mean only those propositions that someone once thought or said to be true." The problem, for me, is that I do not see how this is possible given what he says in RT. You know the citations I refer to. Truth needs to be ontologically distinguished from the rest of the realm of essence if it is to have being independent of mind. Again, the only way I can see this being done is by adopting an Einsteinian view of time. This would provide truth with an "ontological anchor" in the same way that spirit is anchored in matter for its reality (though he sometimes flirts with the notion of a disembodied spirit). I need to look more closely at GS's view of time. My "solution" may well be what he already accepts, since it is in line with Spinoza's view of truth. But I have not sorted it all out.

I suppose the problem is pressing, for me, since I do not take his categories to be *merely* conceptual. I take it that they are also affirmed as types of reality—types of *being* as RB title suggests. And didn't Santayana comment that the RT is partly "senile"? (LGS to Daniel Corey, 1 July 1937) But which part?

Yours,

Glenn

From: "Richard M. Rubin" <rmrubin@acm.org>

Date: Sunday, November 11, 2018 at 1:22 PM

To: "Tiller, Glenn" <Glenn.Tiller@tamucc.edu>

Subject: Re: If a tree falls in the forest and there is no one there to say so, is the proposition that it fell part of the realm of truth?

Glenn,

This exchange is most interesting. We should consider publishing some version of it in next year's *Bulletin*. I confess I do not understand what is bothering you about the RT. A sign of this lack of perspicacity is that I have no clear notion of

how an Einsteinian view of time would solve the problem. I get a clue from the outside when you write, "I do not take his categories to be *merely* conceptual." It appears that you have some gut sense that truth has to have some form of existence; even though, as an infinite portion of the greater infinity of the realm of essence, it has no existence. You can't seem accept that there is a difference between being and existence. The categories of essence and truth are Santayana's inventions, but they are not merely conceptual in that, once they have been defined, anyone who understands them can see how they apply to the world. You can't deny that matter is always found in some form. It is obvious that people have ideas and perceptions. But that ontological observation does not make the two non-existential categories of Santayana the only two worth discriminating.

Richard McKeon's Carus lecture was entitled *Being, Existence, and That Which Is*.² The title suggests that the three terms, which may be synonymous in one way of looking at it, may also have quite different meanings in another. Using those three terms and Santayana's categories we can distinguish three levels of being. *Being* refers to anything that might come into reality in any way, which would include things imagined that don't exist, and even ideas never thought of. *Existence* refers to everything that has existed, exists now, or will exist (I am using it to mean the same as reality). *That which is* refers only to whatever exists now. Sprigge seemed to be hung up on the distinction between that which is and existence. Perhaps your reason for invoking Einsteinian time is that two nows might be said to exist simultaneously, whatever that might mean. Santayana does not solve the problem by saying that there is no universal present moment throughout the universe (another way of saying two different present moments might exist at the same time). He is silent on that matter, except that he does express some doubt of the Einsteinian world view in his essay on Einstein. For Santayana, different moments, say in a person's lifetime or a nation's history, not only persist existentially in the traces they leave in memory and the physical world, but also abide together in the eternal realm of truth.

Richard

On 11/12/2018 11:08 AM, Tiller, Glenn wrote:

Richard,

I like to think I grasp the distinction between existence and essence, though I am a fallibilist. Yet that distinction, if I understand it, is not at the root of the problem, for me. However, I think you are in the zone when you say I have the "gut sense that truth has to have some form of existence". I don't want to say truth exists in the way matter exists, but I do want to know what the ontological *difference* is that separates truth from essence. I once put this question to Kerr-Lawson in the

² It wasn't his 1969 Carus Lecture. That lecture was called *Facts, Categories, and Experience* and has not been published. "Being, Existence, and That Which Is" is the title of a McKeon essay published in *The Review of Metaphysics* (McKeon 1960). McKeon's interpretation of the three concepts is different from the one I derive from Santayana. Nevertheless, his essay is worth pondering for future discussions of the topic of this exchange. RMR

Transactions number dedicated to him (Tiller 2009). I asked (to paraphrase) “Suppose the entire universe was annihilated. Wouldn’t it be true that it existed? If so, what distinguishes the eternal essences that are truths of the annihilated universe from all other essences?” His reply was “Nothing [in the realm of essence]... We ought to be looking to the realm of truth and not the realm of essence” (Kerr-Lawson 2009, 627-28). This reply, in my view, begs the question (in the original meaning of “beg the question”).

No doubt the truth is worth distinguishing in our thoughts as a concept, if we have a practical interest in the world. But I take it that truth is truth whether or not we take any notice of it at all. Truth is more than a useful concept. But this leads us back to square one. What separates eternal truth from eternal essence? I agree with Kerr-Lawson that it can’t be anything in the realm of essence. And it does not seem right to say truth only becomes “the realm of truth” as an ontological category because of mind: that would make truth mind-dependent in bad way (in more than one bad way). Hence, the suggestion that the realm of truth is distinguished from essence because truth is “anchored” to matter which exists all at once in an eternal “now” in the way Spinoza and others have suggested. I still don’t think this fully resolves the problem since, for Santayana, and not for Spinoza, matter is contingent. This marks an asymmetry between the necessary eternality of truth and contingently existing matter.

