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Augmented Understanding: Srul Irving Glick and the Redefinition of the Concept of Jewish Composers

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Abstract

North American Jewish musicians and composers in the early twentieth century fought many of the same difficulties as their predecessors in Europe. The pressure to assimilate affected them in such a way that many sought to distance themselves from overly Jewish subjects. However, as the century progressed, musicians and composers began investigating these issues and challenging previously accepted assumptions. One such musician was the Canadian composer Srul Irving Glick.

Through years of introspection and self-analysis, Glick discovered that his roots in Judaism were stronger and more important to his identity than were the opinions of others. Thus, with a stronger sense of self, Glick began incorporating Jewish folk idioms and elements of cantorial music into his compositions. This article investigates Glick's journey to acceptance. From concealment to glorification, this article will show that it is Glick's music that truly reflects the heart and soul of this incredible Canadian composer.

The world of Western art music has long been an exclusive club ruled by the elite men of the European music tradition. Not only did these musicians see themselves as artistically superior, but they were also reluctant to face the increased competition that would result from the introduction of outsiders into their ranks. Within this restrictive system, it was very difficult for individuals of non-Christian, European descent to gain recognition as performers or composers. The legacy of this mentality, especially with regards to Jewish musicians, has been felt through the twentieth century. Historically, Jewish musicians have often distanced themselves from the rest of the Jewish community in order to disguise their descent. Recently, however, this trend has begun to change and Jews have started maintaining their identity while working successfully in the circles of Western art music. One such musician was the twentieth-century Jewish composer Srul Irving Glick. Through an analysis of literary sources, this article will attempt to illustrate the ways in which Glick was able to harmonize his identity as a Jew with his profession as a composer in Canada.

Prior to the eighteenth century, daily life for the Jews of Europe was often difficult. Frequently forced to live in ghettos or *shtetls* (small, Jewish villages), they were severely limited in their choice of profession through restrictive laws and the anti-Jewish sentiment of the largely Christian populace.[1] As rulers changed and economic stability shifted within Europe, anti-Jewish feelings and rhetoric would also change. Occasionally reaching a boiling point, public sentiment could quickly bring about violent uprisings against local Jewish communities.[2] Yet, as the effects of the Emancipation began to spread throughout Europe, the integration and assimilation of Jews into Western society also spread. To European Jews of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, entrance into high European musical culture was seen as both

1 Stanley Sadie, ed., "Jewish Music," *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, Vol. 13 (New York: Macmillan, 2001), 92.

2 For a summary of the history of European Jewry, see Lloyd Gartner's *History of the Jews in Modern Times*. While it focuses largely on the eighteenth century forward, the text also provides an overview of earlier Jewish history in Europe.

a means of professional success and a sign of acceptance within Western culture.[3] As a result, the nineteenth century saw a great influx of Jewish men into the realm of professional musicians, composers, and musicologists.[4] Wealthy Jewish families appreciated the universality of music, and often presided over musical soirées and salons. Moreover, musical education was greatly encouraged in all levels of Jewish society, as the European music world was believed to hold "the greatest prospects for successful acculturation and integration into European society."[5]

However, the infiltration of Jews into the European music scene was not accepted in all quarters. While nationalism was developing as the newest trend in composition,[6] Jewish musicians focused on the idea of the concept of music as the one universal language. This concept was appealing to a still largely marginalized group as it represented the dream of building a society in which a man's character defined him more than did outward differences such as race and religion.[7] Consequently, their compositions possessed an international quality that led to the idea that Jews were incapable of being truly creative artists. Many believed that the rootlessness of the Jewish people resulted in a lack of cultural authenticity and creativity.[8] In other words, since the Jews lacked a nation of their own, some considered them to be without a unique cultural identity of their own. Most attempts by Jews to compose in the style of the nation in which they lived were seen as poor copies of the genuine article, created by unwelcome guests.

This judgment was further reinforced by the separation of the Jewish musicians from their own cultural community. The desire to be accepted as full members of society often resulted in composers' and musicians' expressions of alienation from Judaism as a religion and created tension both within the Jewish community and between the Jewish and non-Jewish communities.[9] In an attempt to reduce the effects of anti-Semitism on their careers, many Jewish musicians distanced themselves from anything that appeared Jewish. Some converted to Christianity to gain acceptance, while others avoided references to their Jewish origins in their compositions—either because they felt they were of no consequence or because they believed their origins were something to be concealed.[10] As a result, there was often little in the works created and performed by these musicians that denoted anything specifically Jewish. The most famous settings of Jewish liturgical and folksong motifs in this period were completed by non-Jewish composers who had possessed no concerns regarding

3 Within the context of this paper, I will only be discussing issues surrounding the Jewish presence in the world of Western art music. There was a great number of musicians and composers involved with Jewish liturgical and secular music; however, it is the interactions between the Jewish and non-Jewish musicians in Western art music that is of interest to this text.

4 Ezra Mendelsohn, "On the Jewish Presence in Nineteenth-Century European Musical Life." *Studies in Contemporary Jewry* 9 (1993): 4.

5 Mendelsohn, 6.

6 Nationalism, while first emerging in the eighteenth century, developed extensively in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. As recording technology developed, ethnic music also became important to this trend. Donald Grout and Claude Palisca, *A History of Western Music* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 2001), 644, 680.

7 Mendelsohn, 11.

8 *Ibid.*, 6–8. One illustration of these beliefs is Wagner's anti-Semitic essay *Das Judentum in der Musik* ("Judaism in Music"). David Schiller, *Bloch, Schoenberg, and Bernstein: Assimilating Jewish Music* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 168.

9 Many Orthodox Jews viewed assimilated Jews as opportunists and/or traitors. Grout and Palisca, 93.

10 Mendelsohn, 8. Composers such as Felix Mendelssohn (1809–1847) and Giacomo Meyerbeer (1791–1864), while successful composers of European music for European audiences, were confronted with the complications of assimilation (Schiller, 3). While Meyerbeer maintained his Jewish identity, none of his major stage works were based on Jewish motifs. Conversely, though aware of his Jewish heritage through his grandparents, Mendelssohn lived as a practicing Lutheran (Grout and Palisca, 94). A. Z. Idelsohn, an early scholar of Jewish music, determined that "composers of Jewish origin have in their creations nothing of the Jewish spirit; they are renegades or assimilants, and detest all Jewish cultural values." This determination included composers such as Mendelssohn and Meyerbeer. A. Z. Idelsohn "My Life (A Sketch)," *Jewish Music Journal* 2 (2) (May–June, 1935): 10.

implications of the material.[11]

Despite the passage of time, the early twentieth century saw the continuation of these trends with concerns to Jewish musicians and composers. The pressures of assimilation continued to affect Jewish musicians and composers in such a way that many again sought to distance themselves from overly Jewish subjects.[12] However, as the century progressed, musicians and composers began investigating these issues and challenging previously accepted assumptions. One such musician was the Canadian composer Srul Irving Glick.

Born on September 8, 1934, Srul Irving Glick grew up in the diverse atmosphere of the Toronto Jewish community. His earliest introduction to music was through his family. While his older brother Norman,[13] a professional clarinetist, brought the world of Western classical music into the Glick home, Srul was also introduced to the world of Jewish liturgical music through his father's work as a cantor.

Early in his career, Glick had to deal with many of the same concerns as his predecessors in Europe. As he noted in an interview, "Whether we like it or not, there is still tremendous enmity towards Jews in the world."[14] Initially, his response as a composer reflected previous patterns. He maintained a firm belief in music as an international, non-denominational language. His father's work as a cantor initially "affected [him] … because it turned [him] away from Judaism."[15] He "wanted to be a universalist" in his compositions.[16] With these ideas firmly in mind, Glick completed his bachelor's and master's in music at the University of Toronto.[17] It was not until he had worked both at home and abroad, studying in Paris with such composers as Louis Saguer, Darius Milhaud, and Max Deutch,[18] that he appears to have begun revising these opinions. Through years of study, Glick began to discover that "I can only be me."[19] He learned a great deal through his work with other composers; however, most importantly he learned to identify those things that cannot be learned. When Glick asked Max Deutch to teach him about twelve-tone composition, Deutch replied, "You don't learn twelve-tone technique; when you're ready for it, you write it and if you're not ready for it, you won't write it."[20] Essentially, Glick was learning that there are some things that can only be derived from the self. No amount of training or practice can create intellect, as Glick would later put it.[21]

Over time, Glick began considering the deeper philosophy of both his existence as a composer and his personal identity as a Jew. He questioned, as did so many composers of the twentieth century, what it

11 For example, the most famous setting of the *Kol Nidre* (a liturgical piece performed during the synagogue services on the eve of *Yom Kippur*) was composed by Max Bruch, while many non-Jewish composers, such as Modest Mussorgsky, worked with Jewish folk motives (Mendelsohn, 7). *Nota bene*, for a definition of *Yom Kippur*, see footnote 34.

12 The early works of Schoenberg (1874–1951) were largely uninvolved with Jewish topics. In March of 1898, Schoenberg removed himself from Vienna's Jewish community registry and was baptized as a Protestant (Schiller, 168). It is not until later in his life, after experiencing anti-Semitism first-hand in 1923, that his music began to reflect his newly found interest in Zionism and other Jewish matters. Aaron Copland worked mainly within the nationalistic trend, working to compose American music without Jewish content. William Benjamin, *Jews and the Revolution in Music: Liberation and Loss*, Lecture Series (February 11 and 18, 2004). Irving Berlin is often seen as the quintessential American-Jewish songwriter. He was an immigrant " … who quickly acclimated, he became as all-American as his song 'God Bless America.'" Kenneth Kanter, *The Jews on Tin Pan Alley* (New York: Ktav, 1982), 196.

13 Born in Toronto on January 1, 1928.

14 "A Composer's Contribution: Being Able To Say Something 'Particular.'" *Canadian Composer* 103 (September 1975): 4.

15 "A Composer's Contribution," 4.

16 *Ibid.*

17 Earned in 1955 and 1958, respectively. K. MacMillan and J. Beckwith, eds., "Srul Irving Glick," in *Contemporary Canadian Composers* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975), 87.

18 "Srul Irving Glick—Biography," www.srulirvingglick.com, accessed January 8, 2004.

19 "A Composer's Contribution," 6.

20 *Ibid.*, 8.

21 In an interview Glick stated that "there are two parts to music: There's a man who *has* ideas, and there's a man who can *express* ideas. They are not always in the same person and it's tragic when that happens … I think it takes intellect to write from your heart. This is the point: You have to have a *way* to do it, to get it out." *Ibid.*, 6.

meant to attempt to compose music in a world so filled with poverty, fear, and violence. He also investigated the abstract nature of music as an art form. While some composers chose to stop writing music in light of these disturbing reflections, Glick determined that "music should be an expression of your indication that life is an affirmative force" going beyond the darkness of everyday life.[22] Through endlessly testing new materials and motives, he could decide whether or not the ideas held truth for him. Glick noted in an interview that he didn't want to write music that did not possess beauty, but that he used harshness as a contrast that could evolve into other things.[23]

These investigations also led Glick to resolve many issues surrounding his identity as a Jew. He ultimately concluded that his "roots, as a Jew, were deeper than [his] desire to be a composer in the universal sense."[24]

> I looked at Judaism very carefully, and not prejudicially, and I found that *I don't have to be inferior;* it is one of the most glorious cultural and philosophical and creative traditions the world has ever known. So I had to work through that personal fear in myself.[25]

By accepting his cultural roots, Glick was able to begin incorporating the two branches of his identity into his work: his identity as a Canadian composer and as a Jewish composer.[26] The cantorial tradition his father introduced him to as a child began to reassert itself, as did the Jewish folk idioms he learned as a child with Habonim.[27] These musical dialects had imbedded themselves in the recesses of his mind sufficiently so that he was able to incorporate them in his work. Cantorial music is especially complex; it is a music for which there are no easy phrases. Instead, "it spins out in a long line, turning back in on itself and going forth again, forming a dramatic line with emotional content."[28]

Over time, Glick began working these varied threads together into the tapestries of his compositions. In some cases, he attempted to develop a synthesis of the rhythmic drive of jazz and the symmetry of dance music with the lyrical quality of Hebraic music.[29] At other times, he layers textural and chordal thickness with Jewish folk lyricism and tonality, often in a contrapuntal fashion.[30] As noted in the *Encyclopedia of Music in Canada,* while his work of the 1970s experimented with more contemporary idioms, his later works "achieved a synthesis of Jewish and classical musical traditions, creating from these two strains a personal idiom that is openly lyrical and direct in its emotional appeal."[31]

Srul Irving Glick further demonstrated his acceptance of and connection to his cultural background through his liturgical work. In 1969, he began working at Toronto's Beth Tikvah synagogue as choir director. While working with the synagogue, he composed many liturgical pieces and arranged Yiddish folksongs for his choir.[32] His extensive work and dedication to the *shul* (synagogue) was recognized in 1978 when he was made composer-in-residence of Beth Tikvah. By 2001, Glick had written almost two hundred pieces of liturgical music and had received several awards for his contributions to Jewish music.[33] He considered his work with the *shul*

22 *Ibid.*

23 *Ibid.*

24 *Ibid.*, 4.

