Chapter Six

The Pattern Stops Here?

Counter-Inductive Thinking, Counter-Intuitive Ideas,

and Cognitive Science of Religion

"No. There it will break down…. No Induction. Terror. That is, as it were, part of the substance of the belief."[1] —Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Lectures on Religious Belief*

What is meant by "Science of Religion"?

Cognitive science of religion (hereafter CSR) is a relatively new field of research, at this writing about 25 years old.[2] CSR has been a source of interest by religious and non-religious academics alike, with some of its biggest conferences held at religiously-affiliated colleges.[3]Justin Barrett defines CSR as an attempt to scientifically account for patterns of social expression often deemed religious. Dimitris Xygalatas defines CSR as an empirically-based study of mental capacities and processes that underlie recurrent patterns of religious thought and behaviour. As

an experimentally-focused human science, CSR researchers frame specific hypotheses that allow for testable predictions. These hypotheses might concern psychological and evolutionary mechanisms of belief formation, maintenance, and revision. They might concern cognitive or evolutionary explanations for why religious beliefs and practices emerge and persist, based on dynamics of ordinary cognition.

In the 2013 inaugural issue of the *Journal for the Cognitive Science of Religions* the editors lay out some of the core questions CSR studies: "How are religious concepts generated, acquired, represented and transmitted?," and "What are the cognitive structures governing and constraining these processes, and how have these structures been shaped?" CSR researchers, they write, "aim to shed light both on the proximate psychological mechanisms underpinning religious belief and behaviour, and on the ultimate evolutionary forces that sustain religious representations."[4]

In these respects, CSR remains consonant with Hume's approach in his *The Natural History of Religion,* which sought a fuller understanding of religious expressions by distinguishing two different questions, that concerning the reasonableness of religious credences, and that concerning their etiology or causal origins:

> As every enquiry, which regards Religion, is of the utmost importance, there
> are two questions in particular, which challenge our principle attention, to
> whit, that concerning its foundation in reason, and that concerning its origin in
> human nature.[5]

While no doubt steeped in theory, CSR as I understand it takes no stance on the question of realism or non-realism about religious use of language. As a science, CSR concerns itself with the second of Hume's questions –origins in human nature, and not with either the first question about rationality or justification, or with questions of metaphysics. It assumes no necessary incompatibility of the CSR literature with theism. The questions of its implications for questions of religious realism or anti-realism, and for the existence of supernatural occurrences go beyond science proper. But issues that are beyond the scope of science to investigate directly are often pursued by philosophers, theologians, or others who might draw from CSR research.

Helen De Cruz, a philosopher, asks, "Does the second question have an impact on the first, i.e., does the causal, psychological origin of religion have an impact on the reasonableness of religious beliefs?"[6] The short answer is that they may, but that normative issues like those about reasonableness and justification are basically philosophical rather than scientific questions. Secular and religious thinkers who debate the force of etiological challenges to the well-foundedness of religious beliefs would do well to be empirically informed, but these debates are carried on beyond the boundaries of science. So also, whether serious *de jure* and *de facto* challenges arise *from* CSR is not itself a question *for* CSR, for the simple reasons that these are moral, epistemological, and metaphysical questions.[7] CSR researchers typically hold that CSR is committed to no position theological or a-theological on the existence of divine or supernatural forces.[8] CSR is concerned with naturalistic explanation, and so with the causal mechanisms or processes underlying visible manifestations of religion. But as Justin Barrett puts it, CSR is *methodologically* a-teleological in its approach to causes; it is neutral to and not eliminative of another whole order of causes asserted by theologians as higher or deeper.[9]

Robert McCauley writes in "Cognitive Science and the Naturalness of Religion," that his approach to religious phenomena finds the persistence of religion attributable to "the cognitive naturalness of religious ideas, i.e. attributable to the readiness, the ease, and the speed with which human minds acquire and process popular religious representations."[10] CSR seeks explanations of cultural phenomena in terms of acquisition, representation and transmission involving cognitive capacities. These evolutionary and cognitive approaches display less interest in study of cultural differences, but need not exclude them.

Before framing the main thesis for this final chapter, we need to say more about how, in the present study, evolutionary and cognitive approaches are connected with the previous chapter's focus on comparative fundamentalism. Barrett and McCauley both recognize the need for balance between the particular and universal (or generic) in the study of religious ideas. How ideas transfer also needs to be balanced in this way. There is no simple answer as to whether to study religion or *religions.* One aim of CSR to which I hope this chapter will contribute is to disentangle the relationship between cognition and culture in religious representations. But Justin Barrett seems correct that even within CSR there has been something akin to a nature-nurture debate.[11]

The nativist strand in this debate strips away cognitive specificity to explain the propensity for religious credences in terms of a universal cognitive architecture. The nativist the universal side—what is universal to the human condition. As an example, researchers in CSR sometimes apply dual – processing models of thought drawn from social psychology and neuroscience. We all share the features of the 'old' mind and depend heavily its intuitive, heuristic Type 1 reasoning. This type of reasoning is fast and frugal, so we are naturally hesitant to 'de-couple'

from it. Our reliance on it many times that we should have employed some slower and more methodical dispositions of Type 2 explains many deviations with normatively correct reasoning. At the nurturist end of this debate, emanating mostly from social psychology and cultural anthropology, we find a different emphasis: one that highlights religious specificity, as studied through ritual and community, culturally-conditioning of belief, and the politics of identity. These interests in general cognitive explanation and studies of more ethnographically specific levels of description are each legitimate, and necessary for the development of the field. Numerous scholars are combining aspects of each, but balancing them theoretically remains a challenge for researchers. There are many reasons why.

According to researchers focusing on what is universal in our cognitive architecture, too much emphasis on differences in religious belief and practice is seen as an unwarranted impediment to inquiry. Todd Tremlin writes that,

> Among the roadblocks to a scientific study of religion is the long – standing view that religious thought is somehow unlike other kinds of thought, and that it therefore cannot be explained in the same way that ordinary ideas can be… Another traditional misconception of religious studies is that the tremendous diversity within religion found around the world makes it impossible either to generalize about human religiosity or to construct a single explanatory theory.[12]

CSR does not approach religion as an evolved adaptation or as employing cognitive architecture specialized for the acquisition of religious behavior. Rather than there being any special module for religiosity, many CSR researchers share the by-product thesis: that thesis that religious ideas arise as a by-product of cognitive modules and mechanisms that also have quite

unrelated adaptive functions. Robert McCauley understands religious ideas as resting on normal mental structures and processes. The processes on which CSR has focused most, ToM (theory of mind) and HADD (hyperactive agency detective device), are ones originally evolved to serve different though functionally related purposes.[13]

Comparative fundamentalism (CF) primarily comes out of religious studies and subfields like comparative religious ethics. Scholars in these fields might worry that too much emphasis on generic processing and evolutionary explanations might be an impediment to studying the religious behavioral patterns and social dynamics they are most interested in. So as we continue to develop our inductive risk toolkit, this chapter will propose specific ways through which this general-specific contrast between CSR and Religious Studies can be mediated, and CSR and CF more closely connected with each other. There might be numerous ways in which the general and specific might be balanced in CSR research. But I will argue that philosophy of luck as developed in the first two chapters, and religious fideism and counter-inductive thinking as studied in the third and fourth chapters, both raise pertinent questions that CSR can best address. These same concerns with strong fideism and its demonstrable connections with counter-inductive thinking can also bring CSR and CF into closer connection with each other.