Glenn

From: "Richard M. Rubin" <rmrubin@acm.org>
Date: Friday, February 8, 2019 at 3:04 PM
To: "Tiller, Glenn" <Glenn.Tiller@tamucc.edu>
Subject: Unexemplified propositions and the Realm of Truth

Glenn,

Allow me to continue the conversation, after this long break, by replying to your last letter.

The answer your question, Suppose the entire universe was annihilated. Wouldn’t it be true that it existed? is: Yes, but I’m not sure what good it would do.

Your next question is: Wouldn’t it be true that it existed? If so, what distinguishes the eternal essences that are truths of the annihilated universe from all other essences?

This question presupposes that there is something left that might make the distinction? In that sense the question seems to deny the premise on which it was founded—that the universe was annihilated. The question also seems to confuse eternity with time. Just because the universe no longer exists doesn’t mean it has no history. You might say that there are no longer any historical records. All information is lost. The universe is gone without a trace. But the traces of the past are features of the realm of matter, not the realm of essence. The fact that the universe existed is part of the realm of truth, even if there is nothing left that could carry out the process of making the distinction.

The confusion of time and eternity has another aspect. The question seems to be posed from a moment after the universe has been eclipsed. But isn't time of feature of existence? If you have no universe, there is no time. There is no now, no moment after. So, the hypothetical moment from which you imagine the question being asked is both impossible and irrelevant to the real purpose of Santayana's realm of truth. That purpose lies in the recognition that it is important to human life to acknowledge the circumstances in which it takes place and only by external examination of the situation in which an individual or society finds itself and by internal scrutiny of its own aspirations can life be lived well.

Richard

On Wed, May 8, 2019 at 12:50 PM Richard Atkins <atkinsri@bc.edu> wrote:

Dear Glenn and Richard R.,

I regret it has taken me so long to engage with this discussion on my essay "Santayana on Propositions." Thank you both for taking the time and expending the energy to carefully consider what I had argued for there. Being only late to Santayana and not nearly as widely read or as deeply ponderous as the two of you with respect to his work, I am much in your debt for bringing out the many nuances of his thought and for your charity in interpreting my rather blundering efforts to say something of value about it.

That essay of mine was largely an attempt to resolve what seems to be a very difficult problem for Santayana to address, one that Sprigge brings out quite nicely. That problem is that Santayana has nothing that can serve as a truth-bearer in his philosophy. Traditionally, philosophers have held that it is propositions which are true or false, but Santayana has virtually nothing to say about propositions, giving them no sustained attention (or at least none that I know of) in his massive corpus of work. What I had hoped to show is that there are resources in Santayana's *Realms of Being* for developing a theory of propositions, only we should look mainly to the *Realm of Essence* rather than to the *Realm of Truth* for those resources.

Nowadays we might be surprised by Santayana's failure to say anything about propositions, especially in the context of developing a theory of truth. But this surprise is really an anachronistic prejudice. When we turn to the Harvard philosophers of the late 1800s and early 1900s under whom Santayana studied and with whom he worked, we find that in their discussions of truth they make no special appeal to propositions either. Rather, they thought that the primary bearers of truth are ideas. Here is Royce in *The World and the Individual*: "A time-honored definition of Truth declares it to mean the *Correspondence between any Idea and Its Object*." Royce does not reject this definition; instead, he argues that we need to say more about the two relations implied by the definition, viz., how an idea has an object (i.e., what make the object its object) and how ideas correspond to their objects. Here is James in *Pragmatism*: "Truth, as any dictionary will tell you, is a property of certain of our ideas. It means their 'agreement,' and falsity means their disagreement, with 'reality.' Pragmatists and intellectualists both accept this

definition as a matter of course." For James as for Royce, it is ideas that are true or false, not propositions.

The great exception to this tendency is Peirce, who insists that "Truth belongs exclusively to propositions." But Peirce's claim is only in apparent divergence from James and Royce. The function of predicate terms, according to Peirce, is to evoke icons. Icons are special sorts of ideas, ideas which have formal, structural similarities to the objects they are about. This is why Peirce regards photographs, for example, as "quasi-propositions" even though they are not expressed in words. The photographic image is produced by a cross-section of rays striking the photographic plate. From it, we can make judgments as to the sizes and distances of various objects shown in the photograph. That is, the photograph is structurally isomorphic with the actual orientations of the objects photographed at the time (though it is not a perfect representation of those objects since it is two-dimensional rather than three).

The linguistic turn in philosophy has all but papered over these features of the pragmatic theories of truth. Today, we are given stock examples of truthbearers, such as "snow is white" and "grass is green" and told that the "meanings" of these sentences (i.e., the propositions they express) are the truthbearers. This is frequently illustrated by pointing out that whether one says "snow is white" or "la nieve es blanca" or "la neige est blanche," one is expressing one and the same true proposition only using different sentences.