25 *Ibid.*

26 *Ibid.*

27 Habonim is a Labor Zionist youth group. "Srul Irving Glick: A Canadian Who Came Home." *Canadian Composer* 23 (November 1967): 38.

28 Robin Elliott, "A New Future for Glick." *Canadian Composer* 210 (May 1986): 18.

29 "Srul Irving Glick: A Canadian Who Came Home," 38. Completed in 1967, Glick's only ballet, *Heritage Dance Symphony,* incorporated these idioms. Clifford Ford and Robin Elliott, "Srul Irving Glick" *Encyclopedia of Music in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 532.

30 MacMillan and Beckwith, 87.

31 Ford and Elliott, 532.

32 *Ibid.*

33 Grout and Palisca, 945. Among other honours, Glick was presented the J. I. Segal Award for contributions to Jewish music, the Kavod Award from the Cantor's Assembly of America, and the Solomon Schechter Award from the United Synagogue of America. He was also presented an Honorary Fellowship from the Royal Canadian College of Organists ("Srul Irving Glick—Biography," www.srulirvingglick.com). In 1993,

to be a labour of love full of beauty and inspiration. He once noted that in his early years at Beth Tikvah he "was so shocked after [they'd] finished Yom Kippur[34] services that [they] hadn't brought Mashiach[35] because of the intensity and beauty of the singing."[36] Glick had resolved the psychological conflict over his cultural heritage and, unlike his predecessors, he did not believe it was necessary to deny his roots in order to maintain his success within Western art music.

Tragically, Srul Irving Glick died of cancer in 2002.[37] His contributions to the Canadian musical landscape are immeasurable and live on in performances of his extensive library of creations. However, of more import than his prodigious melodic legacy is his redefinition of the identity of the Jewish composer. Not willing to accept the European stereotype of Jewish musicians as uninspired, Glick investigated his own preconceived notions and found them lacking. By truly accepting his identity as a Jew, he was able to introduce complex, new layers to the harmonic and melodic texture of his compositions. Moreover, through his work with the Beth Tikvah, he was able to find great joy in merging his musical talent with his spiritual endeavours. Srul Irving Glick gained what so many of his earlier colleagues were unable to obtain—the confidence inspired by a strong Jewish identity within a supportive community combined with the security of professional success in a career he adored.

Glick was presented the Governor General's Medal for contribution to Canadian culture, and in 1994 was appointed a member of the Order of Canada. "Srul Irving Glick: A Renowned Composer Remembered," *Words and Music* 9 (2) (Summer 2002): 9.

34 *Yom Kippur*, or the Day of Atonement, occurs on the ninth and tenth days of the month of *Tishri* in the Jewish calendar. It is a time for the confession of sins, repentance, and reconciliation with both God and other humans. David Noss, *A History of the World's Religions* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2003), 445.

35 *Mashiach* is the transliteration of the Hebrew word for Messiah.

36 Frances Kraft, "Srul Irving Glick to be Honored," *Canadian Jewish News* 30 (2) (January 13, 2000): 18.

37 "Composer/Conductor Srul Irving Glick Dies of Cancer in Toronto," *Canadian Press Newswire* 18 (April 2002), http://delos.lib.sfu.ca.

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Religion, Science, and Origins: On the Metaphysics of Intelligent Design and Darwinian Evolutionism

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Abstract

In the US and the UK a debate has arisen over the introduction of "intelligent design theory" to school curricula as an alternative to the scientific orthodoxy of Darwinian evolutionism. In popular representation, the debate has been predominately articulated in terms of an apparent antagonism between science and religion. This paper examines the historical and philosophical significance of the issue in order to suggest one possible route for rethinking, and perhaps reconciling, the antagonism. We argue that science and religion cannot be allocated two discrete "magisteria," and that attempts to do so may obscure a common metaphysical nature. Finally, we show how Gianni Vattimo's concept of ethics allows us to rethink science and religion, and we offer a practical perspective on the teaching of intelligent design in schools.

Introduction

Recently, in some societies,[1] a debate has arisen over the introduction of "intelligent design theory" to school curricula as an alternative to the scientific orthodoxy of Darwinian evolutionism. Contrary to Darwinian evolutionism, which holds that organisms arrived at their current biological forms through a process of change over time due to various material factors, intelligent design theory employs the language of scientific reasoning to argue that organic forms exist as designed by an "intelligent agent."[2] This debate has attracted the attention of, or otherwise involved, scientific and religious intellectuals, the judiciary, prominent political figures, legislative bodies, and the wider public; it has increased in volatility, and at the time of writing, no conclusive settlement has been reached. This paper examines the historical and philosophical significance of the issue, and suggests one possible route for rethinking, and perhaps reconciling, the terms of the dispute.

In popular representation, the debate has been articulated predominately in terms of a long-standing antagonism between subscribers to the rational/empirical paradigm of orthodox science (biologists in particular) and those who propose religious/metaphysical explanations for natural origins. Proponents of intelligent design theory attack evolutionism as limited, incomplete, or erroneous in its claim to account for the origins of life; furthermore, scientists are said to be dogmatically exclusionary in their rejection of alternative hypotheses.[3] In response, some prominent scientists have pronounced intelligent design theory to be "creationism in disguise" and have opposed its teaching as unscientific: "[I]nvoking a supernatural Designer is to explain precisely nothing."[4]

1 To the best knowledge of the authors, the debate in question has manifested in a similar fashion in Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

2 Davis and Kenyon 1993. This is a simplification of the debate, as manifold conflicting religious and scientific positions are involved. But for the purposes of our argument, this distinction satisfactorily summarizes the central controversy. Additionally, because of an incontrovertible historical symbiosis with arguments for intelligent design, we implicate certain forms of Christianity in particular when we speak of "religion" in this paper.

3 Hewlett 2003.

4 Dawkins 1986, 141.

Evidently, the irreconcilability of the debate stems in part from its being presented as "superstition versus rationality." In response, using an analysis guided by Martin Heidegger's philosophy of metaphysics, we suggest that both religious *and scientific* efforts to explain origins can be understood as metaphysical.

In seeking a way to defuse the intelligent design debate, we put forward Gianni Vattimo's concept of *nihilism*—an overcoming of "the violent essence of metaphysics."[5] At the heart of Vattimo's thought is a certain democratic ideal that accedes to the plurality of beliefs present in a multicultural, globalizing world. This ideal, according to Vattimo, is best realized by an ethics that seeks to reduce violence through reducing the hold of foundational principles that underlie metaphysics. This paper applies Vattimo's concept of nihilism to the intellectual effort to ascribe to science and religion separate "magisteria," and to the debate about teaching intelligent design in public schools.

"Non-overlapping Magisteria"? Intelligent Design Theory and the Relationship between Science and Religion

In November 2005, the Kansas Board of Education voted to allow intelligent design to be included in the state science curriculum.[6] In a separate case one month later, a Pennsylvania judge, ruling over a case brought by parents against the Dover District School Board, found that the teaching of intelligent design amounted to "creation science"—a religious concept pedagogically prohibited in science lessons by a US Supreme Court ruling in 1987.[7] In the United Kingdom, as of November 2006, fifty-nine schools were using materials distributed by the "Truth in Science" organization, which had sent intelligent design–based teaching materials to every secondary school in Britain.[8] These materials teach that "science can identify features of the natural world that are best explained by an intelligent cause,"[9] a claim reproduced across a growing body of intelligent design literature.[10] The chairman of the UK parliamentary science and technology select committee responded on behalf of the British government that "neither intelligent design nor creationism are [sic] recognized scientific theories," adding that "treating [intelligent design theory] as an alternative centralist theory alongside Darwinism in science lessons is deeply worrying."[11]

In November 2006, prominent scientists gathered at the SALK Institute for Biological Studies' Forum on Science and Religion, "Beyond Belief," in La Jolla, California. The Nobel Laureate in physics Steven Weinberg delivered this statement: "[W]e will miss religion, but … the world needs to wake up from its long nightmare of religious belief."[12] Attending colleagues, including the evolutionary biologist and outspoken opponent of creationism Richard Dawkins, argued that Weinberg's condemnation had not gone far enough. Nobel Prize winner Sir Harold Kroto's further allegation that we dwell in a "McCarthy era against people who don't accept Christianity"[13] denotes a marked departure from the sympathetic chords struck between religion and science in the United States in the early nineteenth century. At that time, there was a spirit of optimism among American Protestants that science (particularly Francis Bacon's empiricism) could contribute to the orthodox ideal of a "religion free of all doubt."[14] This *natural theology*—popularized by an influential book of the same name by prominent New England Anglican priest William Paley in 1802—promised a fusion of Christian philosophy and empirical science through the premise that "nature contains clear, compelling

5 Vattimo 2004, 11.

6 See http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/4419796.stm.

7 See http://www.newscientist.com/article.ns?id=dn8498.

8 See http://education.guardian.co.uk/schools/story/0,,1957858,00.html.

9 See http://www.truthinscience.org.uk/site/content/view/43/49.

10 Davis and Kenyon 1993; Behe, Dembski, and Meyer 2000; Dembski 1998, 2002; Strobel 2004.

11 See http://education.guardian.co.uk/schools/story/0,,1957858,00.html.

12 See http://www.nytimes.com/2006/11/21/science/21belief.html?ei=5090&en=1248e2f606e1e138&ex=1321765200&pagewanted=print.

13 See *New Scientist* 2578, November 18, 2006.

14 Hovenkamp 1978, x.

evidence of God's existence and perfection."[15] Perhaps ironically—in view of the contemporary situation—the wide adoption of natural theology led to an enthusiasm for science in college curricula, and the academic hiring of full-time scientists *en masse*. By 1860, the experiment was an apparent failure, as natural theology fought a gradually losing battle to align Protestant orthodoxy with the inconveniently contradictory "facts" emerging from geology and biology,[16] and was compelled to reject the fruits of an empiricism it had helped to entrench.

Science historian Herbert Hovenkamp concludes that the 1859 publication of Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* sealed the demise of natural theology as a mainstream movement in American education. Yet, by the 1850s, a growing scientific uniformitarian movement had already sought to limit the influence of catastrophism, progressionism, and other tenets of natural theology within national politics and education.[17] By corollary, various Protestant denominations were fragmented by the respective theological concessions they were prepared to accept to maintain a relationship with scientific orthodoxy. Although the immediate ramifications appear to have been pedagogical and political, Hovenkamp indicates the durable *philosophical* problematic foregrounded by the failure of natural theology: put simply, "facts and values are not easily mixed."[18] This historical articulation of the question of the relationship between facticity and morality post-dated Hume's famed ruling-out of an arrival at the latter purely through the former in *A Treatise of Human Nature* (1740) by a century. Despite countless philosophical attempts to tackle the fact/value problem, science and religion continue to be popularly thought of in terms of this apparently fundamental incongruity.[19] For example, in a 1996 address to the Pontifical Academy of Sciences, Pope John Paul II overcame the "apparent contradictions" between evolutionary theory and Catholic scripture by acceding to the historical facticity of evolution, whilst withholding for the Church the authority "to offer criteria for discerning the moral conduct required of all human beings."[20]

As Pope John Paul II's address reveals, the idea of dividing science and religion along a fact/value distinction has arisen as one response to the quandaries posed by evolution and other scientific theories. In the most influential representation of this line of thinking, the late Harvard paleontologist Stephen Jay Gould put forward a "blessedly simple and entirely conventional resolution to … the supposed conflict between science and religion"[21]: "Non-Overlapping Magisteria" (NOMA). By "magisterium" Gould designates "a domain where one form of teaching holds the appropriate tools for meaningful discourse and resolution."[22] According to this schema, science and religion each have particular realms that are proper to them, and to which they are exclusively capable of attending: "the magisterium of science covers the empirical realm: what the Universe is made of (fact) and why [it works] in this way (theory). The magisterium of religion extends over questions of ultimate meaning and moral value. These two magisteria do not overlap, nor do they encompass all inquiry."[23] Speaking on the scientific creationism debate in particular, Gould refers to Pope Pius XII's *Humani Generis*[24] in arguing that evolution represents

15 *Ibid*., ix.