Vainio's Christian Philosophic Appropriation and Critique of CSR

Epistemology and ethics are fields that prescribe norms of thought and action. Cognitive and social psychology help explain the mechanisms that cause us to deviate either consciously or unconsciously from normative principles of logic or ethics, and in some cases to flout them more or less predictably. These sciences are in turn informing what Jack Lyons and Barry Ward call the "new critical thinking," by which they mean a pedagogy that doesn't only study formal reasoning and informal fallacies, but also recognizes that "[M]any of our mistakes are not caused by formal reasoning gone awry, but by our bypassing it completely. We instead favor more comfortable, but often unreliable, intuitive methods."[14]

My point is that only by more closely aligning philosophical normativity with psychological study can we hope to improve *real world* critical thinking, as is crucially necessary to address many problems that we face. A growing number of theologians and religious philosophers would agree. Empirically-informed religious thinkers like Olli-Pekka Vainio in his recent book, *Disagreeing Virtuously: Religious Conflict in Interdisciplinary Perspective* (2017) are well aware of the impact of biases and heuristics on human cognition, and are as interested as any secular philosopher in the implications of the human sciences for religious epistemics. Vainio acknowledges that "quite a large amount of our religious cognition is channelled through Type 1 cognitive processes. Even if this does not automatically cause massive suspicion, it may cause theological problems within religious systems."[15]

Following upon his earlier study of the variety of forms of fideism, Vainio's approach in *Disagreeing Virtuously* emphasizes that "the problematic elements of religion are usually those that are shared by every human being, regardless of their worldview. If there's something that we should worry about, it is the dynamics to create and enforce in-group/out-group distinctions, be they religious or secular."[16] Subject to these qualifications, Vainio is interested in defending virtuous disagreement among religious adherents, and between the religious and non-religious. So Vainio takes a pro-attitude towards interdisciplinary dialogue between theologians, philosophers, and psychologists over the effects of psychology on what he calls people's different doxastic policies or theological methods. He aims to improve the dialogue between these parties by developing a "dynamic view" of disagreement informed by the human sciences, on the one hand, and virtue theory on the other.

I highly admire Vainio's approach in *Disagreeing Virtuously,* and how this Christian thinker appropriates CSR to help explain religious violence and to defend toleration and the importance of continuous dialogue across traditions. Since we have both developed virtue-theoretic accounts of doxastic responsibility, there is a good deal of common-ground in our projects in philosophy of religion. This said, I will take issue with three specific positions Vainio takes, and discussing these will lead us afterwards to want to look more carefully at so-called 'debunking' explanations, and at the relationship between more qualified *de jure* and more sweeping *de facto* challenges.

Firstly, while Vainio's book provides many rich thick descriptions of the role of particular intellectual and moral virtues in a religious life, he defends the reasonableness of the exclusivist response to religious multiplicity on one of the few pages where he engages it

directly. I will not here repeat the problems raised for that response in this book. But I will briefly respond that Vainio's endorsement of reasonable or virtuous exclusivism is logically inconsistent with the account he gives of the virtues.

Secondly, I will defend CSR against Vainio's charge that there is a standard model in CSR that applies dual-process theory in a reductive way, treating religious phenomena largely or wholly as emanations of Type 1 thinking, with all its flaws. This issue will open out into a broader discussion of the relationship between *de jure* and *de facto* challenges, their different intended targets, and the conditions under which the presence of a plausible and sufficient naturalistic explanation of a phenomena is sufficient grounds to slide to the stronger *de facto* challenge. With this latter topic, I will also be able to develop some of the parallels between my approach in this book, and Hume's approach to miracles.

Thirdly, I will take issue with how Vainio treats religious diversity that arises from the same or similar belief-forming functions. Vainio asks whether NERBs –naturalistic explanations of religious beliefs– present any very direct challenge to the attitude of religious exclusivists. But his argument that they do not present a serious challenge relies upon a sense of exclusivism ('open' doctrinal exclusivism) far weaker than the salvific exclusivism we seen numerous examples of. So his answer I will argue comes too easily, since NERBs challenge naturalistically unsupported asymmetries in trait-ascription, and there are far more of these in full-blooded salvific exclusivism. I will argue that NERBs pose a special challenge where the *same* belief – formation method manifests in the form of religious diversity, and another where this method manifests in infallibilist beliefs and exclusivist attitudes, which set each against the others as competitors for one true path to truth and/or salvation.[17]

The first issue concerns Vainio's description and dismissal of what he perceives as a standard model in CSR, a model he says aims to associate all or most religious thinking with Type or System 1 processing. Part of his complaint regards CSR's studies of "theological incorrectness," and its primary focus on "popular religiosity."[18] This exhibits, he thinks, a disregard for how religious thinkers engage Type or System 2 reasoning, reflecting deeply on their beliefs and their causes, and improving their epistemic standing with respect to them. Vainio cites Justin Slone's book *Theological Incorrectness: Why Religious People Believe What They Shouldn't* (2004) as indicative of this distortion of religious views. "It is not clearly the case that religious believers are not engaging in higher and refined forms of cognition, or that theologian's ideas are systematically disregarded." This reductive image of CSR that Vainio thinks is the standard model is one where "religion is almost purely a matter of type 1 cognition," and where type 2 cognition (theology and philosophy) functions as "*post hoc* rationalizations of fundamentally irrational folk beliefs."[19] Vainio is more generally concerned that "CSR writers have different views about the religious relevance of their theories, but negative relevance is often simply assumed without further argument."[20] When researchers like the ones Vainio cites describe religious beliefs or behavior as irrational, is it because they are already assuming the *de facto* view that religious beliefs are untrue? By contrast, Vainio argues that even if people may not always be virtuous in belief acquisition, they can and typically do become so in the course of second-order reflection; this reflection, he points out, often works to raise their interest in and conformity with more systematic theological thinking.[21]

There are clearly some valid points here, and the line between CSR or any science and a realist or anti-realist metaphysic concerning their subject matter, ought to be maintained. We can agree that how study of group biases applies to religious identity, teachings, and dynamics is an

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open question. But while there might well be examples of it, most CSR integration of dual process cognitive theory does not appear to beg these questions, or to make for a valid target for Vainio's criticism. Aggressive atheists or 'debunkers' might appropriate CSR data for their own arguments; CSR researchers might not feel themselves bound by the "methodological agnosticism" taught to religious studies majors. But among CSR researchers in the field today I doubt that there are many examples of the reductive stance Vainio describes. As a prime example, McCauley's CSR applies dual-process cognitive science, it clearly allows the reflective, 'slow' thinking that Vainio calls upon religious adherents to apply to their beliefs. The explicit religious credences adopted and transmitted by the religious, McCauley argues, are generally those in line with what is maturationally natural. We only need common or universal human cognitive architecture to explain why maturationally natural ideas, when processed through domain-specific modules or belief-forming functions, become especially appealing options for adoption and transmission across time. Evolutionary perspectives draw on universal causes rather than proximate environmental ones, but more reflective thinking may always be applied to one's beliefs, *however* acquired.

Type 1 processing is sometimes related to automaticity. Automaticity is rapid and effortless cognition that operates without conscious awareness or deliberative control. But these faculties are not always unreliable, nor do they threaten a credit theory of knowing. Clea Rees and Jonathan Webber's "Automaticity in Virtuous Action" (2014) develop the specific contributions of automaticity for moral and intellectual virtue. The automaticity and/or heuristic aspects of our thinking often support, rather than just threaten, the development of habits and dispositions of critical thinkers. I relatedly argue elsewhere (2017c) that autonomous processing can be supportive of the virtues, but also that heuristic reasoning becomes unreliable when what

West, Toplak and Stanovich (2008) term "fluid rationality" or higher-order critical reasoning dispositions are instead called for in one's epistemic context or problem-situation. Persons who lack the ability for sustained de-coupling will fail reasoning tasks that the engagement of their fluid rationality would allow them to succeed with. Of course, the normal development of the critical reasoning dispositions of fluid rationality involves recognizing and applying inductive norms (causal reasoning, generalization, and analogy).[22]

The philosophical and theological implications of dual-process theory, or the ecological nature of human cognition, are certainly debatable. I believe there are strong normative implications that both fields have yet to fully come to grips with. While it is a bit of a digression, let me add a suggestion about how theologians and philosophers can at least better recognize these normative implications. This suggestion is especially of value if the disputants are talking past one another. I suggest taxonomizing issues about naturalism and normativity by crossing the distinctions between the *etiological* and the *axiology*, and between the *deep* (ancient; general) and the *shallow* (acquired; learned; normative). What I have in mind is one dimension running between that which is buried *deep* or only *shallow* in the human psyche, and the other dimension running between the *etiological* (order of causes) and the *axiological* (order of values).