One will naturally wonder what the ontological status of these propositions is. Frege had claimed that they exist in some third realm. Both Moore and Russell at one time claimed that true propositions are identical to facts. But then what are false propositions? Everyone wanted to preserve the mind-independence of propositions, because no one (like the pragmatists were accused of doing) wanted to make truth and falsity depend on minds or to be forced into the corner of conjuring an Absolute to make sense of the eternity of truths. One way to resolve the problem is to think of propositions as abstract entities supervening on something like states of affairs. If we call these things that make propositions true truthmakers, we might follow David Lewis in postulating some things that make propositions false (falsehoodmakers) in order to address the problem that Moore and Russell faced.

But I have a nagging suspicion that something is going wrong here. If all rational life were extinguished, would we want to say that there are still truths and falsehoods? As Peirce asks in an early essay, after "all life has ceased, will not the shock of atoms continue though there will be no mind to know it?" To be sure it will, but are there truths about it? Peirce's answer is to turn to a counterfactual consideration: were inquiry to continue (though *ex hypothesi* it cannot), investigation would bring forth an answer. Truth is mind-independent in the sense that it does not depend on actual inquiry, but the idea of truth is to be pragmatically clarified or made definite by tying it to our practices of inquiry. This does not preclude truth being abstractly defined as correspondence, as numerous commentators have shown (e.g., Misak, Hookway, Lane, among others).

This has been a rather long detour to get to Santayana, but I think (I hope) it is helpful because it gets to the heart of some interpretive questions when it comes to developing a Santayana-inspired theory of propositions. We will all agree, I do not doubt, that Santayana wants truth to be mind-independent in the sense that there are truths of which no one ever thinks or knows. That is, there are essences that are exemplified in matter, though no one ever thinks of these essences or thinks of them as being exemplified in matter. We might call these “objective propositions;” they are the sorts of things that Frege, Moore, Russell, and many other philosophers have wanted (I am in the habit of calling them L-propositions in deference to David Lewis, but no matter). Objective propositions are not just the essences themselves—otherwise, every essence would be a proposition—but are essences somehow “attached to” matter. Moreover, these objective propositions are also not just the essence-matter “composite.” We have a different word for that: fact. Rather, objective propositions, we might say, supervene on facts. I should like to say that objective propositions are the intelligibility of facts. In my essay, I call them possible verbal descriptions of facts, where the “possible” should be emphasized.

The problem with this account is the one already indicated: What is a false objective proposition? It would be wrong to claim that unexemplified essences are false, as Richard R. does. That would make the essence *red* false, but terms or qualities alone are not true or false. Falseness sometimes involves the misapplication of an “idea” to “reality.” When I aver that Theaetetus flies and he does not, my asseveration is false. Let us say that the complex essence *Theaetetus flies* is the content of my thought. The complex essence is unexemplified. Is it also false? I should think there is no point in calling it false when simply calling it unexemplified will do.

The point I am driving at is this: objective propositions are not truthbearers. They are either exemplified or unexemplified. Let me appeal here to James, who says in *The Meaning of Truth*, “Realities are not *true*, they *are*; and beliefs are true *of* them. But I suspect that in the anti-pragmatist mind the two notions sometimes swap their attributes. The reality itself, I fear, is treated as if ‘true’ and conversely.” Postulating these things called objective propositions does little more than complicate our metaphysics. We can follow Santayana and hold that there are essences and complexes of essences that are exemplified or unexemplified. A fact is an exemplified essence. End of story.

That said, it is philosophically convenient to postulate objective propositions as supervening on facts. The reason is that essences are not only exemplified but thought, and thought essences are frequently not merely thought but used for thinking about reality (when one writes a fictional story, one thinks of essences but does not use them for thinking about reality; this is what the satirists Richard R. references do with the idea of the flying spaghetti monster in that they stop short of applying it to a part of reality). Now let us suppose that one and the same essence is, on the one hand, exemplified and, on the other hand, thought and applied to the portion of reality in which it is exemplified. That is, suppose *Theaetetus walks* is a fact. As a fact, it is a complex of exemplified essences. Now suppose I think that Theaetetus walks while watching him walk. The essence of

which I think and apply to reality is the very same essence that is exemplified. In other words, my thought “agrees” with reality. In fact, my thought does not merely agree with reality but the essence of my thought is *identical* with the essence that is exemplified in matter. Regarding these true thoughts as identical to exemplified objective propositions is philosophically convenient but dangerous. If I may appeal to James again: “I do not say that for certain logical purposes it may not be useful to treat propositions as absolute entities, with truth or falsehood inside of them respectively, or to make of a complex like ‘that—Caesar—is—dead’ a single term and call it a ‘truth.’ But the ‘that’ here has the extremely convenient ambiguity for those who wish to make trouble for us pragmatists, that sometimes it means the FACT that, and sometimes the BELIEF that, Caesar is no longer living.”