16 For example, new geological techniques allowed the dating of the earth as far older than most Protestant teachings allowed; even before Darwin, taxonomists and early evolutionists challenged the "absolute species" paradigm adopted by natural theology by problematizing clear species distinctions, and demonstrating generational changes in some organisms, respectively (see Hovenkamp 1978, 187–210).

17 Hovenkamp 1978, 206–7.

18 *Ibid.*, x.

19 Brooke 1991; Wilson 2002.

20 View the complete address at http://www.newadvent.org/library/docs_jp02tc.htm.

21 Gould 2002, 3.

22 *Ibid.*, 5.

23 *Ibid.*, 6.

24 *Humani Generis* is an encyclical, bestowed in 1950 by Pope Pius XII, that considered the issue of evolution in a fashion precursory to that of John Paul II's 1996 address. Pius famously accepted evolution as a scientific theory, but with reservations that retained for the church what Gould has gone on to discuss as "magisterium" over matters of the spirit, morality, and values. *Humani Generis* is reproduced in full here: http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/pius_xii/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xii_

a difficult area where the domains of science and religion press close together.[25] Adherents to Gould's formulation might conclude that the controversy over intelligent design and evolutionism is owing to breaches of the NOMA principle wherein religion trespasses upon the empirical, or science posits values that infringe upon the magisterium of moral value.

Gould's NOMA principle asks us to make an ontological commitment to a separation of fact from value, the empirical from the moral, and the phenomenal from the metaphysical. But can such an ontology correspond to science and religion as they present in lived actuality? We argue that while facts and values may be split analytically, this split dissolves immediately upon contact with the actual world in which we live—the world in which both science and religion come into being and have meaning for individuals. For example, for some evangelical Christians, the Bible is literally true, and associated moral codes derive from an adherence to values gleaned from the life that Jesus Christ, in matter of fact, is believed to have lived. Similarly, many environmentalists base their moral codes in ecology, a scientifically derived vision of "what is." In both cases, the moral codes that inform individual and collective worldviews arise in relationship with a certain understanding of what the world of facts consists of and how it can be apprehended. This was recognized by the scholar Walter Benjamin, who argued that truth demands an interpretive understanding. Benjamin stated: "Truth is not an intent which realizes itself in empirical reality; it is the power which determines the essence of this empirical reality. The state of being, beyond all phenomenality, to which alone this power belongs, is that of the name."[26] Truth is not an *a priori* that can be revealed through the correct application of intentional investigation, scientific or otherwise. This quality of truth leaves both inductive and deductive methods wanting; philosophical thought must be rooted in the description of the world of ideas.[27]

By asserting that religion's proper domain is that of value, and that science is calibrated to comprehend the material world, NOMA implicitly prioritizes the given-ness of material actuality: crudely put, science first describes the mechanics of the physical world; religion deciphers and gives it meaning. We argue, *contra* NOMA, that the world of facts is not ontologically prior to its apprehension and interpretation. The concept of non-overlapping magisteria is not rooted in a reading of how science and religion appear in the world, or how truth, in Benjamin's terms, "leaps out."[28] Rather, it is rooted in a pre-conceived idea of an appropriate dualistic foundation for understanding the world. While on the basis of this foundation an analytical distinction can be made between fact and value, in the actual phenomenal world the two arise in a relationship that can not be undone. NOMA's dualism overlooks the very thing that grants religion meaning in this world. That is to say, the ability to interpret the world of facts as it is given on a sensory level grounds religion as meaningful for individuals. In other words, each form of religion must make reference to a foundational, material context in which it dwells—without which it would collapse into an arbitrary and unaccountable dogmatism.

Notwithstanding Gould's admirable reconciliatory attempts, under scrutiny the NOMA principle reveals its limitations. Furthermore, the impracticality of a neat fact/value division points to another commonly taken-for-granted distinction made between science and religion that must be interrogated before we can arrive at a new formulation for ethical mitigation. It is an aspect of religion—its situating of the ultimate foundation for values beyond the realm of human knowing or experiencing (a foundation often understood as God)—that compels us to speak of it as *metaphysical*. Science, on the contrary, is usually discussed in terms of "objectivity," "neutrality," and even "nature," as it professes to speak only of the most concrete and knowable circumstances and proves its theories through experiment, replicability, and practice rather than faith. Although man-made disasters (for example, nuclear meltdown and climate change) and ethical debates over technologies (for example, abortion and human cloning) often bring science into

enc_12081950_humani-generis_en.html.

25 Gould 1997.

26 Benjamin 2003, 36.

27 Benjamin 2003, 43.

28 Benjamin 2004, 404.

dialogue with socio-cultural values, science is generally not regarded in terms of metaphysics. However, the following section draws upon Heidegger's philosophy of metaphysics in order to show how science, as well as religion, is rooted in a metaphysical foundation.

Technological Enframing: The Metaphysics of Science

Heidegger uses etymology to recover essential meanings of words used by ancient Greek philosophers. Aletheia was the Greek goddess of truth; the Greek term *aletheia* means "revealing." Heidegger argues that, in contemporary Western thought, "truth" typically means "the correctness of an idea."[29] However, for the ancient Greeks, truth was that which is revealed. That is to say, truth is that which, moving from concealment into unconcealment, appears in nature of its own accord. But as we know, that which appears can be shaped one way or another. For example, the shoes that a cobbler makes could take any number of different forms. Thus, for the Greeks, the word *techne* designated that which, through man, shapes things to turn out one particular way instead of another. In this usage, *techne* is not merely a manufacturing, it "is a mode of revealing."[30] Keeping in mind that for the Greeks truth was that which is revealed, Heidegger can say that *techne* is a mode of revealing truth. Thus *techne* belonged to the fine arts as well as to human activities of a more instrumental nature—the poet revealed truth through the shaping of his poetry.[31]

Technology as we know it today has its roots in *techne*. For Heidegger, modern technology is still a mode of revealing; however, it now challenges nature and compels it to come forth, or reveal itself, as "standing-reserve." That is, modern technology demands that nature yield itself up as resources to be manipulated and managed.[32] Following the Greek concept of *techne*, we can then say that modern technology is a way of revealing nature as resources for instrumental use by humans. Furthermore, because *techne* is a way of revealing truth, this instrumental way of perceiving nature is legitimated as the correct or true interpretation of the human relationship to the world. Heidegger argued that this way of perceiving the world—which he termed *Enframing*—is the essence of technology. In itself, enframing is nothing technological; rather, it is the way in which nature comes to be seen as resources to be exploited.[33]

Heidegger argued that technological enframing prefigures the objectives and practices of modern science.[34] But how does this relate to our argument that science has a metaphysical foundation? Science strives to achieve knowledge of truths that exist independently of humans *via* its method of research.[35] Yet scientific research cannot proceed in a void; there must first be a space in which research can take place. That is, there must be some idea—what Heidegger calls the "ground plan"—of nature in which research can unfold. Through the geometry and mathematics that, *via* Galileo and classical physics, established idealized shapes as those through which the empirical world is filtered, science conceptualizes nature as a "self-contained system of motion of units of mass related spatiotemporally."[36] Only through this ground plan are events in nature recognized as events. Thus research must bind itself to this particular view of nature for its procedure to be considered valid.[37] Of course, science recognizes the incredible diversity, complexity, and changeableness of interweaving phenomena; thus scientific research requires procedure to be able to apprehend, out of constant flux and change, objectively representable facts. But the ground plan that designates that which from these facts is ascertained is always already set. Thus before it has even begun, science has established a normative conception of the world, a conception that is then validated by subsequent research. Through science, man creates a model of the universe and his place in it.[38]

We can say, then, that science rests on metaphysical

29 Heidegger 1977a, 12.

30 *Ibid*., 13.

31 *Ibid.*, 34.

32 Heidegger 1977a, 14–15.

33 *Ibid*., 20–23.

34 Heidegger 1977a, 23.

35 Heidegger 1977b, 170.

36 Heidegger 1977c, 119.

37 *Ibid.*, 119.

38 *Ibid.*, 128.

foundations. Metaphysics here does not mean a system of thought attributable to a particular thinker or group of thinkers.[39] Rather, metaphysics is "thought as the truth of what is as such in its entirety."[40] Metaphysics is thinking that accounts for existence only through principles or foundations that rest beyond actual phenomenal experience. Thus we can say science is a metaphysical enterprise because it relies upon a concept of what nature is as the foundation for all its findings. This concept then confronts us as the "truth" of existence.

Nihilism and Metaphysics

If Heidegger allows us to view science in terms of the dominant metaphysical expression of our era, Vattimo charts possibilities for an ethical politics that proceeds from this realization. Democratic ethics require values, yet as we have observed, values often belong, in our era, to metaphysical systems of thought. It is therefore not immediately clear what form ethics might take without inhabiting a metaphysical position that posits its own fundamental assumptions, or, as Aristotle would have it, a "golden mean" beyond experiential existence to which our values and morals are calibrated. Indeed, Vattimo recognizes a great peril in metaphysics and orients his philosophy to its overcoming: "the effective rationalization of the world through science and technology unveils the true meaning of metaphysics: will to power, violence, the destruction of liberty."[41] In order to show what form this overcoming might take, and how it may be enacted with respect to philosophical problems that have been politicized in the way that intelligent design has been, we must first understand the nature of the danger posed by metaphysics.

Drawing on Heidegger's thought, Vattimo argues that European philosophy, from the pre-Socratics to Nietzsche, was characterized by the "oblivion of Being" that is the core of metaphysics. Since the beginning of philosophy, Being itself has been thought of not in its relationship to the "concrete historical situation of users of language"[42] but as some kind of condition, or status, that has an inherent character and that may be "discovered" or "revealed" through proper thought.[43] This oblivion "forgets" that Being is not an object, but is the very "aperture within which alone man and the world, subject and object, can enter into relationship."[44] For Heidegger, the externalization of Being from human immediacy meant the objectification of the relationship of man and world into something to be "discovered" and "revealed" rather than simply lived. This "forgetting" of Being allowed philosophy to take as its task a certain searching for the nature of Being—which took the form of the seeking out and securing of "ultimate foundations" to which human actuality was subsequently oriented. And, as we have discussed, the privileging of thought originating outside experience as the context in which to consider our lived actualities is the very essence of metaphysics.

The dominance of certain foundational thought is understood by Vattimo as the "violent essence of metaphysics."[45] In our current era, "the foundationalism of metaphysics is … responsible for modern rationalization, its violence, and its fragmentizing effect on the significance of existence."[46] Violence is commonly thought of in terms of the denial of rights, an unwelcome imposition, or a physical harming—but Vattimo does not mean only the instances and conditions that confront us as ostensibly violent but also the very unquestioned principles that allow, bring upon, and "legitimize" those conditions. We have discussed the specific hazards of the total rationalization of society through technological enframing—hazards that Karl Marx articulated when he spoke of the "alienation" of man from his "species-being," as did Max Weber when he described the "iron-cage" of unrestrained bureaucratization—but metaphysics also poses the more general violence of the imposi-

39 Heidegger 1977d, 54.

40 *Ibid*.

41 2004, 11.

42 Vattimo 2004, 4.

43 Consider, for example, Plato's theory of forms that views all earthly objects of sensory perception as but "pale shadows" of the unchanging, ultimate forms that belong to a higher realm beyond human experience.

44 Vattimo 2004, 6.

45 2004, 11.

46 *Ibid.*

tion of normativities on others. For example, moral codes, whether derived from religion or the realm of scientific "facts," may ascribe a negativity to certain activities or conditions and therefore legitimate their violent oppression. Metaphysics, therefore, oppresses in that it designates the intelligibility and moral textures of the aperture of Being through which the world presents itself.