Thinking in maturationally natural ways is etiologically deep, but typically axiologically shallow, since its specific content is conditioned and filtered by culture. Thinking draws attention to propensities of mind that are etiologically deep because rooted in our 'old mind,' in 'online' cognition; but it is axiologically shallow because it draws norms from culture, and refuses or is in tension with logical and epistemological norms. Reasoning and the acquired critical thinking dispositions are just the opposite. They are axiologically shallow, and have the characteristic

McCauley attributes to the "practiced natural." These norms are correctives to biases where they intrude on inquiry. We have to value and habituate ourselves to them, and habituation is a matter of practice; this does not come easily or naturally, and until internalized as good habits of thought there may be much psychological resistance to them.

The upshot for our present discussion is that CSR's concern with universal cognitive architecture is a concern for *etiologically deep* sources of religious ideas, and not with what is *etiologically shallow* in the sense of ideas acquired along with culture, or corrected religion-specific theologies or rituals. This contrast, additionally, should not raise flags that religion is being denied recognition as a source in people's lives of core *values*. That would be a claim about *axiology*. Facility with theological reasoning, and the ability of some not to stray as others do from the content and norms of theological correctness within a tradition may be well and good for the individual. But this is a different question than that of belief acquisition and transfer. Ideally, my taxonomy enables clearer location of the points of contention in the debate over CSR, such as debate over availability of NERBs for beliefs in different domains, and their implications in particular for how we understand religious differences. Table 4.1 includes some brief examples of how this classification works.

	Deep	Shallow
Etiologically	--Mere behaviors --Type 1 processing --Heuristic thinking of the old mind --Appeal of maturationally natural ideas	--Intentional actions --Type 2 processing --Self-conscious employment of a doxastic strategy --Fluid rationality and critical thinking dispositions
Axiologically	--Pro-social moral emotions --Anti-social emotions/*Thanatos* or other recurrent regressive values --Self-interest; ingroup-outgroup dynamics	--Societal expectations and assigned social roles --Culturally recognized virtues and vices --Posited universal moral principles or rights. --Evolved scientific and disciplinary norms

Table 4.1 Organization of the Philosophical Implications of Dual-process Theory

The organization of issues according to this taxonomy also allows us to parse concerns about safety, sensitivity, and epistemic risk (Chapter 2). It is not enough to counter etiological challenges based on CSR research as Vainio does by pointing out how people may improve their theological reasoning within the faith tradition in which they are raised. The question of safe and

sensitive belief acquisition is an externalist concern, and this is why the *post hoc* use of reason to defend or extend beliefs acquired on another basis is indeed philosophically significant, as we have previously argued. Those processes which are maturationally natural can be anticipated to continue to impact thought and culture, widely construed, even if they are not reliable processes in the sense of giving rise to beliefs that are truth-apt. One might correctly say that this is true for the full range of our controversial views, if it is true at all. But the self-reflection of a religious agent subsequent to an act of testimonial authority assumption will not very directly affect the *external* concerns with safety and sensitivity on which etiological challenges may be based. It cannot, because these are not even in the same ballpark: No appeal to theological systematization and reflection within a faith tradition has the power to later transform intervening or environmental veritic luck into benign evidential luck. Etiological challenges as framed by philosophers instead need to be met with *specific* reasons why the good religious luck in the etiology of a belief is benign rather than malign. Then the debate can truly be engaged. But to treat theological reflection as upgrading positive epistemic status, or as a sufficient demonstration of the agent's intellectual virtue, would be to assume that internal cogitations negate externalist concerns with veritic luck. That, I take it, is logically precluded by the external and modal status of veritic luck.

The second concern I raised above is the position Vainio takes on how NERBs are related to recognized religious diversity. He makes the blanket claim that

NERBs do not bring anything new that would dramatically change the situation. We already knew that diversity existed; suggesting a cognitive mechanism that

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brings about diversity does not alter the basic premises of the solutions that

Christian theologians have already suggested in the course of history.[23]

Cognitive science of religions raises an interesting philosophical question: If we are able to tell a plausible naturalistic story about how religiosity emerged in the course of human evolution, have we provided a debunking account, one that reveals the true nature of religion as something produced by impersonal forces of evolution? Vainio insists not, and this is consistent with our own non-reductionist view. Truth-tracking and fitness-tracking functions of belief are not identical, but neither are they mutually exclusive categories. Vainio may be right that "throughout their history, theistic religions have formulated answers that take into account the diversity of religions in a way that reflects their core beliefs." According to the author, "contemporary CSR provides nothing that would make religious noncognitivism or anti-realism more plausible than they were before."[24]

To support this conclusion, Vainio has his readers focus on a peculiar claim made by Barrett: that if NERBs produced religious uniformity among humans, this might actually be a ground for antirealist. Vainio then reasons:

For Barrett, NERBs combined with the *unity* of religions and worldviews would count against theological realism. In order for NERBs to acquire their debunking power, we would need a uniform belief – formation process that produces demonstrably false beliefs, not supported by epistemic arguments. So if NERBs plus uniformity would be more problematic for exclusivists, we can conclude that

NERBS plus diversity does not have an immediate effect on the evidential force

of the exclusivist claims. Therefore, the debunking thesis fails.[25]

Vainio's inference regarding the combination of NERBS and religious diversity, and his

subsequent dismissal of their relevance to exclusivist responses to religious multiplicity, seems

far too quick. I will argue that it is quite unsound: The relationship between NERBS and

religious diversity is neither so uniform nor as settled as Vainio here asserts. Let me explain why.

Firstly, the application of NERBS likely does not require Barrett's somewhat quirky

claim in the first place. Vainio might just be trying to argue on Barrett's premises, but imagining

exclusivism — even doctrinal exclusivism — together with complete uniformity of belief makes

no sense to me. Who would these exclusivists be excluding? For on this scenario there are no

nonbelievers, and the uniformity of belief guarantees that there is only one set of beliefs that

humans in fact adopt. Secondly, even assuming Barrett's claim that NERBs plus uniformity of

religious belief provides the strongest case for anti-realism about religious belief, Vainio ignores

an important detail in Barrett's argument: that "beliefs about God's, souls, and the rest would

likewise be more suspect if it were discovered that *no matter the information available*, the mind

used it to arrive deterministically at such beliefs" (italics added for emphasis).[26] This rider makes

the conditions under which uniform belief would invite skepticism still more hyperbolic. How

would we ever discover if this odd counter-factual condition, no matter the information

available, were met? This again makes doubtful Vainio's unusual view that contrariety somehow

reduces the plausibility of fictionalism or anti-realism in that domain. As a general point, it

increases it. Finally, Vainio's conclusion appears overdrawn because there are clearly conditions

where a belief forming cognitive mechanism that gives rise to diverse outputs should motivate

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skepticism about the epistemic status of *all*, not just some of the generated beliefs. Our study focuses not on religious truth and knowledge, but on doxastic responsibility and the intellectual viciousness of counter-inductive thinking. Still, we should not shy away from direct examination of the relationship between *de jure* and *de facto* challenges.

This relationship between the two types of challenges, which some recent collections in CSR contain interesting papers on, will be the focus of the next section. But throughout the course of this book we have been concerned with doxastic methods that generate sharply *asymmetric* moral, epistemic, and theological trait-ascriptions. We termed the production of contrariety through symmetrical proximate causes as the main generator of what we earlier termed *enemy in the mirror effects* (EME). So I do think that religious contrariety generated under unsafe or counter-inductive doxastic methods has an immediate effect on the evidential force of the exclusivist claims. The question, 'Are any of them better off?' naturally arises from our Etiological Symmetry thesis (in Chapter 2) plus the multiplicity or diversity it produces. This goes quite some distance, we have held, to explaining why exclusivist responses to religious multiplicity are far more common in testimonial traditions like those of the Abrahamic religions, than, for instance, in mystical or meditational-practice oriented traditions.[27] Their mirrored vice/bias charges directed at faith-based belief in all alien faith communities makes their case for being epistemologically better off than any others, worse.