Let us call the essence qua object of thought and applied to reality a subjective proposition (I am in the habit of calling them E-propositions, where the “E-“ is for *eidos*). *When true*, the subjective proposition will be identical with a (philosophically convenient but fictitious) objective proposition. Two remarks: First, this is very close to Royce’s view, where the “idea” is now an essence and the “object” of the idea depends on its application. If I apply “Theaetetus walks” to an apple (i.e., if I say of an apple that it is Theaetetus walking), I speak falsely. But if I apply “Theaetetus walks” to Theaetetus walking, I speak truly. That is, truth consists not merely thinking of an exemplified essence but in applying the essence to the right portion of reality. Second, this is the analysis of propositions presented in my essay: We need a way to pin the object down as that to which we are applying the essence (the indexical component) and then we need to say something about the object pinned down (the rhematic component).³ Only then is the thought essence even truth-apt: It has to first be applied to reality or some portion of it.

Let me address one more complication. Let us admit that the subjective proposition *Theaetetus walks* is true, in which case the (conveniently fictitious) objective proposition *Theaetetus walks* is exemplified. But I also think Theaetetus walks. In other words, the subjective proposition *Richard A. thinks Theaetetus walks* is true, in which case the objective proposition is exemplified. But doesn’t my thinking something have to do with the realm of spirit? Isn’t it a truth about the realm of spirit rather than the realm of matter? Here I appeal to two claims. The first is that the realms are different ways of “looking” at a total natural event. The second is that these ways of looking at the total natural event only generate conceptual distinctions. That is, the realm of spirit is no more than the realm of matter looked at from the inside (so to speak), much as the convexity of a curve is only its concavity viewed in a different way. That is, *Richard A. thinks Theaetetus walks* is an essence exemplified in matter.

Whew! That is a lot of introductory comments to get at the criticisms you both have raised to my essay on Santayana. Let me start with what Richard R. has written. Without question, these are two different claims: (a) *I think Theaetetus*

³ See Atkins 37.

walks (or the example from my essay: *Diana believes the cup is blue*) and (b) *Theaetetus walks* (or *the cup is blue*). They can both be true.

But the essence exemplified in matter is not what is true. Objective propositions are not truthbearers (they aren't anything, really, except convenient fictions). What is true is the verbal description. As I stress in my essay, "verbal" is not to be taken in the sense of "word" but more in the sense of "logos." It is no more than an essence, which may be the object of thought or exemplified in matter. But this essence becomes a subjective proposition only when it is applied to the material realm. That is, it must be used to describe the way the world is. A subjective proposition is an actual verbal description of a (presumed) fact.

Let us admit that *Theaetetus walks* is a fact. It is convenient to postulate that supervening on this fact is an objective proposition. It is also convenient to regard this objective proposition as true in the *attenuated and conditional* sense that were anyone to think the essence *Theaetetus walks* and apply it to Theaetetus rather than (say) an apple, then that person's verbal description of the fact *would be* true. But this "truth" is entirely conditional in nature. If no one thinks Theaetetus walks and applies that essence qua thought to reality, then there *is* no subjective proposition and, a fortiori, no truthbearer. Consequently, there is no truth or falsity about whether Theaetetus walks. *But the absence of truth or falsity does not imply the absence of a fact or of a (conveniently fictitious) objective proposition we may regard as true in a conditional and attenuated sense.*

Let me now come to Santayana's claim that the truth is the "sum of all true propositions." Given what I have said, there are two ways to read this claim. The first is that it is the sum of all objective propositions that supervene on facts. So it is, but we should not forget that objective propositions are convenient fictions and are not truthbearers except in the attenuated and conditional way already indicated, viz., that were one to think the sum of all these essences that are exemplified and apply them to the parts of reality where they were exemplified, then the sum total of all that would then be thought is the truth. And this is the second way to read Santayana's claim: that the truth is the sum of all true subjective propositions that *might* be thought even they are not. The catch is that these readings are equivalent, since the sum total of all conditionally true subjective propositions is identical to the sum total of all the (conveniently fictitious) objective propositions that supervene on facts. I might point out that Santayana could not have meant that truth is the sum total of all subjective propositions that are actually thought, since he held there are unthought true propositions.

Now suppose that I think of Theaetetus that he walks (i.e., (b) above). My thought is true. But suppose no one ever thinks of me that I think of Theaetetus that he walks (i.e., (a) above). Is that unthought but possible thought—i.e., the unthought objective proposition—(a) true? Since truth is a property of subjective propositions and not of objective propositions and since *ex hypothesi* no one thinks it, there *is* no truth. But the objective proposition may be regarded as true in the conditional and attenuated way already mentioned.

Let us turn now to the flying spaghetti monster (FSM). The essence of the FSM is not exemplified, and so the subjective proposition *FSM exists* is false. But

the essence *People think the FSM exists* is exemplified. Accordingly, the subjective proposition *People think the FSM exists* is true, since people in fact think that *People think the FSM exists*. In contrast, suppose no people think that *People think the FSM exists* is true when the essence *People think the FSM exists* is exemplified. Then: (1) *People think the FSM exists* would be exemplified, (2) the objective proposition would be true in a conditional and attenuated way, but (3) the subjective proposition *People think the FSM exists* is not true just because no one actually uses it as a verbal description of reality. When Richard R. complains that I make “exemplified proposition into one that has been thought, spoken, or written,” he is right so long as this is understood to be a subjective proposition. He is wrong if it is understood to be an objective proposition.