In contemplating overcoming this violence, Vattimo rejects the popular recourse to "critical" thinking, "which could only arise through reliance upon another first principle … and thus a foundation."[47] He holds that the proper response to metaphysics is *nihilism*. To some, nihilism could signify *atheism* or *anarchy*, which would be wholly imprecise. Rather, Vattimo means "what Nietzsche called nihilism: not just the nihilism that acts as a solvent of all principles and values but also an 'active' nihilism, the chance to begin a different history."[48] The dissolution of principles must prefigure an ethics equipped to counter the violence of metaphysics, otherwise we "[repeat] the metaphysical game of the first principles by taking a specific and particular myth as an ideological absolute."[49] The question arises: Surely principles exist precisely to *prevent* violence; without them are we not opening ourselves up to the possibility of unchecked exploitation, oppression, and other harms? To the contrary: "the temptation to violence may never be extinguished—any more than it is within any other frame of reference. The difference here is that the temptation is stripped of all appearance of legitimacy: something that is not the case with essentialist ethics."[50]

To arrive at an ethics from a position of nihilism, we must adopt what Vattimo calls an "ontology of actuality." This is a philosophical position, otherwise known as "weak ontology," that abandons its orientation to the Truth of Being—which, in our era, is actually the oblivion of Being—and instead attempts "to clarify what Being signifies in the present situation."[51] In other words, weak ontology forgoes what is ordinarily thought of as the matter of ontology: the underlying "strong" terms of Being, the lasting matter of "is-ness." Instead, it becomes "weak" by contemplating the meaning of Being as it confronts us through lived actuality—that is, as Being is presented by the governing metaphysical principles of an era. Weak ontology is ethical when it beholds violence and asks: From what principle(s) does this violence obtain its legitimacy? The ethics of weak ontology is therefore a hermeneutical engagement with metaphysics in order to reveal the violence it legitimizes. This hermeneutics conceptualizes the world as a conflict of interpretations and reinterpretations, rather than lasting Truths, and thus weakens metaphysical foundationalism.

Nihilism and Intelligent Design

The foregoing analysis equips us to rethink the intelligent design debate in at least three ways. First, we have shown that attempts to distinguish science and religion as the proper magisteria of fact and value are symptomatic of the metaphysical tendency to compartmentalize reality in accordance with certain ordering principles. Therefore, the intelligent design debate—as it is articulated in terms of science and religion—owes its volatility to its appearance as "a dogmatic clash between conflicting truths."[52]

Second, by calling into question any ontologically "strong" foundation of reality, truth, or the legitimacy of knowledge, and by recognizing any such ideas as metaphysically contingent, we open the way for a hermeneutic acceptance of the ideas, theories, and values of various schools of thought that ask to be considered "scientific" or "religious," and so on, without orienting this acceptance to a hierarchical or exclusionary principle of legitimacy. This allows a contemplation of intelligent design and Darwinian evolutionism—or any other constellation of thought—in their unique "provenance and heritage."[53] In this way, we can reclaim thought in

47 2004, 11.

48 *Ibid.*, 40.

49 *Ibid.*, 41.

50 *Ibid.*, 47.

51 Vattimo 2004, 3–4.

52 Vattimo and Zabala 2002, 454.

53 Vattimo 2004, 40.

its historical and cultural situatedness, rather than permitting it to stand over us, and dispel the finality of facticity from which violence draws its power.

Third, and most importantly, the terms of the intelligent design debate reveal something of the irresistible hold of technological enframing in our current era. This can be observed in the fact that proponents of intelligent design can be seen to adopt what metaphysics has secured as the dominant legitimizing discourse of our era: that of scientific evidence. Perhaps the most threatening and objectionable element of intelligent design to orthodox scientists—and certainly what has prompted responses such as that at the SALK institute—is the appropriation of a language that, in our current era, is deemed proper to the project of universal rationalism legitimated by technological enframing. NOMA speaks of technological enframing when it rationalizes a separation of the spheres of religion and science to nullify the mutual threat of de-legitimization felt by those with the slightest insecurities about their position *vis-à-vis* Truth. We must ask: What do some scientists fear from a contradictory explanation, and what do some people invested in a theological principle fear from the theories of Darwinian evolutionism, unless both obey the logic inherent to technological enframing that permits, indeed *legitimizes,* only one dominant principle?

That intelligent design theory reveals the metaphysical foundations of our era points to the possibilities of nihilism's "chance to begin a different history."[54] The political impasse reached on this subject calls for a radical rethinking, and we have put forward the case for a weak ontological reconciliation. Immediate practical solutions with respect to the question of the pedagogy of origins may only be tentatively arrived at until a rigorous analysis of nihilism's implications is carried out. However, a democratic ethics as outlined here does not advocate an "anything-goes" approach that would permit without proviso the teaching of intelligent design in science classes. Rather, in recognition that education must (pragmatically) be compartmentalized into certain subjects, nihilism—as elaborated herein—would suggest that science should not be privileged with an aura of authority over that which is real, but presented as much as possible in its own "provenance and heritage." It would be the duty of science teachers to incorporate a hermeneutics to their pedagogy that explicitly qualifies the theories of science as historically situated, always only hypothetical, and contingent upon an ordering vision of the world. Of course, Darwinian evolutionism as a scientific theory should be subject to questioning—but it would breach the ethics of weak ontology to do so through the import of a foundationalism. Whether or not intelligent design theory speaks of, explicitly or implicitly, any form of fundamental principles whatsoever is the question that must be asked first. Second, the question of whether intelligent design theory actually emanates from the provenance and heritage of science—or from some other influence—remains in some doubt. If these concerns cannot be met, and if our analysis is accepted, it is difficult to ethically justify the inclusion of intelligent design theory, at least in science curricula.

Nihilism does not deny scientific rationality, Darwinism, or, indeed, God—to do so would require a strong ontology of the universal. It opposes only the imposition of normative frameworks that proceed from such ontologies. And it is most crucial to the limiting of future violence that this imposition is resisted as far as possible in the education of our children.

54 Vattimo 2004, 40.

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"Christian Society": A More Influential Concept Than Often Understood?

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Abstract

The rise of monarchies; the rise of cities; the supposedly radical break in the Reformation with the communal emphasis of the Middle Ages—all have been described as signs of early secularization. This paper will dispute those claims. It will examine the concept of "Christian society" and demonstrate that it still had a powerful hold on the minds of early modern Europeans, yielding both constructive attempts to strengthen society and fearful attempts to purge it of the contamination of the Other.

"Christian society" was an aspiration for many people in the Middle Ages. The longing—it was more than a concept—informed choices made in the political realm in the attempt to bring about both social harmony and social righteousness under the umbrella of the Catholic Church. Many believed it possible to construct a just, peaceful, and faithful society with which God would be pleased and upon which He would pour out his blessings. Church and state were the "two heads" of Christendom, which were, in effect, to mediate such a grace to the people. This sacramental view of "Christian society" had a powerful hold on the imagination. Unlike many historians, my contention is that "Christian society" continued to have an influential impact on aspirations and behaviours in the early modern period. I will give evidence for my claim in this paper.

As in many sub-disciplines of history, popular religion in early modern Europe has experienced a paradigm shift. Through much of the last century, the Reformation was understood as creating a radical break with the moribund spirituality of the late Middle Ages. Excessive social control by the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church accounted for this "autumn" of an era.[1] It was widely accepted that this control had to be shaken off, and the Reformers took the first step. However, too much bound by the faith that had enveloped them, they could not move farther. The Enlightenment broke through to a conception of society formed on a basis other than faith. This paradigm was particularly congenial to historians sympathetic to secular liberal democracy. Still, they generally considered the Reformers as heroes who initiated the process of secularization. Recent historiography reveals flaws in this narrative. It is probably accurate to credit the *philosophes* with effecting the transition to a new basis for social organization (though they might have been disappointed that this basis was not Reason, but romanticized nationalism). However, the Reformers were not secularizers, and the break with the medieval period was not as significant as many have postulated.[2]

One approach to this paradigm shift, one suggestive of more fruitful refinements yet to come, is to examine the work on "Christian society" of different scholars. John Bossy tackles the objectivist treatment of "religion" and "society" by Emile Durkheim.[3] Bossy objects on three grounds. First,

1 For the classic expression of a waning culture, see Johan Huizinga, *The Autumn of the Middle Ages*, tr. Rodney J. Payton, Ulrich Mammitzsch (University of Chicago Press, 1996).

2 Some confessional historians—both Protestant and Catholic—have contributed as well to the impression of a major rupture between them.

3 John Bossy, "Some Elementary Forms of Durkheim," in *Past and Present* 95 (May 1982), 3–18. Durkheim's book, *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*,

there was in the late medieval/early modern period no such thing as religion as a *system*. In no way was it something outside of oneself that could be examined in a detached fashion. Religion was, in fact, the expression of one's Christian piety. The objective manner of speaking was very rarely used. Second, relying on Raymond Williams' work, Bossy suggests two/three meanings for the word "society." It could mean simply "companionship" or "fellowship." The more objective meaning could indicate either "the body of institutions or relationships of a group" or, more abstractly, it could mean "the condition in which the institutions and relationships are formed."[4] In the early modern period, only the first meaning (the relational and non-objective) applies: "So society for Catholics was practically of the order of the sacred. It was a saving fraternity, the outward face of charity."[5] Yet Bossy diverges from the traditional paradigm: Protestants saw society in the same relational fashion, though probably with less intensity. Third, Bossy makes an important distinction. Durkheim could affirm the statement, "A country needs to have unity of religion to have unity of society." It appears to have great explanatory power: here is the reason unity of religion was so important in the early modern period. Bossy revises it slightly, but crucially: "A country needs to have unity of religion to have society." This revision, especially when applied to both Protestants and Catholics, deepens the enmeshment of society and religion. It explains, positively, the profound impact of religion on social order, and, negatively, the great fear that was unleashed when religious change or difference appeared to threaten the major overlap between religion and order. Thus, conflicts over disunity in religion do not reflect two stubborn groups battling, each unwilling to yield. Instead they reflect fear: fear for the well-being of all that might be dear—family, friends, village, monarch. The rise of Protestantism did not secularize (or objectivize) the notion of society, nor did it lessen this fear. "Christian society" was both a powerful heritage and a deep longing for both Protestants and Catholics in the sixteenth century.

The older paradigm often argued that the rise of absolutist monarchs represented a challenge to the hegemony of the priestly hierarchy and, thus, another aspect of the rise of secularism. Politically, there is truth in this picture. Yet we can doubt the priestly hegemony was quite so complete.[6] More importantly, we note the rise of monarchs did not represent a challenge to Christian society, but an alternative vision for pursuing that goal. Wayne Holt describes the symbolically charged coronation ceremony of the "Most Christian King" of France.[7] His vow included the promise to "preserve at all times true peace for the Church of God."[8] Gallicanism was so important to the French because many believed the King of France was in a better position to preserve and deepen Christian society than was the papacy, with its burdensome taxes and its predilection for luxury. The rise of the monarchy was not incipient secularism.

Further evidence comes from Spain. The king could help to preserve, in light of strictures from the priests, the local religion that was so important socially to the people. William Christian gives a detailed picture in *Local Religion in Sixteenth-Century Spain*.[9]

was published in 1915. Durkheim, considered by many to be the father of sociology, suggested that the organic connections in a society derived from the division of labour it embraced. Religion, he argued, was less "organic" and more ephemeral, more a part of the "mechanics" of the society. Both the organic and mechanical sources of social unity could be examined, he believed, in the detached, objectivist manner prevalent in so much scholarship in that period of overconfident modernity.

4 Bossy refers to Raymond Williams, *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (1976).

5 Bossy, "Durkheim," 11.

6 See one example of social resistance, Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, *Montaillou: The Promised Land of Error,* tr. Barbara Bray (New York: Vintage Books, 1979; originally published in French, 1975).

7 This exalted self-designation had venerable roots, going back to the coronation of Charlemagne by the Pope in 800, and even earlier to the baptism of the first Frankish (Merovingian) king, Clovis, in 496. In the sixteenth century, it competed for prestige with the more recent designation (by the Pope in 1496) of the Spanish monarchs as "Catholic kings."

8 Mack P. Holt, *The French Wars of Religion, 1562–1629* (Cambridge University Press, 1995), 8–12.

9 William A. Christian, Jr., *Local Religion in Sixteenth-Century Spain* (Princeton University Press, 1981).

When the Spanish Inquisition began to pay attention to Catholics (as opposed to Spaniards of Jewish or Muslim background), people stopped speaking of visions of saints and began to frequent rural shrines. To avoid scrutiny by inquisitors, the people shifted their devotional attention to sites away from the urban centres where the officials lived. These shrines had developed extensively in the eleventh century, and represented a "Christianization of the landscape"[10]: "Local religion was a fusion of sacred with secular, god-in-society or god-in-landscape … Sacred places, outlasting individuals as they do, come to stand not only for the *pueblo* of the moment, but also for the eternal *pueblo*."[11] In the end, an accommodation occurred: though the church was largely unsuccessful in suppressing aspects of popular religion, local religion did graft itself onto church-wide practices to survive.[12] The role of the king, especially Philip II, in this process is illuminating. As a sign of the status of Spain, but also as a means of royal identification with villagers, Philip arranged for the import of relics from many parts of Europe, and for their redistribution to many villages. Both the relics themselves and the royal patronage were sources of local pride. Kings, too, would visit local shrines as they travelled.[13] Loyalty to the dynasty grew stronger, strengthening the monarchy. Yet this strengthening was not an attack on Christian society (even though it was undermining the ecclesiastical hierarchy) but rather a deepening of this society, both in its intensely local particularity and, through the king, in its wider manifestation.