When the attitude exhibited by a religious exclusivist or recommended by an apologist is the attitude we would say that a biased individual *would* exhibit, we have the phenomena that we have called bias-mirroring. I take it that the exclusivist cannot plausibly deny this of exclusivists either of the home religion or of an alien one. But now the question becomes, in an inference to

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the best explanation, does the self-exception cast in theological terms of divine plan, or the NERB provide the better explanation? Following the Diversity Principle as major norm of inductive reason, more diverse evidence is normally stronger than less diverse evidence. If the majority of religions, those not of the purported true faith, are well-explained by the NERB, there is an inductive presumption that describing one's own religion as the lone exception to naturalistic explanation rule does not of itself insulate one from the challenge. In the case of explanations involving identity bias one would think rather that religious exclusivism *invites* uniform application, since self-exemption from causes that regularly lead to false religious beliefs is close to the very definition of exclusivism. The more numerous the self-exemptors, the more likely that all are shaped by the same causal factors. Applying the diversity principle rebuts Vainio's argument, and indicates that the strength of NERBs to motivate debunking explanations is a question of inductive strength. The New Problem is then a problem for Vainio insofar as it shows that when religious exceptionalism partakes of counter-inductive thinking, the alternative naturalistic explanation gains considerable strength.[28]

Vainio is probably right that the theological liberalism of a generation ago, perhaps exemplified in John Hick's neo-Kantian *ding-an-sich* "tried to universalize everything in monistic fashion," while contemporary revisionism, in adopting more aspects of postmodernism, steps away from such essentialism and instead acknowledges genuine particularity. Liberal and conservative theologians might agree on this, though responses to multiplicity or related issues divide them. But we can add to this response to Vainio by relating another recent discussion of the reach and limitations of so-called evolutionary debunking arguments. According to P. E. Griffiths and John Wilkins (2013), "Evolutionary debunking arguments suggest that the evolutionary origins of our cognitive faculties should undermine our confidence in the beliefs

which those faculties produce."[29] Evolutionary adaptions may produce beliefs that in some domains are truth apt, and in other domains are not. So it is incumbent on evolutionary debunking arguments that they have resources to distinguish specific classes of belief for which the skeptical argument has force, and other beliefs for which it does not.

On the third point of contention, Vainio defines exclusivism in terms of its doctrinal, not its salvific sense. Many soteriological exclusivists are not also doctrinal exclusivists, and so can allow that there may be religious truths to be found outside the home religion. Exclusivism in the doctrinal sense is only about religious truth-possession, and so his "open exclusivism," is a watered down version of what most self-described exclusivists hold.[30] This has an important implication for how Vainio treats NERBs. When he asks whether NERBs present any very direct challenge to the attitude of religious exclusivists, he presents exclusivism differently than when it implicates the further explanatory asymmetries of religious *value* and of culpability for unbelief that salvific exclusivism ascribes to religious aliens.[31] I see NERBs as challenging asymmetries not supported by relevant difference reasoning. Salvific exclusivism entails many more relevant differences between religious insiders and outsiders than does doctrinal exclusivism. It most notably includes that religious aliens lack value in God's eye, and that they are morally culpable for not having taken up the one salvific religious identity. Essentially it is about people and their actions, not just about truth taken abstractly. Until Vainio takes up the harder case of salvific (or soteriological) exclusivism, I remain unconvinced by Vainio's treatment of NERBs and his conclusion that they raise no new worries for exclusivists. Moreover, I suspect that many of the intellectual virtues Vainio so nicely develops in his book, for instance "open-mindedness," "maintaining a critical attitude and public conversation," "virtuous tolerance" or the idea that

inter-religious dialogue has to express intellectual virtues, are either rejected outright or implicitly violated in salvific exclusivism.[32]

Under what specific conditions might evolutionary explanations 'debunk' belief? This is a question that Griffiths and Wilkins ask, but that Vainio's discussion seems to miss due to the blanket response tries he makes, that NERBS can never really suggest any new challenges that theologians haven't already thought about and responded to. The authors employ the helpful concept of a "Milvian Bridge" for domains in which natural selection will favor the production of truth-apt beliefs. They argue that "there is a Milvian Bridge connecting true commonsense beliefs to evolutionary success," while "no Milvian Bridge links true religious beliefs to evolutionary success." What the authors mean is that in the one domain but not the other, it is plausible to link true belief with pragmatic success, i.e., to see evolutionary success as grounds for attributing truth.[33] So as the authors seem right to point out,

It is an error to contrast truth-tracking with fitness tracking because this treats complementary explanations at different levels of analysis as if they were rival explanations at the same level of analysis…. 'Fitness-tracking' is not an alternative to 'truth-tracking' because truth-tracking is a property at a lower level of explanation… It makes sense to ask if a trait is an adaptation for respiration, or for foraging, or for something else. It makes no sense to ask if a trait is an adaption 'for fitness,' since that is simply to repeat the definition of an adaptation—a trait that evolved because it enhanced fitness.[34]

So evolutionary debunking arguments that work on universal causes have no force on everyday commonsense ideas, or arguably on beliefs obtained through scientific reasoning. But

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etiological challenges based on an unusual proximate mechanism, like brainwashing, might challenge particular beliefs. Evolutionary debunking may, however, have more force against moral beliefs or religious beliefs, again either by domain, or by individuated belief. The success of debunking is tied to its ability to target an over-strong realism about the domain to which the target belief belongs. Religious beliefs, the authors conclude, "emerge as particularly vulnerable to evolutionary debunking arguments…. Current evolutionary theory really does support the view that human beings would have religious beliefs even if all religious beliefs were uniformly false." But, they continue, "debunking is not disproving. If there are independent reasons for religious belief, their cogency is not removed by the fact that religious beliefs have evolutionary explanations."[35] This seems to be a more sound way to approach the special concern that the combination of NERBS plus religious diversity raises. But the relation between our *de jure* challenge to the reasonableness of the exclusivist attitude, and a more widely cast *de facto* challenge to beliefs acquired on the basis of testimonial authority assumption invites a more direct discussion.

De jure and *De facto* Challenges: How Related?

Challenges to a belief can take multiple forms. The literature on so-called debunking unfortunately equivocates somewhat between an argument that casts doubt on the *doxastic responsibility* (moral and intellectual virtue) of the agent in coming to hold or maintain the belief, and an argument that casts doubt on the *truth* (or candidacy *for* truth) of what the agent asserts.

If 'debunking explanation' is defined as covering both *de jure* and *de facto* challenges, as it seems to in the literature, it is not a very helpful term. While I will not use this term, the relationship between *de jure* and *de facto* challenges is indeed important question.[36] Philip Kitcher's work should be mentioned in this connection. Kitcher's Terri Lectures makes solid points about the *symmetry - of - generation thesis* (thesis (AS) in Chapter 2). Recall that etiological symmetry holds wherever the proximate grounds behind beliefs are of the same general type. I see myself as close to Kitcher on this, as well as on his articulation of different models of faith with varying degrees of rational respectability (as well as on his clear, strong response to Dawkins, Sam Harris, and other "militant modern atheists").