At this stage, we may well wonder: What does it take to be a member of the realm of truth? Are objective propositions that are exemplified (i.e., conditionally and attenuatedly true objective propositions) members of the realm of truth? Or are subjective propositions alone members? Here Santayana clearly comes down on the former: conditionally and attenuatedly true objective propositions are members of the realm of the truth. However, what we get for an analysis of propositions in the realm of essence, as I argue in my essay, makes propositions into subjective propositions alone. The better account, I think, is to regard these as the truthbearers, though Santayana wants to have his cake and eat it too by making objective propositions truthbearers. And, as I have argued, they can be regarded as such in a conditional and attenuated way.

Here we touch on the problem Glenn raises: what distinguishes the realm of truth from the realm of essence. My position should by now be clear. The realm of truth consists in the sum total of all the exemplified objective propositions (i.e., all those objective propositions that supervene on facts). This is not the sum total of all the essences, since not all essences have been exemplified. These objective propositions, moreover, must be indexed to time and space. The essence “it rains” is exemplified in many different places and times. But the objective proposition is not “it rains” since that makes no reference to the place and time it rains. Rather, the objective proposition is “it rains in Madrid, Spain, on March 15, 2019” (or what have you). But these spatiotemporal qualifiers are features of matter, which exists here and now, not of the essences, which are eternal and immaterial. This is what makes the realm of truth different from the realm of essence: truths in the conditional and attenuated sense supervene on essence + matter, not essence alone.

Richard R. writes, “In your commentary, you adopt Atkins’ notion of a proposition as a verbal construction, but then argue that truth cannot be applied to a proposition until it is not only thought of, but believed in—that is, judged to be true. Interpreted that way, an unexemplified true proposition is impossible, because until it is rendered in a judgment, a proposition is neither true nor false.” This is correct in a way—an unexemplified true subjective proposition is impossible. But an unexemplified (conditionally and attenuatedly) true objective proposition is not impossible. But Richard R. is right not to endorse the claim that “truth cannot be applied to a proposition until it is not only thought of, but believed in.” Whether the subjective proposition “agrees” with its objective proposition is independent of whether we think it does or judge that it does.

I turn now to another issue Glenn raises: “from all I can gather from Santayana, neither a proposition or an ‘opinion’ can be true of the world until it is asserted. If essences are intrinsically ‘inert’, they can have no indexicality and cannot be true until taken up in thought and discourse. In my view, this leaves the whole realm of truth unanchored, so to speak, and there is nothing to tell the realm of truth apart from the rest of the realm of essence.” The problem is resolved if we distinguish between objective and subjective propositions. Subjective propositions cannot be true until taken up in thought and discourse. In fact, they do not even exist until they are. But objective propositions are independent of thought and discourse, though they be nothing but convenient fictions postulated as supervening on facts. As I have already argued, though, objective propositions are not truthbearers. They are either exemplified or unexemplified. There is no need to appeal to truth and falsity, though truth might be ascribed to them in a conditional and attenuated sense. There is a problem with Santayana’s realm of truth, but the problem is that he fails to distinguish subjective propositions from objective propositions. He wants the realm of truth to consist in the totality of the latter because he thinks there are truths unthought of. This is a mistake: there are facts, exemplified essences, unthought of but no truths. We can ascribe truth to these exemplified essences that are unthought of only in a conditional and attenuated way. *Realm of Truth* would have been better titled the *Realm of Exemplified Objective Propositions*. But his analysis of propositions such as we find it in the realm of essence and as I exposit it in my essay really is of subjective propositions.

At last I come to Glenn’s criticism of my view that knowledge is literal rather than symbolic. Here it will be helpful to distinguish between knowledge by acquaintance and knowledge by description. As Glenn points out in his criticisms, Santayana denies that what we see in any way mirrors the way the world is. There is no color red such as I see “in” the apple. This has to do with knowledge by acquaintance. But truths are truths of description, since the truth bearers are “verbal” descriptions. What is true is not my perception of the red apple (that may be veridical or not) but the verbal description *the apple is red*. The term “red” here is symbolic. It is a little theory, as Peirce says, to account for the looks of the apple. It amounts to averring that there is something in the apple (or about the relation between me and the apple) that causes me to see what I do. The theory is perfectly neutral about what red is. Surface reflectance properties of the apple? The relation of the apple to my visual system? The form redness instantiated in the apple? What the theory is not neutral about is that there is some explanation for my seeing red. “Red” or “redness” is only a symbol of what we might call the essence of red. But the subjective proposition *the apple is red* remains true even if I can give no account of why I see red. It is true just because the essence red (whatever that may amount to) is exemplified in the apple. It is true even though I have not ascertained the “literal” nature of red, have not penetrated the mysteries of essence. The essence for which my word “red” stands is the very same essence which is exemplified in matter, even if I have no literal knowledge of what being red really is. In short, nothing about my account, so far as I can tell, is contrary to what

Santayana says about literal vs. symbolic knowledge or requires that our knowledge “mirror” reality.