Cities, as locations of more famous shrines, still had an important function in Christian society in Spain.[14] The rise of European cities generally from the eleventh century has often been portrayed as another movement toward secularism; I argue that ambitious local government was not a secularizing trend. Cities did, with increasing wealth from trade, lead the way in challenging feudal structures.[15] Bernd Moeller's groundbreaking book describes how these cities successfully overthrew lay or ecclesiastical overlords, and established an internal governing mechanism that emphasized great solidarity among the local citizens. The magistrates on council and the citizens at large shared a common goal: the city should pursue both material and spiritual well-being. They understood solidarity to mean that the sins of one citizen could potentially bring divine judgment on the city. Piety was, therefore, encouraged by almost all.[16] When the town sought to usurp control of ecclesiastical elements, it was not done to lessen the influence of Christianity but rather to ensure its continued and effective local representation. Townspeople did not wish bishops with wider jurisdictions to overlook the city's needs. Towns, then, were viewed as Christian commonwealths, exemplars of Christian society. A subtle shift had taken place by the 1520s. Towns were no longer seen as connected to eternal salvation, yet they still held out the promise of guaranteeing peace on earth, a goal stemming from the pursuit of Christian society.[17] So, ambitious local government was not a secularizing innovation, but an aspect of Christian faithfulness within the urban commonwealth.

Moeller seems to endorse the secularizing impact of the Reformation when he asserts that Reformation preaching, especially that of Zwingli and Bucer, dissolved the medieval conception of sacred society where one is saved by belonging to a holy community.[18] Yet he actually points to flexibility in the concept of Christian society: the Reformed stream of Reformation teaching—Bucer and Zwingli are two

10 Christian, *Local Religion,* 91.

11 Christian, *Local Religion,* 158. Christian uses "secular" to refer to the mundane, the daily, the tangible. I have used it as a synonym for the "non-religious." *Pueblo* means "village."

12 Christian, *Local Religion,* 161–77.

13 Christian, *Local Religion,* 134–37, 153–58.

14 Christian, *Local Religion,* 152.

15 The cities of the Holy Roman Empire provide a helpful illustration: Bernd Moeller, *Imperial Cities and the Reformation, Three Essays*, tr., ed. by H. C. Erik Midelfort and Mark U. Edwards, Jr. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1972), 41–53; Robert Alan Schneider, *Public Life in Toulouse, 1463–1789: From Municipal Republic to Cosmopolitan City* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989), paints a similar picture from southwest France.

16 Moeller, *Imperial Cities,* 62–63: it was often the populace that pressured the magistrates to adopt the Reformation as part of this search for communal piety.

17 Moeller, *Imperial Cities,* 53.

18 Moeller, *Imperial Cities,* 90.

prominent representatives—became dominant in the imperial cities of western and southern Germany precisely because it engaged "the particularly vital communal spirit" there.[19] Christian society was differently conceived in many places influenced by Reformation preaching, but its powerful hold on the heart remained.

The rise of monarchies, the rise of cities, the supposedly radical break in the Reformation with the communal emphasis of the Middle Ages—all have been described as signs of early secularization. Instead, we should see them as efforts to deepen or purify Christian society in reaction to disappointment with a compromised church hierarchy.[20] The flexibility of the notion of Christian society demonstrates its deep influence on the Christian imagination. If Christendom as a whole could not live up to its calling, then perhaps a smaller unit—the city, the kingdom—could. If an overtly sacramental conception of society seemed disappointing, then Reformers could reconceive this society as one united under the preaching of the gospel. The concept could mutate, but it was not abandoned.[21]

This passion for Christian society could bear a dark side. Examples are not hard to find. Robert Scribner, probably the most influential of English-speaking historians of popular religion in this period, published widely. In a book of his essays collected posthumously,[22] one important piece stands out. "Elements of Popular Belief" demonstrates the continuity of popular beliefs from pre-Reformation Catholic times to the post-Reformation. Despite the best efforts of Protestant preachers, the populace continued to have a "weakly sacramentalized" view of the world, one in which the supernatural inhabited the material realm in ways both orthodox and less orthodox. This continuity reminds us of the persistence of local religion in Spain, and certainly undermines the argument for a radical break with late medieval spirituality in the Reformation. Scribner's study of efforts to use the woodcut to widen the reach of the Reformation, *For the Sake of Simple Folk,* was a new departure for historians. Since many people were illiterate, the woodcut functioned as a form of mass Protestant propaganda. Scribner contends that it was weak as a teaching tool,[23] and he is unsure how successful it was as propaganda.[24] Still, it is not unreasonable to assume a significant impact from a widely used medium. Its merger of anticlerical themes with Reformation claims, its use of the notion of carnival[25] with its predominant theme of "the world turned upside down" as a framework for criticizing the Catholics, its reliance on both biblical themes of judgment and the practices of astrology and of the study of heavenly portents to serve as a warning of a society under threat, the identification of the pope with the Antichrist—all these themes showed a desire to regain momentum in the movement toward Christian society, a momentum many felt had been lost under

19 Moeller, *Imperial Cities,* 103.

20 See Peter A. Dykema and Heiko A. Oberman, eds., *Anticlericalism in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Leiden: Brill, 1994). Anticlericalism was widespread and represented the cynicism of the populace for the many in the church hierarchy who obviously loved luxury and had little spiritual "sensitivity"; only rarely was it a rejection of Christianity.

21 Even after the French Wars of Religion, Christian society was not abandoned. The focus fell on strengthening the absolutism of the Bourbon Kings. I suggest that secular tendencies actually began in reaction to the carnage of the Thirty Years War (1618–1648) on the continent, and the Civil War/Commonwealth period (1642–1660) in England. In both these conflicts, what I will call the "dark side" of the conception of Christian society was a clear factor. Consequently, we see a drift—a notably slow drift—toward either rational religion or Enlightenment skepticism.

22 R. W. Scribner, *Religion and Culture in Germany (1400–1800),* ed. Lyndal Roper (Leiden: Brill, 2001).

23 R. W. Scribner, *For the Sake of Simple Folk: Popular Propaganda for the German Reformation* (Cambridge University Press, 1981), chapter 7. Scribner believes that the woodcuts could transmit the "campaign slogans" of the Protestants very well; they were too simple a medium, however, to teach the subtleties of Protestant doctrine.

24 Scribner, *Simple Folk,* 9–10.

25 Carnival preceded Lent. Lent was a lengthy period of spiritual discipline prior to the commemoration of Christ's death and resurrection on Good Friday and Easter Sunday. Carnival was a riotous time in which both the social hierarchy and the church's moral teachings were widely disregarded.

episcopal leadership.[26] Though some Catholics shared Protestant anticlerical concerns, Scribner's detailed analysis of numerous woodcuts makes it easy to understand how, when many Catholics responded with similar vehemence in favour of their version of Christian society, the dark side of religious violence was near—as I will now show.

Inga Clendinnen tells a heart-rending story of a murderous rampage, carried out under an aura of legality with the support of the Spanish authorities in the Yucatan, to try forcibly to Christianize the Maya Indians. Their conversion had become suspect because of compromises between their old way of life and the pattern of the Christian faith they had supposedly converted to—at least, as this pattern was understood by their erstwhile protectors, the Franciscan monks. Protectors became agents of severe punishment. Ideology, including a commitment to Christian society, triumphed over the ideals of sacrificial service ingrained in the order.[27]

Barbara Diefendorf produced a masterful work in her study of the rise of violent tendencies among the Catholics in Paris, tendencies that produced the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre in 1572.[28] First, fear developed as a result of the blockade of food to the capital by Huguenot armies. Then, aspects of a Catholic commitment to Christian society sought to draw the Protestants back into the Catholic fold: military-style processions with familiar relics were tried first. Polemical preaching followed. The preaching did not reconvert the Protestants, but it did stir up militia groups. They became increasingly ready to do violence "in the name of keeping the peace"—a concept very much tied in with notions of Christian society. The rising hostility around them made Parisian Huguenots a tightly knit social grouping. Their isolation increased their vulnerability. The truly violent were a small percentage of the Catholic population. The weakness of the Crown made the militia groups bolder. They ignored any attempts by the court to tolerate the presence of the "heretics." Then, fateful words were uttered by the duc de Guise upon leaving the lodgings of the assassinated Huguenot leader Admiral Coligny: "It is the king's command." Some in the confused night took these words not to describe the limited mission to eliminate one leader whom Charles IX found too strong, but to permit killing all Huguenots.[29] "The militia stood at the ready to carry out an order that it wanted to hear."[30] They were "sharing in a vital effort to rid their polis of the corruption of heresy and return it to a pristine state."[31] They could not accept the abandonment of their perception of "society." The massacres (including the echoes in a dozen provincial cities) killed thousands because the Catholic majority, even if many abhorred the murderous rampage, shared the same conception of Christian society.

In this context, we consider Denis Crouzet. Crouzet's *La genèse de la Réforme français* followed up on his earlier ground-breaking *Les Guerriers de Dieu*. These works could be typified as glorious successes and glorious failures. He de-emphasizes socio-economic and socio-cultural factors in explaining the rise of Calvinism and its rivalry with Catholicism, and convincingly argues that religious motivations played a key role.[32]

26 Scribner, *Simple Folk*, chapters 3, 4, 5, 6. Euan Cameron, *The European Reformation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 56–61, says that anticlerical measures were not a sign of incipient secularism but an "ownership" of the church by the laity, who genuinely believed Christian society would be better served by their measures. For a wealth of detailed local studies, see Dykema and Oberman, *Anticlericalism*.

27 Inga Clendinnen, *Ambivalent Conquests: Maya and Spaniard in Yucatan, 1517–1570* (Cambridge University Press, 1987). See, too, her earlier article "Disciplining the Indians: Franciscan Ideology and Missionary Violence in Sixteenth-Century Yucatan," in *Past and Present* (February 1982), pp. 27–48. It is fascinating to note that the Mayans abandoned their own gods—whom they deemed defeated by the Franciscans' show of force—and adopted Christianity. Yet, like the local religions in Spain at the same time, they did so "on their own terms" with resistance to the forms dictated by religious authorities.

28 Barbara B. Diefendorf, *Beneath the Cross: Catholics and Huguenots in Sixteenth-Century Paris* (Oxford University Press, 1991).

29 Diefendorf, *Beneath*, chapter 6.

30 Orest Ranum, reviewer, *Beneath the Cross* in *The Journal of Modern History* 66 (June 1994), 383.

31 Diefendorf, *Beneath*, 171–72.

32 Denis Crouzet, *La genèse de la Réforme français, 1520–1560* (Paris: Sèdes, 1996), 477–591; Denis Crouzet,

Unfortunately, Crouzet frequently overstates his case. He often makes his case more "sinister" than the evidence allows for. For example, he refers to an incident in Toulouse in 1532, where forty-one warrants were issued for the arrest of suspected Lutherans, both students and professors, in the respected law faculty at the university.[33] One professor, Jean de Caturce, was executed. Crouzet's narration focuses on only a half dozen participants who are cast as conspirators. He minimizes the university connection. He treats Jean de Boysonné, a popular professor of Roman law who was forced to abjure publicly, as a committed Lutheran, and the group as millenarian in emphasis. These claims create a false impression. Caturce was a Lutheran, but Boysonné was a Catholic humanist. Instead of treating the group as millenarian conspirators, it is more appropriate to see group members as temporarily losing an academic battle with the scholastics when the local *Parlement* took the side of the latter.[34] While we prefer Diefendorf's careful handling of her sources to Crouzet's excessive psychologizing, generally their depictions agree. It is the concern to maintain (for Catholics) or renew (for Huguenots) Christian society that allowed both to participate in acts of violence.[35]

Philip Benedict, relying on both social and cultural historical methods, deepens our understanding of Huguenots in the seventeenth century. His erudite collection of essays, *The Faith and Fortunes of France's Huguenots*,[36] weighs in against Crouzet's psychologizing as well. The decline of religious violence did not result from Catholic guilt, but from a shift in local balances of power: one party or the other became numerically so much stronger that the minority party did not risk an open challenge. Commitment to their respective views of Christian society had not abated. In the same vein, Benedict demonstrates that Huguenot theorists embraced notions of freedom of conscience only when it became clear their dream of reforming the entire Gallican church could not be achieved.[37] Most helpfully, he deals with the popular recent approach to this period called "confessionalization." Benedict rejects the stronger form of this theory as inapplicable to France, at least. This theoretical view links the formation of religious group identity with wider forms of social disciplining and the building of modern states. He does accept a weaker view of confessionalization as the formation of religious group identity as a defensive measure in light of the existence of rival alternatives.[38] Yet this movement represented another shift in the conception of Christian society, more inward- than outward-looking, at first still embracing the political unit over which the particular confession was dominant, but also preparing the way for the ultimate rise of denominationalism in the more secularized states that slowly emerged, beginning in the latter half of the seventeenth century.