However, Kitcher does not develop the further connections that interest us here: how asymmetry of content – strong and even polarized contrariety – *flows from etiolog*ically symmetrical processes, especially in testimonial faith traditions.[37] Following upon my response to Vainio in the previous section, my thesis is that the *combination* of etiological symmetry and content contrariety is what we need to pay the most attention to. If this combination is quite epistemically significant, it is because it exhibits the clearest indicators of counter-inductive thinking. But notice also that it is combinations of this sort that also raise the plausibility of moving from judging some claims in the domain as untrue while allowing that others are possibly true, to judging it more likely that all of them are untrue. The debate over miracle claims is a debate where this dynamic of movement from a *de jure* to a *de facto* challenge is ever-present, so we can develop our thesis further by briefly comparing it with Hume on miracles.

In certain respects, my project's concern with the explanatory asymmetries that power apologetics for religious exclusivism also parallels the Humean critique of miracles. The relationship between *de jure* and *de facto* challenges might be illuminated through this parallel, so let us make a brief digression. Hume did not overgeneralize in the way that presents religious beliefs as *en toto* rational or irrational. There are different possible bases for belief, through reasoning, experience, testimonial transfer, etc. Hume's argument starts from an epistemic focus on the reasonableness of belief in miracles on the basis of testimony; it focuses on the rational credibility of such claims for the recipient of testimony about a miracle event, not for someone who purportedly experienced such an event first-personally. The New Problem's challenge to sharply asymmetrical trait-ascriptions basically parallels this. In both cases this is an epistemological argument, or what we have called a *de jure* challenge.

But notice that Hume's argument also has potential, whether Hume pushed this line or not, for denying the very *existence* of miracles –a stronger *de facto* argument. The *de facto* argument concerning miracles, suggested but not fully developed by Hume, holds that while it is logically *possible* that most miracle claims are false while some smaller number of them are true — say the miracle events recounted just in religion x's sacred narratives, uniquely — it is far more *probable* that all of them are false. Somewhat relatedly, in psychology if you design tests to look for an effect but in repeated studies do not observe it, this is good evidence that there *is no such effect*. This is no mean appeal to ignorance, but takes place through the search for evidence, and by deducing observable consequences from working hypotheses. Moving from absence of

evidence to evidence of absence thus seems be part of abductive reasoning; the epistemic import

of lack of empirical evidence depends upon context, and by no means is always fallacious.[38]

Hume's argument regarding miracles also has versions which draw attention to the

counter-inductive nature of miracle claims. This comes in two ways: in his analysis of

testimonial sources of such claims, and in the alternative psychological explanation he offers of

why miracle claims are often persuasive for recipients of the testimony.[39] About the first he

writes, "When anyone tells me, that he saw a dead man restored to life, I immediately consider

with myself, whether it be more probable, that this person should either deceive or be deceived,

or the fact, which he relates, should really have happened." Beliefs based on human testimony

varies with people's experience. "Where this experience is no uniform on any side, it is attended

with an unavoidable contrariety in our judgments, and with the same opposition and mutual

destruction of opposites as with every sort of evidence."[40] To respect inductive norms

concerning the reception of testimony, Hume thinks that we should always reject the miracle

claim unless the falsehood of the testimony would be more miraculous than the breach of a

causal regularity. Hume's own skepticism about the principle of induction has often been cited

against him where he purports to say that the violation of a law of nature must be highly

improbable. But Hume does not rely on his epistemological argument alone; he offers multiple

supporting psychological explanations, explanations that people are motivated thinkers, and are

driven by "the passion of *surprise* and *wonder,* arising from miracles," leading to their being too

easily persuaded on the basis of vivid or eloquent testimony.[41] My point is not that these

alternative psychological explanations are correct, but only that the better supported one takes

them to be, and the closer their fit with the epistemological considerations, the more

philosophically motivated would be the assent from a *de jure* to a *de facto* challenge to miracles.[42]

With regard to etiological challenges, it might be suggested that judging the ground for a belief to be not just inductively weak, but positively *counter*-inductive, provides just the kind of criteria that might validate assent to the stronger, 'debunking' sort of challenge. If so, this may be because what we find salient in such cases is not just failure of *safety*, but of *sensitivity*. Sensitivity demands that if *p* had been false then the agent in question wouldn't have believed *p* on the basis on which she actually believes *p*. Helen De Cruz comments that when people apply maturationally natural doxastic methods, the beliefs they acquire are often insensitive. This occurs if they "would believe it even if God did not exist – making their belief veritically lucky."[43] This is as much to say that sensitivity failure, as distinguished from safety failure, engages more directly the *truth-aptness debate*. Now, it stands to reason that this may be so for particular beliefs, or for whole domains of belief/opinion.[44] If this is correct then sensitivity failure also serves to show when and how far the door is open for a skeptical *de facto,* in addition to a responsibility / rationality focused *de jure* challenge.

The Religious Credence Thesis: Another Sort of Debunking Argument?

How should we understand the relationship between *de jure* and *de facto* challenges? If these two objections are independent of one another then the philosophical success of one of these challenges does not guarantee the success of the other. So as a quick example of different views of how they relate, it is quite common among nontheists to combine a *de jure* objection that theism is epistemically unacceptable with agnosticism about the *de facto* objection that

theism is false.[45] Principled agnostics tend to think that this gives their position the upper hand against atheists who may take *de facto* challenges to falls out of *de jure* challenges to the epistemic *standing* of some target beliefs or attitudes. Among theists, Alvin Plantinga, describes a "proper" *de jure* objection as a *de jure* objection that cannot be shown to implicitly depend on a *de facto* objection. In *Warranted Christian Belief,* Plantinga argues that there are no *de jure* objections that do not implicitly depend on a *de facto* objection, that latter being seen as one the theist can easily reject. John Bishop and Imran Aijaz (2004) reply that this strong dependence Plantinga asserts is too quick, and that the externalist epistemology Plantinga appeals to fails to justify the categorical rejection of *de jure* challenges to Christian belief. More positively, however, moderate religious fideism has the resources to "constrain" strong fideism by retaining some conditions for proper *de jure* challenges. Understanding faith as *doxastic venture,* as did Mill and James, is consistent with moderate religious fideism, Bishop and Aijaz argue, but not with a view like Plantinga's where "certain belief" and knowledge are self-attributed by the faithful. A doxastic venture account explains how a plurality of religious faith ventures arise, and the moral and epistemic limits of our right to them. But "doxastic" venture is used loosely here, since the authors do not want to beg the normative question about whether faith is rightly understood as a certain kind of propositional attitude. Some of what we call doxastic ventures may be sub-doxastic so long as it one's attitude towards faith-propositions is able to serve its normal function in practical reasoning. [46]

While developing a narrowly-targeted *de jure* objection is the main approach we have pursued, CSR has little truck with *de jure* challenges, since these deal with questions of epistemic guidance and of the ethics of belief. CSR can proceed in simple suspension of *de facto* questions about the existence of God. But there is a second kind of *de facto* challenge on the

table that CSR research might support. This is a challenge not to the positive epistemic standing of given religious beliefs, nor is it directly a challenge to the existence of God. It is a challenge to the correctness of description of religious "avowals" (for example, creedal confessions) as "beliefs" in the first place. This sort of 'debunking' argument may seem highly revisionary because it challenges the self-understanding those engaged in religious discourse, insofar as that self-understanding is overtly realist about religious language. Hence this kind of challenge is more closely aligned with fictionalist or non-cognitivist views about the aims of religious discourse. But for us it suggests further options for how best to understand the relationship between *de jure* and *de facto* challenges. Let's call this form of *de facto* challenge a challenge to status as an epistemic *state*, and we can look at how it draws directly upon work in CSR. But to provide background I will first digress onto Wittgenstein's *Lectures on Religious Belief,* before turning directly to the arguments of Neil van Leeuwen who best presents this type of challenge.