To conclude, I would like to make an apology and a retraction. The apology first: In these comments I have availed myself of several distinctions I do not employ in my essay. This no doubt resulted in confusion, and that is partly because I have been working through these distinctions myself. Some of what I say here may not be perfectly aligned with what I say in my essay, but I think the spirit of what I say there is fully compatible with what I say here even if it is not in letter.

Now the retraction: In my essay, I say that Santayana’s theory of the proposition is very much like theories endorsed by philosophers today. That was wrong. Many philosophers today conflate the true and the real (or exemplified). No one draws a distinction between objective and subjective propositions (Santayana himself does not), and the literature is rife with confusions because of it. Santayana wanted a theory of the proposition much like the sort endorsed by philosophers today, viz., of objective propositions supervening on state of affairs. He has something like that in his theory of facts as exemplified essences, but it is not quite the theory we have today. Santayana also wanted a theory of propositions like the pragmatists, viz. of subjective propositions or ideas that are applied to portions of reality. He has something like that in his theory of essences, but it is not quite the theory we find in the pragmatists. When Sprigge complains that Santayana fails to give us a theory of propositions, it is because he wants a theory of objective propositions. When Kerr-Lawson states that Santayana wants to jettison a theory of propositions because it is psychologistic, it is because of worries over subjective propositions. When we draw the distinction between subjective and objective propositions and between the two senses in which we can say each is true (as the truthbearer of thoughts vs. conditionally and attenuatedly), we can navigate this Scylla and Charybdis.

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Bibliographical Checklist

Thirty-Fifth Update

The items below supplement the references given in *George Santayana: A Bibliographical Checklist, 1880–1980* (Bowling Green: Philosophy Documentation Center, 1982) prepared by Herman J. Saatkamp Jr. and John Jones. These references are divided into primary and secondary sources. Except for the book reviews and dissertations, the following articles and books are classified according to their years of publication. Readers with additions or corrections are invited to send these by email to bulletin@georgesantayanasociety.org, and to sanedit@iupui.edu. The Santayana Edition keeps an online, searchable version of the complete checklist at <http://americanthought.iupui.edu/aib/index.php>. As in prior years, the editors send a special thank you to Daniel Moreno for his time and effort in researching and compiling most of the entries for this year's update and to Guido Tamponi for several additional entries.

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Some Abbreviations for Santayana's Works

Page numbers in articles refer to the critical edition of Santayana's work, if it has been published, unless otherwise specified in the references for a particular article. For a list of the volumes of the critical edition that have been published, see the next page. Authors should refer to the critical editions, when they are available.

These abbreviations should be used for citations only. To refer a work in the text, authors should spell out its name.

AFSL	<i>Animal Faith and Spiritual Life</i> , ed. John Lachs	OiS	<i>Overheard in Seville</i>
BR	<i>Birth of Reason and Other Essays</i>	OS	<i>Obiter Scripta</i>
COUS	<i>Character and Opinion in the United States</i>	PGS	<i>The Philosophy of George Santayana</i> , ed PA Schilpp
POEMS	<i>Complete Poems</i>	POML	<i>Physical Order and Moral Liberty</i> , ed. J and S Lachs
DL	<i>Dialogues in Limbo</i>	PP	<i>Persons and Places</i>
DNM	"Dewey's Naturalistic Metaphysics"	PP1	<i>The Background of My Life</i>
DP	<i>Dominations and Powers</i>	PP2	<i>The Middle Span</i>
EGP	<i>Egotism in German Philosophy</i>	PP3	<i>My Host the World</i>
GSA	<i>George Santayana's America</i>	PSL	<i>Platonism and the Spiritual Life</i>
GTB	<i>The Genteel Tradition at Bay</i>	RB	<i>Realms of Being</i> (one-volume edition)
ICG	<i>The Idea of Christ in the Gospels</i>	RE	<i>The Realm of Essence</i> (RB Bk. 1)
IPR	<i>Interpretations of Poetry and Religion</i>	RM	<i>The Realm of Matter</i> (RB Bk. 2)
LGS	<i>The Letters of George Santayana</i>	RT	<i>The Realm of Truth</i> (RB Bk. 3)
LP	<i>The Last Puritan</i>	RS	<i>The Realm of Spirit</i> (RB Bk. 4)
LR	<i>The Life of Reason</i>	SAF	<i>Scepticism and Animal Faith</i>
LR1	Bk. 1, <i>Reason in Common Sense</i>	SB	<i>The Sense of Beauty</i>
LR2	Bk. 2, <i>Reason in Society</i>	SE	<i>Soliloquies in England and Later Soliloquies</i>
LR3	Bk. 3, <i>Reason in Religion</i>	TTMP	<i>Some Turns of Thought in Modern Philosophy</i>
LR4	Bk. 4, <i>Reason in Art</i>	TPP	<i>Three Philosophical Poets</i>
LR5	Bk. 5, <i>Reason in Science</i>	WD	<i>Winds of Doctrine</i>
MARG	<i>Marginalia</i>		

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Listed in order of publication. Citations should refer to these editions.