John Bossy calls this latter development "Migrations of the Holy."[39] Having painted a portrait of an intensely social religion in the late medieval period, Bossy believes Europeans by 1700 sought to replace a lost sense of social solidarity by other means. As I mentioned above,[40] absolutist monarchy was one such avenue. He sees the discipline of music as an intimation of the holy that ultimately drifted away from the church. Words, too, became more objective and less descriptive of solidarity. While Bossy can blame Protestants for this loss,[41] he can also agree[42] with my suggestion in this paper that, in a somewhat different form, Protestants were so committed to Christian society that they took enormous risks in seeking to do

Les Guerriers de Dieu: La violence au temps des troubles de religion (vers 1525 - vers 1610), 2 *tomes* (Seyssel: Champ Vallon, 1990).

33 Crouzet, *Le genèse,* 212–14.

34 See Schneider, *Toulouse,* 47–49.

35 The Huguenots participated in many acts of iconoclasm, a small number of murders of Catholic leaders, the attempted abduction of kings, and war.

36 Philip Benedict, *The Faith and Fortunes of France's Huguenots, 1600–85* (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2001), 302.

37 Benedict, *Faith and Fortunes,* 308.

38 Benedict, *Faith and Fortunes,* 313–16.

39 John Bossy, *Christianity in the West, 1400–1700* (Oxford University Press, 1985), chap. 8.

40 See n. 21.

41 See his discussion of the interiorizing effect of Protestant celebrations of the Eucharist and its lessening of the social bond: *Christianity in the West,* 141–43.

42 See above.

better than they felt the Catholic hierarchy had done.

Protestantism was not a conscious secularizing movement. Christian society was a powerful assumption of almost all Christians in the late medieval *and* early modern period. Scholars certainly are aware of its importance at one level. Yet many seem to miss the immense power behind its continued pursuit by both Protestants and Catholics. This paper has pointed the way toward further reassessment of its place. It was the dark side of this longing, the fear-filled insistence on only one manifestation of Christian society and the resulting carnage, that, by 1648, turned Europeans (slowly!) in another direction to seek to constitute society on a less "comprehensive" basis, one more able to accept social and religious diversity.

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Warp, Weft, and Womanly Wiles: Weaving as an Expression of Female Power
The cases of Penelope, Philomela, and Arachne

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> Like the Fates, they weave and determine destinies, not for others, but for themselves. – *Kruger, 137*

> Power is the ability to take one's place in whatever discourse is essential to action and the right to have one's part matter. – *Heilbrun, 18*

Abstract

This paper considers how weaving—an activity traditionally emblematic of classical feminine virtues such as modesty, chastity, and obedience—is used by Homer and Ovid to symbolize women's resistance to the mores of a social patriarchy. Homer's Penelope and Ovid's Philomela and Arachne all use weaving to redefine themselves and their roles within a limited—and limiting—social environment. The women use this traditional symbol of a woman's domestic role to wield power that has repercussions far beyond the domestic sphere. Not only do Homer and Ovid challenge the conventional idea of womanly virtue in the classical world, but they recast these women as authors of their own destinies, resisting social pressures, challenging patriarchal and Olympic authority, and defying the expectations of those who would exert control over them.

By using weaving as a metaphor for resistance, Ovid and Homer demand that we re-examine our understanding of social power in the classical world. Though their environment and social roles limit their authority within the public sphere, Penelope, Philomela, and Arachne define on their own terms how they will respond to their physical circumstances. Wielding a shuttle is not quite like wielding a sword, but by exercising traditional roles in untraditional ways, Homer and Ovid's female characters still wield extraordinary social power, with profound social consequences.

Introduction

... talibus orsa modis lana sua fila sequente[1]

There is nothing new in our understanding that the "canvas" of a textile may be used to signify meaning beyond the textile's physical capacity to clothe, shelter, prettify, or otherwise serve human beings. Long before the classical poetry of Greece and Rome popularized the rich metaphorical possibilities of weaving, human society—particularly women—wove cultural and personal symbolism into cloth. We can think of the textile as being the ancient ancestor of written text (our own term "text" being derived from the Latin *texere,* meaning "to construct" or "to weave").

But the relationship between weaving and symbolic meaning is much older than the advent of writing. Scholars have pointed out that while the end result of weaving—that is, the textile—is akin to the text on a written page, the *act* of weaving is in many ways analogous to the composition of oral poetry, which has no tactile end-product but is "woven" extemporaneously by the oral poet, using a range of poetic elements stored in his memory.[2] Nor is the

1 Ovid, *Metamorphoses,* 4.54: "She begins to spin this tale … as she spins her woollen thread." (English translations of Ovid are by Anthony S. Kline, available at http://etext.virginia.edu/latin/ovid/trans/Ovhome.htm.)

2 See, for example, discussions throughout Scheid and Svenbro 1996, Rosati 1999, and Kruger 2001. In her studies of Homer's Helen and Penelope, and of Ovid's Arachne and Philomela, Kruger is particularly clear about the distinction between the metaphorical relationship of

weaving metaphor solely the domain of the poet: the historian weaves individual and public histories into a cohesive whole,[3] the rhetorician weaves diverse points into a logical argument,[4] the politician devises solutions to knotty political problems by weaving compromise amongst members of the state.[5] In this capacity, each weaver is in essence a "creator" of something new and, conversely, anyone who creates something new can be likened metaphorically to the weaver who weaves the threads of the weft onto those of the warp, joining separate elements into a single, greater whole.

The Homeric epics and Ovid's *Metamorphoses* both make traditional, yet elegant, use of the "multi-textual" weaving metaphor—as symbolic of the poets' own artistic craftsmanship, for example, and of the complex *textus* of the narrative tale. Yet both poets also invert the weaving metaphor, using an activity traditionally emblematic of feminine virtues (such as modesty, chastity, and obedience) to symbolize female resistance to the mores of a social patriarchy.[6] Homer's Penelope, and Ovid's Philomela and Arachne all use weaving as a tool to redefine themselves and their roles within a limited—and limiting—social environment.[7] The juxtaposition of two such divergent concepts as "weaving woman" and "social activist" serves to make the comparison, and the narrative outcomes, more striking than if either poet had simply recounted tales of female resistance to authority. In all three cases, the weavers use the traditional symbol of a woman's domestic role to wield power that has repercussions far beyond the domestic sphere. In this manner, not only do Homer and Ovid challenge the conventional idea of womanly virtue in the classical world, but they recast women in a role that emphasizes their social influence rather than their deference to authority.

Historian Elizabeth Barber suggests three reasons for the symbolic representation of meaning through textile across human history.[8] While the third reason

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weaving to speaking and that of weaving to writing:

> The difference between the weaving of Arachne and Philomela and that of Helen and Penelope constitutes a distinction between the oral and written word .... for Helen and Penelope, process is of primary concern: Their texts imitate the manner of oral poetry, where significance (signification) lies not in product (textile) but in the flow of the story's language, in the whir of the shuttle, or tongue, thrown across the story's warp or plot .... the weaving of Helen and Penelope exists in the service of a larger text, the epic (oral) poem .... Conversely, with its emphasis on product, the stories of Arachne and Philomela represent a culture rooted more deeply in the written tradition, reflecting the storywriter Ovid rather than the story-teller, Homer. (83–84)

This understanding of the oral/literate application of the weaving metaphor is strengthened by the fact that "[t]he only clear reference to writing in Homer" is in the *Iliad* (6.155–97): Proteus, King of Argos, sends orders for Bellerophon's death *written on tablets* to the King of Lycia. (See Marquardt 1993, 154)

3 As Herodotus does in his *Histories*.

4 For example, Scheid and Svenbro (143–45) suggest that Cicero (along with other Roman writers), in his desire to see Roman society infused with the best of Greek culture and custom, wove ideas from ancient Greece with ideas of Rome to create one seamless Roman culture: "[It] was the triumphant acculturation of the Romans that partly explains the encroachment of the metaphor of linguistic and poetic weaving from Cicero's period on (if not earlier). For the metaphor of weaving becomes especially pertinent to someone who is engaged in transposing an entire culture into a new milieu." (144)

5 In Aristophanes' *Lysistrata* (411 BCE), Lysistratus justifies his "political ... plan ... to correct the muddled affairs of the Athenian empire" with a weaving metaphor: "As we do our thread: when it is tangled, we take it and raise it with our spindles here and there. In the same way we would dissolve this war, if we have our way, untangling the threads by means of ambassadors sent here and there." (Aristophanes, *Lysistrata*, 565–70, discussed in Scheid and Svenbro, 15).

6 Both poets invert the traditional metaphor in other ways as well (see the examples of Circe and Calypso below), but the use of weaving as a tool of female power provides particularly fertile ground for discussion.

7 See Kruger, who compares these three weavers to the Greek *Moi'rai*: "Like the Fates, they weave and determine destinies, not for others, but for themselves." (137)

8 She also gives a very good general summary of the history of weaving in various contexts. For the purposes of this discussion, it is useful to know that indirect evidence (that is, sewing instruments and beaded patterns found intact *in situ*) suggests string and sewing-craft were invented twenty to thirty thousand years ago. The earliest direct evidence for fibre craftsmanship is a piece of spun

she gives—that textiles might be used to divine the future or to solicit good fortune or favour of the gods—is not particularly relevant to this discussion, her first two reasons are. First, a textile can impart information difficult to transmit across time and distance. Symbols painted or tattooed onto a person's body might distinguish his or her social rank, and written information might convey to the reader personal details or the nature of a particular social role, but information cannot be transmitted *continuously* in either way, and each method of transmission has limitations. Body paint must be reapplied frequently, and in colder climates the body is hidden by clothing. Written information is useful to the recipient only if she is able to read it. Textiles, on the other hand, can be "read" in any language, as long as the visual symbology is understood. Textiles can also transmit their message across distance and time—they can be packaged and sent to a recipient (and potentially outlive their human messenger), the original message imparting the same information—in the same tone—that the creator/weaver intended.

In these ways "textile transmission" was efficient and durable in the ancient world where "oral transmission" and writing were less so. Clearly textile transmission had limitations of its own, but weaving enabled the weaver to "voice" a narrative, or deliver a message, in a manner that offered her a greater degree of autonomy and creativity—and the means to reach a wider audience—than she might otherwise have had.[9]

Secondly, suggests Barber, a textile can be used as a mnemonic device to record historical events or other cultural information. Helen's tapestry depiction of the Trojan War,[10] Philomela's woven portrayal of her rape by Tereus,[11] and Arachne's irreverent representation of the gods' amoral conduct[12] all function in this way. The weaver records events *as she wishes to record them*, wielding power not only over which information is told, but how it is told, using artistic persuasion to direct, to some degree, how the information will be received. Such mnemonic devices were not confined to the realm of mythology; historical tapestries were housed in the classical treasuries and frequently brought out for public viewing on special occasions.[13]

For the purposes of this discussion, it is necessary to flesh out Barber's distinctions. The two categories of metaphorical representation above (that is, weaving as representation of cultural information, and weaving as mnemonic device) work on several levels within the context of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and the Homeric epics.

First, the weaver herself may intentionally weave social information into her "text," or intend her weaving to be understood by other characters as a mnemonic device. For example, Helen's woven account of the Trojan War recounts historical events for posterity, arguably working as both a representation of cultural information and a mnemonic device.[14]

Second, the poet (Homer, in the case of Penelope, and Ovid in the cases of Philomela and Arachne) may wish to impart cultural information to his audience aside from the obvious narrative tale, and may intend his own weaving of the narrative or the material woven by his character to be understood as a mnemonic

cordage (resembling modern-day nylon rope), fossilized in one of the painted caves of Lascaux, France (ca. 15,000 BCE). The earliest examples of woven material come from Neolithic Iraq (6000–7000 BCE) (see especially Barber, 149–63).