In the epigraph for this chapter, from Wittgenstein's *Lectures on Religious Belief*, we read, "No. There it will break down…. No induction" (56). Wittgenstein's passage I interpret as connecting both with a) our methodological approach emphasizing the centrality of counter-inductive thinking in strongly fideistic conceptions of faith; and b) our analysis of logical and moral faults of the exclusivist response to religious multiplicity. The exclusivist is always claiming that an inductive pattern, however strong it may be, "breaks down" in their own case, usually because of their unique relationship with God. The pattern we apply to all others (whether the 'we' is a neutral observer or a committed exclusivist), a pattern of producing many false beliefs, breaks down *in our own case:* This is the exclusivist's purport. The reliability of our own tradition is wholly dependent upon its truth, but since exclusivists of every faith claim truth for themselves, the pattern-breaking reliability of a single testimonial tradition is still

asserted in the face of inductive logic. "No induction. Terror" clearly suggests violation of inductive norms. The only way it is not a violation is that the refusal of the demand suggests that religious language plays a quite different language game altogether, a game where "truth" loses its shared meaning. In the space of epistemically good reasons, the "No induction" demand itself demands justification. Not providing a positive response to it is to leave reasonableness, so long as reasonableness calls upon rational accountability, or the giving and asking for reasons.

Wittgenstein's *Lectures on Religious Belief* perhaps equivocates between descriptive and prescriptive fideism. I take it as primarily descriptive of how faith-based avowals often functions. But what has become known as Wittgensteinian fideism is weakly prescriptive as well. His claim about the distance between scientific and faith-based practice (which is fitted together with his picture theory of meaning) seems to instill an Independence model of the relationship between science and religion. Most theologians influenced by the Wittgensteinian view are not proponents of a Conflict, but of an Independence model. But let's back up and consider Wittgenstein's passage more closely on its own terms; although he was not specifically concerned with our special focus, his work can still help us illuminate aspects of fideistic thinking. Commenting on the contrast of religious and scientific practice, he writes, "A religious belief might in fact fly in the face of" a forecast based upon objective reasoning. In the face of an objective inductive pattern, Wittgensteinian fideism describes the faith-based believer in the Day of Judgment as asserting, "No. There it will break down…. No induction. Fear. That is, as it were, part of the substance of the belief."[47] As a historical side-note, Wittgenstein read and appreciated Kierkegaard, who held a strong version of prescriptive fideism, claiming that genuine faith *should not* be based upon "objective reasoning."

This is why there is a mismatch but not a *contradiction* between a) the traits of factual belief as we understand it in everyday and scientific thinking, and b) what the religious adherent regards as their belief that a prophesied event like the Day of Judgment will indeed occur. Wittgenstein is focusing on the (mis)communication between the Day of Judgment believer and another person who does not believe it. "These controversies look quite different from any normal controversies. Reasons look entirely different from normal reasons."[48] He goes on to comment, "In a religious discourse we use such expressions as: 'I believe that so and so will happen,' and use them differently to the way we use them in science…. [T]here is this extraordinary use of the word 'believe.' One talks of believing and at the same time one doesn't use 'believe' as one does ordinarily."[49]

Together with Wittgenstein's broader account of disparate language games with little commensurability between them, these passages go some distance to explaining Wittgenstein as articulating an Independence model of the relationship between scientific and religious thought. Vainio and others point out that there has been a "slide to 'Wittgensteinian fideism' in narrative theology." But logically, this means more of an Independence model of faith and reason. The question becomes whether the insulation of beliefs from evidential challenge which Independence affords does not come at the cost of ceding historical claims ("propositions") to evidence-based objective reasoning. This is why charges of relativism regularly attend critical examination not only of particularist exclusivism, but also of any conception of religious language games that insulate religious assertions from the need for rational justification.

Following this line of thought there is a kind of cognitive dissonance that we would expect to arise for agents in such a situation of prescribed certainty that events, such as miracle events in a purported special revelation, in fact transpired. This is because to make an act of faith the basis

for certainty about truths of an historical order invites all the oddities that Kierkegaard drew attention to, and for which his own response was to abandon objective reasoning in favor of embracing the paradoxical idea of "truth as subjectivity." Evidences are conditional, but truth-qua-faith is prescribed to be unconditional. Religious truth does not require or even desire evidence in the objective sense, but the credence is still a belief with a historical/factual content.[50]

Since these deep thinkers, Lessing, Kierkegaard, Barth, Wittgenstein and many others all point to this cognitive dissonance through metaphors like "ditch," "chasm," etc. let's give a more a more definite terminology to this important problem where logic and psychology clash. Let's define *State and Standing Tension Effects* as follows:

(SAST)   The effects (reported or indicated) of unresolved tension in an agent's thought process brought on by a combination of:

 a) the underdetermination of historical evidence for a justification of faith, and

b) the overdetermination by multiple trait-dependent factors for taking purported special revelation to supply well-grounded historical/empirical beliefs.[51]

A philosopher who develops this area of concern between psychology and epistemology is Neil van Leeuwen. In his papers, "Do Religious 'Beliefs' Respond to Evidence?" (2017) and "Religious Credence is not Factual Belief" (2014), the author argues that "psychology and epistemology should posit distinct cognitive attitudes of religious credence and factual belief,

which have different etiologies and different cognitive and behavioral effects."[52] Leeuwen more specifically argues that religious credence[53] and factual belief have distinctive properties of their own: "[F]actual beliefs (i) are practical setting independent, (ii) cognitively govern other attitudes, and (iii) are evidentially vulnerable. By way of contrast, religious credences (a) have perceived normative orientation, (b) are susceptible to free elaboration, and (c) are vulnerable to special authority. Leeuwen's term "credence" doesn't *require* a doxastic interpretation, and it captures the mood of faith in following what one takes to be doxastic requirements.[54]

I think Leeuwen is correct that "when we talk about differences in 'beliefs,' we tend to focus on differences in *contents,* without considering the possibility that we are lumping distinct *attitudes* under this one word."[55] The support he offers for this claim draws upon differences between cognitive and conative attitudes, where the former represent how situations *are or might be*, while the latter represent how the agent would like things to be, or how things *should be made to be.* Using this distinction, it becomes problematic to say that things on William James' faith ladder, where there is a shift from what ought to be to what is, rightly constitute "beliefs." James indeed urged us to recognize the mood of faith in our faith ventures. While astute on that matter, James never seems to have questioned that these were *doxastic* ventures; he routinely traffics in the language of religious *beliefs*. Whether it is even possible to intentionally follow Kierkegaard's prescription and acquire a belief one judges not to be sufficiently supported by one's evidences, has been recently debated between Andre Buckareff (2005) and John Bishop (2005). For our study, the important point is that this problem must lead one to acknowledge non-doxastic alternatives to a simple "belief" characterization of faith.[56] Looking to actual doxastic practice among the religious returns us to *SAST effects*. The logical tensions between fideism and the evidential grounding normally expected of historical beliefs tend to be ignored

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when the model of faith that is adopted involves any kind of prescribed certitude, or prescribed absence of doubt. The prescription makes the will primary in acquiring or maintaining religious commitments. Prescribed certainty appears suspiciously oxymoronic. But the logical tensions between affective grounds and historical belief cannot be fully repressed. They have psychological effects, which Leeuwen supplies empirical evidence of, and which we have described as involving observable *SAST effects*.

In this connection, Leeuwen's analysis might be seen as a different and more subtle form of debunking, a *de facto* form that draws more upon logical and philosophical than evolutionary grounds. But as Leeuwen points out, illusory self-attributions of belief, which are certainly possible, are harder to investigate when philosophy and cognitive science both tend to assume that belief "is a single cognitive attitude type and that variation in behavioral effects of different beliefs is due to variation in contents" (706). Leeuwen's strongest thesis, and one that he suggests should guide further psychological and epistemic inquiry, is:

> (RCT)   *Religious Credence Thesis*: psychology and epistemology should posit distinct cognitive attitudes of religious credence and factual belief, which have different characteristic etiologies (how they're formed and revised) and different forward effects (downstream consequences).