For the *Letters* and the *Marginalia* the volume numbers are given below to indicate date of publication, but please note that the preferred method of citation omits the volume number.

For the *Letters*, the preferred citation format is:

LGS to [recipient], [date in dd Month yyyy format]

The recipient or date is omitted if the text explicitly refers to it. In case one or the other is omitted, there is no comma.

For the *Marginalia*, the preferred citation format is:

MARG [author], [work] [page number in the author's work]

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The editors may request revisions before a piece is accepted for publication. Upon acceptance, authors will be expected to approve editorial corrections.

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- Manuscripts should be submitted electronically as e-mail attachments to submissions@georgesantayanasociety.org.
- Manuscripts should be double-spaced and in an editable file format such as Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx), Rich Text Format (.rtf), or OpenDocument Text (.odt).
- Manuscripts should be prepared for blind review. Identifying information should not appear in running heads, footnotes, references, or anywhere in the manuscript. Identifying information in footnotes or reference may be replaced with blanks or dashes.
- Manuscripts should be prepared according to [The Chicago Manual of Style, 17th edition](#) guidelines. See also: [Manuscript Preparation Guidelines and Preparing Tables, Artwork, and Math](#).
- Footnotes should be reserved for substantive comments, clarifications, and ancillary information that would interrupt the flow of the main text. These should be kept to a minimum.
- Textual citations should conform to author-date system described in the *Chicago Manual of Style*. The author followed by the date (if the author has more than one work cited) and the page number should appear in parenthesis within the text wherever such a reference is needed. In block quotations, the parenthesis appears at the end just after the last punctuation mark in the block. For citations within the text, the parenthetical citation should be after any closing quotation mark but immediately before the final punctuation mark, unless the final punctuation mark is a question mark or exclamation point that belongs inside the quotation.

Example with date:

(James [1898], 175)

Bracketed date indicates that the reference occurred in the original edition, even though a later edition or reprint is listed in the references.

Example without date (author has only one work cited):

(Royce 144)

Note that the dropping of the date is an exception to the Chicago guidelines.

- If you use an edition or version other than the original, the date of the date of original publication should be in brackets before the date of the edition you are using. If a passage is different in a later edition or found only there, the date in brackets should be the date that the passage first appeared. If it is the edition you are citing, then the date in brackets should be left out.
- A reference list should be provided at the end of the manuscript, specifying which edition is used. Note that in author-date style, the date immediately follows the author's name and is followed by a period.
- References to classical writers, such as Plato and Aristotle, should use standard page numbers.
- References to Santayana's works should use the standard abbreviations found in recent issues of *Overheard in Seville* (e.g., SAF for *Scepticism and Animal Faith*) followed by the page.
- If a quotation from a Santayana work is taken from a critical edition and only critical editions are cited, the work need not be included in the reference list, as long as you use standard abbreviations. If you cite non-critical editions or non-Santayana material, then you should include the abbreviation of the work in your reference list and simply indicate that the critical edition is the one referred to:

LR1 Critical edition

- An author may use an abbreviation to refer to another author's work by preceding the bibliographical listing of the work with the abbreviation. For example,

AE Dewey, John. 1934. *Art as Experience*. New York: Minton, Balch and Company.
- If there is only one reference with an abbreviation for an author, list that reference alphabetically by the abbreviation. In the case of multiple references with abbreviations for the same author, list the references indented under the author's name and alphabetically by the abbreviation.
- If an abbreviation or the author's name alone is used in a citation, do not put comma before the page number. If the date is included, place a comma after the date.
- In citing a reference to a work identified by an abbreviation that contains essays by more than one author, if the context does not make clear who the author is, include the author's name before the abbreviation. For example: (Hartshorne PGS 153).
- The preferred way to cite one of Santayana's letters is to use the abbreviation LGS followed by the date and "to [recipient]." If either the recipient or date is given in the text, it may be left out of the citation.

- Wherever possible, references should be to authoritative scholarly editions, such as *The Works of George Santayana* (MIT), *The Collected Works of John Dewey* (SIU), *The Works of William James* (Harvard), *The Jane Adams Papers* (UMI), etc. **An author not in possession of a particular scholarly edition should encourage his or her institution's library to acquire it or borrow the work through interlibrary loan.** Authors should notify the editor if, after such efforts, they still do not have access to a particular authoritative edition. Note that some of the critical editions of Santayana's works are available in modified PDF formats that enable accurate page number citation.
- Research articles and essays should be no more than 8,000 words.
- Authors should divide their manuscripts with appropriate section headings. Section headings may use paragraph styles Heading2, Heading3, etc. We do not recommend subsections, unless some obvious contextual reason calls for them.
- Except for block quotes, use no paragraph style other than Normal set to double space and to indent 1 inch before the first line. (These settings are for submission. They are not the settings for publication, but following these guidelines simplifies the transition to publishable form.)
- For block quotes, either change the paragraph to have no first line indent and to be indented on the left one inch, or use a style based on Normal that implements those changes.
- Use block quotes for any quotation longer than three lines (roughly 225 characters including spaces).
- To indicate that the text following a block quote does not start a new new paragraph, either do not indent the first line of the paragraph after the block quote or put "[same paragraph]" at the start of the text following the paragraph.
- Submissions should include a brief description of the author's background and work for use in a contributor's note.
- Any permissions necessary to print any part of a submission are the responsibility of the author to obtain.
- If you refer to a theoretic position with a label (e.g. pragmatism, romanticism, phenomenology), explain the meaning of the term in the context or your article. Do not capitalize such labels.
- To refer to term instead of using it, put the term in italics. It is an option to use single quotes for this purpose. Use italics the first time an unusual technical appears (and perhaps is defined). Thereafter, use the term without italics or quotes. You may use double quotes may be used in paraphrasing an author to indicate that you are using a term that is used by the author in a special way. In general, avoid doing this for Santayana's works.