9 Even today textiles act as metaphorical representations of cultural meaning, arming the creator or user with the power to make a social statement without making a verbal or written one. A necktie marks the businessman, a wedding dress the bride; the team jersey enables players to distinguish friend from foe, serving a function similar to that of the private-school uniform; an observant Jew's *kittel* (a white ceremonial garment) lends solemnity to religious occasions. In Rome (and elsewhere throughout antiquity and the Middle Ages), colour, too, conveyed social information: purple, for example, was generally used only by the social elite, the manufacture of the dye being a time-consuming and expensive process.

10 Homer, *Iliad,* 3.125–28.

11 Ovid, *Metamorphoses,* 6.571–86.

12 *Ibid.*, lines 103–28.

13 Barber 1994, 153.

14 Kruger notes that Homer's depiction of Helen "weaving history" in this way (aside from whatever parallels the reader sees between Homer's woven tale and Helen's woven tapestry) is suggestive of "not only the popularity of such cloths, but their importance as historical and political documents ..." (78)

device. For example, Ovid and Homer both reaffirm the idea of weaving as symbolic of womanly virtue, domestic skill, feminine grace, and modesty. Where the poets associate weaving-craft with undesirable "feminine" qualities, such as infidelity, sexual promiscuity, and deception, rather than weakening the "weaving equals a good woman" metaphor, these examples highlight the discongruity of the relationship between the women and their "unvirtuous" behaviour. For example, the fact that the enchantresses Circe and Calypso in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* are both introduced at their loom makes their subsequent deception and abuse of Odysseus all the more distasteful: a women who weaves just shouldn't *do* those things![15] The fact that Helen, the Greek epitome of the unfaithful woman, spends much of the *Iliad* weaving a tapestry of the Trojan War (an otherwise culturally valuable application of a woman's domestic abilities) seems a gauche mockery of all that is honourable in Greek womanhood. And while Arachne's refusal to acquiesce to Minerva's Olympic authority suggests that "her struggle for power, from a position of weakness, is ... a heroic one,"[16] the fact that she challenges the goddess to a weaving contest (when weaving is the quintessential symbol of feminine modesty and obedience in Roman society[17]) serves to highlight her immodest claims as absurd, and to underscore the aptness of her punishment: to exist as a spider forever doomed to weave in circles, without meaning, without power.

On a third level, the audience may understand aspects of the weaving metaphor of which the poet himself is unaware: that is, "meta-metaphors," or metaphors so imbedded within the poet's environmental context that they function as a cultural "underlay," visible only to one who systematically sets out to deconstruct the narrative and examine each element in light of its metaphorical meaning. Today, for example, the weaving metaphor is such an integral part of how we view creative invention that much of the time we are not aware of how it shapes our understanding of relationships and events: a good plot is "well woven"; a poorly told narrative doesn't "hang together." We speak of someone being "well suited" to the task. The solution to a crime must "fit" the evidence. *Et quae filum deducit, et poeta carminem deducit*; thus do we "spin a tale" and "lead on" our listener. Weaving metaphors have become part of our cultural "fabric." When we consider the works of Ovid and Homer in light of possible meta-metaphors, we heighten our sensitivity to the poet's perspective, to what might be conscious inclusions in his poetry, and to what may be unconscious.

Women and Weaving in Greece and Rome

We have much more written evidence from Rome about the relationship of women to weaving than we do from Greece, and the metaphorical parallels between weaving and womanly virtue are drawn with bolder brushstrokes in Rome. Yet we can note similar patterns in the two cultures; arguably we can trace the roots of Roman views on womanhood and domesticity back to classical Greece, especially Athens.

Any examination of the roles of women in the classical world must consider that almost all the extant written material about women from these periods was written by men. In addition, much of the material is in the form of poetry, narrative history, and drama—that is, composed by creators who sought to entertain as well as inform within a social environment that had diverse political and cultural expectations of its citizens, men and women alike. In this study I examine three female characters as seen through the eyes of Homer and Ovid, not through the eyes of the women themselves. On one hand, this perspective affords us a window onto how Ovid and Homer, and perhaps other men of the time, viewed women and women's traditionally appropriate roles (and conversely, how they perceived women might manipulate those roles). On the other hand, though Penelope, Philomela, and Arachne all exercise "voice" and power by weaving their own story with their own hands, their narratives are still mediated by Homer and Ovid, who "reweave" the women's craft into an element of their narratives. This fact compels us to presume that, to some extent,

15 For a description of Circe, see the *Odyssey*, 10.220–24 and 10.251–58; for Calypso, see 5.55–70.

16 Kruger, 65.

17 See the discussion below.

the female characters have been fashioned by the poets "to suit" their objectives.

While this makes our dissection much trickier and perhaps ultimately inconclusive, to undertake this study as if Homer and Ovid's presentation represents an objective "truth" about classical womanhood would certainly lead to a distorted understanding. Our study must therefore take into account the fact that the female characters, and expressions of female power, are mediated not only through the eyes of men but also through the art of the poet.[18] Yet these characters also provide us with "insight into the ideals of behavior that women were to embody" at the same time that they "reveal ... aspects of women's actual societal roles."[19] Hazards duly noted, there is a wealth of evidence—written and visual—from which we can hypothesize about the relationship between women and weaving in the classical world.[20]

Weaving and activities associated with weaving were integral to ancient daily life in a way that is difficult to imagine today. Creating a simple woollen tunic required shearing the wool from the sheep; washing the wool (a hot, physically taxing and smelly business), often with sweet-smelling agents to reduce the musky odour (agents that also had to be sourced); carding the wool to ensure that no foreign objects remained and the wool was free of knots; dying the wool (with dyes that also had to be made) by boiling it, again, with the colour (also a physically demanding job); spinning the wool into yarn—by hand, or with hand tools such as a spindle or wheel; and weaving the wool into cloth (a process that required one to first set the warp (vertical) threads onto the loom, and then weave the weft (horizontal) threads by passing the shuttle through the loom). If the cloth was patterned, many shuttles, each wound with threads of different colours, would be woven separately through the warp. Once a piece of cloth was large enough, it could be used to make the tunic. Needless to say, clothing a household demanded a considerable amount of energy and time.

In classical Greece, women were valued for their beauty, their chastity, their obedience, their fidelity, their modesty, and their ability to manage a household. Attic vases frequently depicted women holding spindles, "which were confused or interchangeable in these portraits with hand-held mirrors"[21] as "both conveyed the same meaning" as representations

18 Walters (1993) has a particularly sceptical view of the value of reading social meaning into literary works in the context of female power within a patriarchal framework:

> One approach has been to speak of Athenian women's power as a resistance to male authority—or even outright rebellion. But the expression of this putative resistance stems from literature ... As a product of the imagination, though drawing on the social and cultural context, literature often imagines situations, quite deliberately, that are the reverse of the norm and the contrary of the possible. Thus, the words and deeds of [female characters in classical literature] are often taken too literally or simplistically. These fictional words and deeds are almost impossible to judge as social commentary not only because they are utterly fictional but also because they are totally and solely the product of ... men. Active or reactive, they articulate a male world view in the dominant language of men. For these and other reasons, the words and deeds of these literary heroines cannot be used to explain social reality. In fact, the reverse is the case. It is first necessary to understand the social reality in order to come to grips with the meaning of dramatic literature. (194)

All well and good, but if we refrain from reading *any* social meaning into representations of female power in literature, we will soon put ourselves out of a job. Though Walters is right to be cautious, we must work with what we have. We do not have a wealth of first-person accounts by women in the classical world, either resisting power or acquiescing to it, and we do not always have the tools to hand to first "understand the social reality." We do, however, have many fictional literary portrayals of women by men. If we assume that these portrayals are rooted in social context, and that the "truth" to be found in them is not a simplistic mirror-image of that context, we can still derive insight into particular historical environments, as Vivante suggests below.

19 Vivante 1999, 224–25.

20 There were male weavers in Greece, but weaving remained primarily the realm of women. In classical literature generally, "to depict a male weaving is to feminize him" (Kruger, 54). Hercules weaves as Omphale's slave, for example, and the "cuckolded Hephaistos" weaves a net to catch his adulterous wife.

21 Kruger, 151.

of "feminine grace and charm."[22] Jamin suggests that the value of the female character in Homeric epic is "judged predominantly by the loyalty she demonstrates to both her natal household and later to her husband and his household. Her daily completion of household tasks, her beauty and physical, as well as verbal, demonstrations of modesty are all indicators of her worth."[23] In Herodotus' *Histories*, the assertive Pheretima battles Euelthon's traditional view of women, a view that limits his capacity to view Pheretima as a fellow "statesman":

> Pheretima went to Euelthon's court and asked for an army to put the party she represented back in power at Cyrene; but an army was the one thing Euelthon was unwilling to give her. Other things he gave her generously enough, and each time she accepted a present she said it was a fine one, but not so fine as to give her what she really wanted—an army. As she continued on every occasion to make the same remark, Euelthon ended by sending her a golden spindle and distaff, with wool on it. Pheretima repeated the same words as before, which drew from Euelthon the reply that he had sent her a present which, unlike an army, he thought suitable to her sex.[24]

Women were often married at a young age, and usually the marriage was arranged between the families of the bride and groom or, in the frequent case of marriage to an older man, between the groom himself and the bride's family. In this way, a woman was always under the guardianship of a man—either her father or her husband. A widow whose father was no longer alive would return to her brother or another male relative. A woman generally played no role in the public forum, but this did not necessarily mean she could not own property, and it did not mean she did not wield considerable power within the household. But her power was limited to particular spheres, and any influence she might have had within a more public, social context was generally mediated by the men in her life.[25]

It would not be appropriate, however, to suggest that the women of classical Greece were powerless within the public sphere: though their power, within the home and without, was defined by particular boundaries, their role was essential to the cultural, political, and economic functioning of society. A conversation between Socrates and Ischomachos in Xenophon's *Oeconomicus* illustrates the need for a woman to be taught her social role—if not by her mother or father, then by her husband. Ischomachos expresses no surprise that his wife came to him lacking important domestic skills; rather, he seems to take for granted that part of his role as husband is to fill in the gaps of his wife's domestic education:

> "As to what you asked me, Socrates," [Ischomachos] said, "I never spend time indoors. Indeed," he said, "my wife is quite able by herself to manage the things within the house."
>
> "It would please me very much, Ischomachos," I said, "if I might also inquire about this—whether you yourself educated your wife to be the way she ought to be, or whether, when you took her from her mother and father, she already knew how to manage the things that are appropriate to her."
>
> "How, Socrates," he said, "could she have known anything since she came to me when she was not yet fifteen, and had lived previously under diligent supervision in order that she might see and hear as little as possible and ask the fewest possible questions? Doesn't it seem to you that one should be content if she came knowing only how to take the wool and make clothes, and had seen how the spinning work is distributed among the female attendants? For as to matters of the stomach, Socrates," he said, "she came to me very finely educated; and to me, at any rate, that seems to be an education of the greatest important for both a man and a woman."
>
> "It will be necessary," I said [*i.e.*, Ischomachos said to his wife], "for you to

22 Keuls 1983, 21.

23 Jamin 2001, 1.

24 Herodotus, *The Histories*, 4.162.

25 For general discussions of women's roles in classical Greece, see Lefkowitz and Fant 1982, and Vivante.

> remain indoors and to send out those of the servants whose work is outside; as for those whose work is to be done inside, these are to be in your charge; you must receive what is brought in and distribute what needs to be expended, and as for what needs to be set aside, you must use forethought and guard against expending in a month what was intended to last a year. When wool is brought to you, it must be your concern that clothes be made for whoever needs them..."[26]

Social roles differed between city-states, however. Elite Athenian women were not expected to work outside the home, but their craftsmanship within the home had an essential role within the economic sphere. In Sparta, women of the upper classes were not necessarily expected to weave and often delegated such basic tasks to servants.[27] Ionian women prided themselves on weaving ornate fabrics, and there is some evidence to suggest they sometimes did so for profit.[28] In all Greek societies, the extent to which women held power within their own homes is not clear. For the most part, scholars "acknowledge the concept of separate spheres of influence or power held by each gender, and the fact that no gender held complete power in all realms of society."[29]

Historians generally agree that Roman women "occupied a far stronger position socially, politically, and economically than did their Greek counterparts."[30] Yet in Rome the role of weaving as a metaphor for womanly virtue is even more clearly drawn. Literary and inscriptional sources "associate Roman women of all classes with wool-working, an activity seen as symbolic of women's domestic duties."[31] Perhaps the most compelling pieces of evidence for the widespread cultural understanding of the "weaving equals a good woman" metaphor are funerary tributes, written by widowers in memory of lost wives. Epitaphs praised women in conventional terms for domestic virtue: "for being old-fashioned (*antiqua vita*); content to stay at home (*domiseda*); chaste (*pudicitia*); dutifully obedient (*obsequium*); friendly and amusing (*somitas, sermone lepido*); careful over money (*frugi*); .... Above all a wife was commended for her spinning and weaving (*lanifica, lanam fecit*)."[32] Wives were also remembered for their marital fidelity.[33]

Women in Roman literature are routinely pictured spinning and weaving, in groups or individually within the home, in a room populated primarily by women or in an environment that otherwise highlights domesticity. In the few exceptions to these examples—such as in the cases discussed below—weaving often symbolizes precisely the woman's *rejection* of this predetermined womanly role. In this way, while weaving craft in the classical world is symbolic of feminine virtue, it can also be employed in specific contexts to represent the assertion of feminine autonomy from within the patriarchal framework of classical culture.