I am not here endorsing this thesis, which is a broad generalization indeed if intended to debunk religious utterances generally. But the basic distinction between belief and credence clearly connects with some aspects of our approach through philosophy of luck. It also suggests an interesting motivation for a *de facto* challenge that might either complement or compete with

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the *de jure*-focused treatment I gave to the New Problem. What we earlier described as *SAST effects* addresses the same mismatch of belief and evidence. Both Leeuwen's approach and my own have potentially strong implications for religious epistemics. Philosophers of religion have often described it by saying the phenomenology is one of "believing in" rather than "believing that." Kierkegaardian truth-as-subjectivity is over-against objective reasoning, but the "gulf" or "chasm" thus created cannot simply be denied. Prescribed certainty can engender a kind of cognitive dissonance when the prescription to have faith talks to the heart, yet faith is supposed held to be held propositionally.[57] The resulting mismatch of belief and evidence invites confabulation on the part of agents, so that strong fideism is a prime area for study of confabulatory explanations.

The religious normally self-ascribe beliefs to themselves, yet the model of faith at work is often one that also identifies genuine faith with heart-felt avowal. This challenges any simple assumption that religious avowals are cognitive utterances. Before judging belief-attribution as appropriate or somewhat illusory in the religious domain, Leeuwen wants us to note examples of conflations in pre-theoretical speech. Historical examples he discusses are "jade" and "hysteria"; both terms once lumped together as phenomena that moderns have learned to more carefully distinguish. Leeuwen thinks there is an analogy with the catch-all term "belief." He is at least correct that good science depends on recognizing distinct phenomena as distinct, and that we need more clarity about "belief" and its close cousins. A related point I would make is that if the belief/credence or doxastic/subdoxastic distinction is indeed looming larger today in philosophy of religion and in cognitive science of religion, it may be because our descriptive fideism has led us to better recognize the way people can conflate these.

Another thing my analysis adds to Leeuwen's is that "prescribed belief" and "prescribed certitude," due to their implicit strong voluntarism, are markers of credence rather than belief. The argument here, as in our own *de jure* approach, has much to do with the strengths of analogies, and the conditions for reasonably-drawn disanalogies. Etiological symmetries and asymmetries; psychological states of belief and of affective credence; epistemic and pragmatic reasons: each of these pairs point to what credences are *if* they are not beliefs; these pairs do not merely point to what kinds of evidence there is for some target religious proposition.[58] Motivated reasoning — directional thinking — leads to the question of what religious credences are, and not just what levels of total evidence there are for different religious propositions.[59] Motivated reasoning or directional thinking leads to these paradoxes of prescribed certainty. Predictably, people try to steer clear of these paradoxes by denying or 'sinking the fact' of directional thinking in the acquisition and maintenance of their beliefs in the religious domain.[60]

No greater moral dissonance is aroused in an individual than by a perceived demand of faith that the individual make what Kierkegaard famously termed a "teleological suspension of the ethical." This term is tantamount to Abraham's perceived duty to follow the will of God for a ritual sacrificing of his son Isaac, against all "universal" ethical reasoning. A perceived divine command is answered by the knight of faith. The "particular," suspends and then overrides natural sentiments and universal principles; one's duty is not to think or to question, but to make oneself the vessel of God's will even where its rationality or morality is something of a complete mystery. The moral dissonance thus aroused when the perceived demand of God seems at odds with universal moral thinking, such as a parent killing their own child, or a loving god demanding blood, cannot but affect the individual's psyche. This is perhaps why Kierkegaard, that great lover of paradox, gave us such a rich reflection on Abraham as an exemplar of faith,

and on why says he that he both admired and abhorred his action. But SAST effects and Leeuwen's Religious Credence Thesis focus attention directly not on ethical choices and ensuing moral dissonance, but rather on its epistemological correlate, religious avowals on fideistic motivations, or what I propose to call "teleological suspension of the logical," or "teleological suspension of the epistemological."

In summary, while I remain skeptical of the sweeping, highly revisionary account of religious seemings as non-doxastic that Leeuwen's Religious Credence Thesis introduces, I still want to heed his warnings against accepting belief-talk uncritically.[61] Faith venture should be understood as potentially referring to doxastic *or* to sub-doxastic commitments. Leeuwen's thesis and the empirical support that he offers for it substantially broadens our understanding of *de facto* challenges and their relationship to our more restricted *de jure* argument focused just around exclusivist responses to religious multiplicity. While it might seem natural to associate (RCT) with a sweeping *de facto* argument, in fact Leeuwen's account throws a strong light on what he terms "extremist credence." Extremist credences "are vicious because they are not responsive to evidence and they have unrestricted downstream consequences on thought and action."[62]

It is these that display the strong mismatch we find in *SAST effects.* Leeuwen defines extremist credences as ones that are allowed to be "behavior-guiding," and to have "wide cognitive governance," yet without acknowledging evidential vulnerability: "As the practical setting of religious credence expands to cover more and more of an agent's life, without also acquiring evidential vulnerability, the agent tends toward extremism, which is vicious."[63] This passage I think locates one target of Leeuwen's argument, similar to our own, as strong fideism

and the teleological suspensions of the ethical, logical, and epistemological that it regularly generates.

Counter-Inductive Thinking and Minimally Counter-Intuitive Teachings: How Related?

As we noted earlier, comparative fundamentalism and CSR have not been closely connected, and CSR is sometimes criticized for neglecting the particularities of practices and beliefs that interest those in religious studies. It is of course such particularities that claims to religious uniqueness are premised upon. Robert McCauley's response to the question of balance raised earlier is that CSR's focus on popular religiosity and the appeal of maturationally natural ideas is well-suited "to redress an imbalance in religious studies – an imbalance in favour of the particular over the general and the interpretive over the explanatory."[64]

McCauley and other cognitivists take popular representations of the supernatural to be culturally successful *because they trigger and are processed by intuitive systems.* By their focus on what I call the etiologically deep, they tend to ignore *directional thinking.* McCauley shares James' claim that theological systems are secondary constructions, but he is quite critical of what he perceives as James' over-emphasis on faith tendencies as emotionally engaged. Also, James focused on experience, mostly of the exceptionally faithful, while McCauley focuses on evolutionary mechanisms and their manifestation in popular religiosity. While CSR's focus is certainly valid, I worry that the cognitivist approach tends to jettison Mill's and James' interests in individual temperament and the role of emotions and value religious faith ventures. James is certainly correct that there is constant movement between belief and value during assent up the

"faith ladder." Also, the role of directional thinking in generating religious contrariety is central to our earlier critique of fundamentalism, and to any *de jure* or responsibility-focused approach such as we have taken in this book.

But there may be grounds for rapprochement between the more cognitivist and comparative approaches in the study of religion. There may be specific research projects that call upon both, and require their broader integration. This is what I think we discover when we pose a question about the relationship between McCauley's interest in the universal appeal of "minimally counter-intuitive" ideas, and our own interest in people's differential predilection to indulge in "counter-inductive" thinking. Let's explore this relationship more methodically. CSR tells us that there is a correlation between "minimally counter-intuitive" ideas arising from maturationally natural processes, and the beliefs/credences that people find the most memorable, 'live,' or appealing.[65] Does this attractiveness of ideas that are 'just weird enough' suggest that there could be a more direct relationship also between Type 1 or maturationally natural processing and counter-*inductive* thinking? In other words, does the attractiveness of counter-intuitive or counter-schematic religious ideas for some agents predict a pattern of counter-inductive *inference* in the religious domain? I believe so, and will here argue that this connection between CSR's focus on counter-intuitive *content* with our own focus on violation of inductive norms in one's mode of inference and explanation has the potential to expand CSR's focus by connecting it in various ways with religion and philosophy of luck/risk as articulated in Part I.