Submitted manuscripts and communication regarding submissions should be addressed to submissions@georgesantayanasociety.org. Correspondence about matters other than submissions may be addressed to bulletin@georgesantayanasociety.org

Angus Kerr-Lawson Prize

The George Santayana Society offers the Angus Kerr-Lawson Prize in tribute to the late Professor Kerr-Lawson's outstanding contributions to Santayana scholarship both as longtime editor of *Overheard in Seville: the Bulletin of the George Santayana Society* and as the author of many articles that appeared in the *Bulletin* and in other publications. Kerr-Lawson was an early participant in the George Santayana Society.

The prize is available to a scholar not more than five years out of graduate school for an essay engaging or rooted in the thought of George Santayana. We encourage applications from graduate students and junior faculty members. Authors may address any aspect of Santayana's life and thought. We welcome essays that relate his thinking to other figures in the American tradition and beyond and to contemporary social, cultural, and philosophic concerns. Relevant themes include materialism and naturalism, realism and Platonism, metaphysics and morals, and issues connected to American culture and intellectual history.

The winner will receive \$400 and be invited to present the winning paper at the Society's annual Eastern APA meeting in early January. The winning essay will be submitted for publication in the edition of *Overheard in Seville* that follows that meeting. In the coming year the winner will be notified by September, 2020. Authors should prepare submissions for blind review (no exposing references to the author within the composition) and send electronically in Word, ODT, or PDF format to: submissions@georgesantayanasociety.org. The subject line of the email should read: "Kerr-Lawson Prize Submission, [author's name]." The deadline for submissions is Monday, 4 May 2020.

Contributors

Lydia Amir is a Visiting Professor at Tufts University. She the Founding Editor of the *Philosophy of Humor Yearbook* (2020), and de Gruyter Series in Philosophy of Humor (2021) and author, most recently, of *Philosophy, Humor and the Human Condition: Taking Ridicule Seriously* (2019). She is under contract to finish *Laughter and the Good Life: Montaigne Nietzsche Santayana*.

Richard Kenneth Atkins is an Associate Professor of Philosophy at Boston College and Executive Director of the Charles S. Peirce Society. His most recent book is *Charles S. Peirce's Phenomenology* (Oxford, 2018).

James Ballowe is Distinguished Professor Emeritus of English at Bradley University. He edited and wrote the introduction a collection of Santayana's essays on America (*George Santayana's America*). His other works include *A Man of Salt and Trees*, a biography of Joy Morton, and *The Coal Miners*, a book of poetry.

Phillip Beard teaches in the English Department and in the Vienna Austria Abroad program at Auburn University. His articles have appeared in the previous two issues of *Overheard in Seville*.

Martin Coleman is the Director and Editor of the Santayana Edition. He is now working on critical edition of *Winds of Doctrine*.

Ruth Derham is an English biographer. Following her articles in *Overheard in Seville* (Fall 1919) and *Russell* (Winter 2017-18) her full biography of Santayana's friend Frank Russell, entitled *Bertrand's Brother: The Marriages, Morals and Misdemeanours of Frank, 2nd Earl Russell* will be published by Amberley Press in October 2020.

David Dilworth is a Professor of Philosophy at the State University of New York at Stony Brook. He never lost a golf match to Angus Kerr-Lawson.

Sarah Green lives and works in Cambridge, UK and has published on the work of Lionel Johnson, George Moore, and J.M. Barrie.

Nóra Horváth is an Associate Professor at Széchenyi István University, Győr, Hungary and editor-in-chief of the Hungarian literary-philosophical journal *Műhely*.

Katarzyna Krempleska is an Assistant Professor at the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, Polish Academy of Sciences and the author of *Life as Insinuation: George Santayana's Hermeneutics of Finite Life and Human Self* (2019).

Charles Padrón is a member of the editorial board of *Overheard in Seville*. He is an independent scholar an editor, living on the island of Gran Canaria. With Chris Skowroński, he edited *The Life of Reason in an Age of Terrorism* (Brill 2018).

Glenn Tiller is the Secretary-Treasurer of the George Santayana Society. He is a Professor of Philosophy at Texas A&M University—Corpus Christi.

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