Wielding Power with a Distaff

Both Ovid and Homer purposely twist the weaving metaphor to represent female characteristics and qualities quite different from traditional womanly virtues. In the narratives of Penelope, Philomela, and Arachne, the poets' female heroines wield the classical emblem of obedience and passivity in such a manner as to author their own destinies,[34] defying the expectations of those who would exert control over them.

Penelope uses weaving to avoid remarriage to one of her suitors. Social expectations in classical Greece dictated that a young widow remarry in a timely fashion, but Penelope safeguards her precarious

26 *Oeconomicus* 7–10 (4th c. BCE). Translation by T. C. Lord (discussed in Lefkowitz and Fant, 101–2).

27 Vivante, 241.

28 Barber, 281.

29 Vivante, 239.

30 Gold, 279. But Gold also advises caution: while epigraphical evidence suggests that the influence and value of a Roman woman in the public sphere was less frequently conflated with her prowess in the domestic sphere (than was that of her Greek counterpart), the "muse-like image [of the Roman woman] created and manipulated by the poet" (298) is not necessarily representative of the actual social power held by Roman women of the time.

31 Hallett, 264.

32 Balsdon, 207.

33 Hallett, 271.

34 In Kruger's words, "write their own texts of resistance." (57)

position as a wealthy "widow" by using the ruse of Laertes' shroud, which she weaves during the day and unravels at night. Though the suitor Antinoös places the responsibility for this deception solely on the shoulders of Penelope herself, one cannot but hear in his words his grudging respect for a woman who so cunningly uses the traits that make her desirable as a wife, her weaving skill and her seemingly honourable devotion to her father-in-law, to make fools of all the men who would aspire to be her husband:

> And yet you [*i.e.,* Telemachos] have no cause to blame the Achaian suitors, but it is your own dear mother, and she is greatly resourceful[35]

Penelope herself calls attention to her "virtue" to excuse herself from her social duty to remarry and plays with the suitors' sense of honour. If any suitor objects to Penelope's request for more time to weave Laertes' shroud, he will seem to dishonour a war hero:

> ... This is a shroud for the hero Laertes, for when the destructive doom of death which lays men low shall take him, lest any Achaian woman in this neighborhood hold it against me that a man of many conquests lies with no sheet to wind him.[36]

The audience, of course, knows that Penelope has no intention of finishing the shroud; thus, her appeal to the suitors' sense of honour comes across as rather dishonourable, and certainly not virtuous. One could suggest that Penelope demonstrates womanly virtue in her fidelity to Odysseus, yet even this argument falls flat. If Penelope is indeed loyal to an Odysseus whom she believes to be alive,[37] then why does she flirt so shamelessly with the suitors? "For she holds out hope to all, and makes promises to each man / sending [them] messages ..."[38] If she believes Odysseus to be dead, why does she refuse remarriage for so long, and in such an indirect manner? Perhaps she leads the suitors on because she knows she is safe as a "widow" only if the very large group of excited men in her foyer believes one of its members will eventually win the queen and the palace. In this way, each suitor acts like a personal bodyguard, protecting Penelope from the others; however, if this is the case, then Penelope is certainly acting in a manner not at all representative of womanly virtue. She is not passive,[39] she is not honest, she is not obedient, she is not demure. She weaves, but she also unravels her weaving, at night, by torchlight, in a wholly duplicitous manner, arguably undoing her womanly virtues as she resists the social role cast for her.

Philomela uses weaving as resistance in two ways, both of which turn the "weaving as womanly virtue" metaphor on its head. First, the process of weaving allows Philomela to denounce Tereus while admitting her loss of virginity and her, albeit unwilling, role in her sexual relationship with Procne's husband (even without a tongue she "speaks"). Second, by sending the tapestry to her sister, Philomela authors her physical escape, and Procne's "reading" of the woven narrative sets in motion the events that eventually lead to Tereus' last, devastating supper:

> Signa deus bis sex acto lustraverat anno.
> Quid faciat Philomela? fugam custodia claudit,
> structa regent solido stabulorum moenia saxo,
> os mutum facti caret indice. Grande doloris
> ingenium est, miserisque venit sollertia rebus.
>
> Stamina barbarica suspendit callida tela
> pupureasque notas filis intexuit albis,
> indicium sceleris; perfecaque tradidit uni,
> utque ferat dominae gestu rogat: illa rogata
> pertulit ad Procnem, nec scit, quid tradat in illis.[40]

35 Homer, *Odyssey,* 2.85–86.

36 *Ibid*., lines 97–100.

37 This is not made wholly clear. To the suitors, at least, she intimates that Odysseus is dead: "Young men, my suitors now that the great Odysseus has perished, / wait, though you are eager to marry me, until I finish / this web ..." (*Odyssey,* 2.94–96).

38 *Ibid*., lines 89–90.

39 Arguably she is passive-aggressive, but this is before Psychology (yet not before *anakhronismos*), so one must be careful.

40 Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, 6.571–80: "The sun-god has circled the twelve signs, and a year is past. What can Philomela do? A guard prevents her escape; the thick walls of the building are made of solid stone; her mute mouth can yield no token of the facts. Great trouble is inventive, and ingenuity arises in difficult times. Cleverly,

That Philomela has a loom at all (jailed behind massive stone walls as she is, without a tongue, and with guards preventing her escape) is not only diabolical in a literal sense, but disturbing in a metaphorical one. Here Ovid draws a monstrous caricature of the classical Athenian image of women weaving in the home, away from public view.[41] Tereus has stripped Philomela of her virginity, her dignity, her liberty, her individuality, and her voice—but he leaves her with the traditional symbol of womanhood, essentially saying, "You're a woman: Now weave."

Then Ovid has Philomela weave her story in purple and white.[42] We know the colour purple was generally reserved for the upper classes;[43] white represents purity. As Philomela defies Tereus' attempts to de-womanize her, Ovid suggests that despite her physical circumstances, Philomela is still noble, still pure. In weaving the tale of her violation, she seals her fate and the fate of her sister, and dooms her young nephew to a terrible death, but she also steps out of the role defined for her by Tereus, wielding her loom in much the same way that Tereus wielded his blade when he cut out her tongue, authoring her own destiny with the tools available to her.

Ovid's use of perfeca ("perfect," "finished," or "complete") is particularly important, foreshadowing the sudden and definitive end of the narrative. In contrast, Homer never shows us Helen's completed tapestry. Arguably this absence is symbolic of Helen's uncertain future; as long as the Trojan War rages, her fate is undecided—she is "shuttled" between the Greeks and Trojans as long as the battle (and thus the tapestry) remains incomplete. There is no such hesitancy, however, in Philomela's weaving. She weaves her denouncement of Tereus, and when it is done, she snips the thread, just as the Fates spin, measure, and snip human life.

Arachne uses weaving not to resist social pressure and not to defy male power, but to challenge Olympic authority. First she declares that her weaving skill is wholly her own—not inspired by the goddess Minerva, patroness of weaving and domestic arts: *"... quam sibi* [*i.e.*, Minerva] *lanificae non cedere laudibus artis audierat."*[44] Then she challenges the goddess to a weaving "duel" and further provokes Minerva by weaving into her tapestry scenes of the gods' sexual misdemeanors. Arachne's "come what may" attitude[45] suggests that the final outcome of the contest is not as important to her as the act of defiance. When Minerva realizes that Arachne's skill cannot be faulted—regardless of her poor choice of subject-matter—she is enraged. Arachne hangs herself rather than enduring Minerva's wrath, and Ovid once more uses a weaving symbol—that is, the cordage that Arachne uses to fashion the noose—in a scene that highlights female resistance rather than womanly virtue. Minerva's *"pende tamen"* ("yet hang!")[46] takes on new significance: is it only Arachne who is doomed to forever hang (by the instrument of her defiance), or does Ovid also comment here on the reaction of authority to all women who attempt to author their own destiny or wield "womanly" tools in an "unwomanly" manner?

By using weaving as a metaphor for resistance, Ovid and Homer not only up-end the traditional view of women as silent and powerless outside the purely domestic or "womanly" realm but also encourage us to re-examine our understanding of social power in the classical world. Though their social environments and social roles limit their authority within a public sphere, Penelope, Philomela, and Arachne *do not do what is expected of them,* defining on their own terms how they will respond to their physical circumstances. Female power, suggest the poets, comes in many forms.

she fastens her thread to a barbarian's loom, and weaves purple designs on a white background, revealing the crime. She entrusts it, when complete, to a servant, and asks her, by means of gestures, to take it to her mistress. She, as she is asked, takes it to Procne, not knowing what it carries inside." See http://etext.virginia.edu/latin/ovid/trans/Ovhome.htm.

41 See the discussion above.

42 The text does not clarify whether these are Philomela's personal colour choices, or if they are the only two colours she has with her.

43 See above.

44 Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, 6.6–7: "… whom she [Minerva] had heard would not give her due credit … in the art of spinning."

45 *Ibid.*, line 25: *"'certet' ait 'mecum: nihil est, quod victa recusem.'"* ("'Contend with me,' she said[.] 'I will not disagree at all if I am beaten.'")

46 *Ibid.*, line 136.

By exercising traditional roles in untraditional ways, women *do* wield extraordinary social power, often with unexpected and unpredictable consequences.

Conclusion

Arachne's decision to commit suicide (though it is overturned by the goddess) is an appropriate point to conclude this discussion. In classical mythology the actions of spinning and weaving are frequently described as bookending human life. The spinning sisters, or the Greek *Moi'rai* (in Latin, *parcae*, "bringers forth," or *fata*, "fates"), determine the lives of human beings: young Clotho spins the thread of life, older sister Lachesis measures it, and eldest sister Atropos snips the thread, thereby determining the time of a man's death. Thus, in Greek and Roman society, while men traditionally wield the primary political and social power, there is a long literary tradition that links the mystical, unknowable realms of death and destiny with women.[47]

This tradition would seem to suggest that when a woman resists patriarchal or Olympic authority, or reinvents her role within the existing social structure, she becomes suddenly less knowable; as an "author of destiny," she renders the outcome of events suddenly less foreseeable. A woman who resists social norms by defying authority and modifying her physical circumstances becomes, like the Fates, at once threatening and mystifying. She also becomes a much more interesting narrative character: one who *does* as opposed to being *done to* by others; one who creates events rather than suffering those created by others; one who weaves her own narrative rather than merely being a thread in someone else's.

Woe betide the individual who thinks that, as long as his womenfolk are busy doing womanly work, outcomes will be predictably favourable. Ovid and Homer both suggest that even from within their traditional "domestic" roles, women wield tremendous power over individuals and events. Arguably, the poets set out to undermine not only the traditional view of domestic arts as symbolic of "womanly virtue," but the related assumptions that a) one who demonstrates skill in the domestic arts must, *ipso facto*, be virtuous, and b) one whose primary power is in the domestic realm wields little or no power on a public or social level. In the cases of Penelope, Philomela, and Arachne, weaving symbolizes precisely the *opposite* of traditional classical femininity. And while wielding a shuttle is not quite like wielding a sword, when a woman exercises power from within traditional feminine contexts, her actions have profound social consequences.

47 See, for example, both the *Odyssey* and the *Iliad*, in which Homer refers to the destiny of Odysseus as having been "spun" for him from birth by the "heavy[-handed] Spinners." *Odyssey,* 7.196–98; *Iliad,* 20.127–28.

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