A propensity for counter-inductive thinking may be only one instance of negative attitudes towards reason carried in one's model of faith. Emil Brunner, an influential Lutheran post-liberal, for example claims that "the teaching of the gospel and

the theory of progress are irreconcilable opposites."[66] This is a conflict model of the relationship between faith and reason. It may relatedly be suggested that a combination of CSR's religious idea-focused approach and our own explanation-focused approach both diagnose 'ironic' rationalizations of religious exceptionalism. The example we have used is Barth's irony that God faults all religion, yet chooses Christianity to be the root of revelation, and Christians alone to rightly award themselves 'the prize.' But this extends more generally to scriptural passages where God's irony shows through a) in disdaining the evidence-demanding 'doubting Thomas'; b) in choosing to convey highest wisdom or revelation through those who seem weakest; or c) in choosing a divine plan where the meek shall eventually inherit the earth; or d) in purposefully making true saving revelation appear as "foolishness to the Greeks," etc.[67] Are highly ironic religious narratives such as these perhaps *more* credible to individuals whose model of faith is more than just moderately fideistic? If so, is this perhaps because these ironies, connected with minimally counterintuitive ideas on the one hand and discovery of truth through counter-inductive inference on the other, coheres with their own strongly anti-rationalist theological method?

CSR is seeing innovations that allow investigators better access to people's actual and/or implicit religious beliefs and attitudes. For example, interest has been drawn to covert and implicit measures of religiosity, in addition to explicit measures like self-reports; source monitoring tasks; partially structured measures using responses to short narratives, consistency between explicitly and implicitly-held religious beliefs; and theological correctness or distance between theologically correct belief and popular religiosity.

Attempting to find measures for "religiosity" in some general sense is not as useful for connecting CSR with philosophy of religion, as are more specific measures for counter-inductive thinking and what I term bias-mirroring. From a descriptive or scientific perspective, the etiology of belief in religious faith traditions is symmetrical until proven otherwise. But asymmetric trait-ascriptions can be studied simply as bias-like, since methodological neutrality limits do not license psychologists to 'reduce' ironic narratives to tropes, or theologically-case asymmetric religious trait-ascriptions to known social bias. But it does license them to study how people's self-reported responses to religious multiplicity *mirror* known cognitive and social biases. Let's call this a *bias mirroring effect* (BME). As the New Problem in chapter Two, and the articulation we gave to descriptive fideism in chapters Three and Four worked to show, strong fideists to a significant extent mirror one another in their mode of belief acquisition, and in the ways that they maintain their uniqueness and superiority. Some of the best evidence for the mirroring of social biases among test subjects might be the extent to which they *attribute* bias to religious aliens in order to buttress their uniqueness and to explain the falsity of contrary beliefs and the culpability of others in holding them. Bias mirroring effects are in evidence wherever we find test subjects responding in ways that a biased individual *would* think or judge.

It has been proposed that CSR's studies of minimally counter-intuitive ideas and their psychological appeal can be approached philosophically from its connection with epistemic risk and with how religious agents weigh or fail to weigh it. If there is such a connection between counter-intuitive content of appealing ideas and counter-inductive thinking as a matter of strength of fideistic orientation, then religious epistemics must study the implications of these and other empirical studies. This also reinforces the point that in CSR there is no either/or choice between an explanatory approach focused on general cognitive mechanisms and an approach

through comparative study of fideistic orientation. Cognitivists remain interested in studying the "doctrinal mode of religiosity," and my suggestions for more integration between CSR and religious studies are made in the spirit of Jesper Sorensen's claim that cognitivist theories enable "more precise historical (and ethnographic) descriptions as well as facilitate comparative historiography."[68]

The best way to look for these connections between the counter-intuitive and the counter-inductive is to utilize our inductive risk toolkit to pose some new questions at this intersection. Table 4.2 codifies a number of these suggestions including how best to scale *fideistic orientation* along a spectrum from weaker to stronger. Philosophers might interact with cognitive psychologists in designing related tasks, and honing the hypotheses that motivate them. The two kinds of *tasks* outlined on this table —Inductive Risk and Source Monitoring— are easy-enough to define. Inductive Risk tasks are tasks with making inferences from inductive evidence. Source monitoring tasks ask test subjects to interpret the meaning of provided testimony, to assess the trustworthiness of a testimonial source, and to distinguish empirical from narrative meaning. The two kinds of *effects* outlined on the table —Bias Mirroring and SAST— are ones that I suggest can best be studied in self-reporting surveys about their own doxastic methods, after they have been *primed* in ways that make them sensitive to these problems in other people's (for instance, religious outsiders') doxastic methods.[69] Some of the other questions on the chart highlight how philosophers best interact for the sake of this research program with social psychologists concerned with religious radicalization, or with comparative religious studies scholars.

My proposal for balancing the general and the particular in the scientific study of religion is also in a sense a proposal for bringing philosophy and psychology of religion closer together.

While trying to develop specific scales for the just-described observable effects would be a collaborative project that goes well beyond the scope of this book, McCauley and other CSR researchers often call for new questions at the interfaces of philosophy and psychology. Table 4.2, with which we can draw this chapter to a close, aims to provide some slightly more formal questions reflecting our approach. Since we primarily motivate it as an investigation of possible correlations between the Appeal of Counter-Intuitive Ideas and the Penchant for Counter-Inductive Thinking, I will give this research program the simple acronym, *CICI.*

<table 4.2 near here>

Inductive Risk Tasks	Tasks with inductive evidence and inference[70]
a) Tasks on fluid rationality and critical reasoning dispositions	What are the studyable relationships between the *natural asymmetry* of causal explanation and the way that asymmetries are ascribed and causal inferences made by people in the religious domain? Does the attractiveness of counter-intuitive or counter-schematic ideas or evidence for some agents predict a pattern counter-inductive *inference* in the religious domain? Does strongly fideistic orientation correlate with heightened counter-intuitive, counter-schematic, counter-inductive, and counter-evidential thinking?[71]
b) Rationalism-Fideism Scale	What is each tested person's orientation on a rationalistic-to-fideistic spectrum? How can their *specific* theological method be described?

	How might strong fideistic orientation be measured with markers of the person's inductively risky beliefs or doxastic strategies? Is cognitive risk-taking prescribed by the agent's theological method? Is the need for objective evidence of one's religious beliefs accepted or rejected? How can religious orientation scales be made more comparative? How can psychologists study similarities among Abrahamic religions? What are the markers of fideistic *testimonial authority assumption*? In what domains or with what priming does inductive norm violation most often occur? How do counter-inductive inferences protect assumptions of religious uniqueness and superiority?
c) Fundamentalist Orientation Scales	
Source Monitoring Tasks	***Tasks of interpreting the meaning of provided testimonial or other sources of claims***
a) Assessment of claims & sources of claims	How do religious and non-religious subjects differ in how reliably they are able to monitor claims and sources of claims? Do religious subjects differ from others in how reliably they track inner vs. outer sources of experience? How *trait-dependent* are these and other inferences people make from their purported religious experiences?
b) Assessment of narrative vs. simple testimonial intent	How reliably do they track differences between simple and narrative testimony? For example, how reliably do they track imaginary elements, and author intent?

	How reliably do they recognize non-literal passages within longer testimonial tracks?
c) Assessment of authority of the written word, or expertise in different domains	Are people more likely to attribute reliability and inerrancy to a written text, in contrast with non-written forms of testimony?
	How do assumptions about religious authority or expertise bear upon what religious ideas are treated as inerrant?
	Do people attribute expertise uncritically or in minimally truth-apt domains where expertise is doubtful?
	Are ambiguous/mysterious/ironic religious texts/teachings preferred and found persuasive (the Guru effect)?
Bias Mirroring Effects	*Indicators of religious subjects mirroring what they concede biased persons would say or do.*
a) Ethnocentrism	Do religious and non-religious subjects differ in likelihood of absolutizing ethics, or culture-specific mores? In advocating express moral paternalism?
b) Group biases	Do religious and non-religious subjects differ in mirroring epistemic or ontic injustice toward outgroupers?
c) Inter-personal biases	How do religious and non-religious subjects differ in how they mirror group biases (for instance, ingroup-outgroup bias, group polarization)?
	Is there more willingness among religious persons to risk others by submitting them to the ingroup's moral dictates? How is the exposure of others to moral risk rationalized?

	How do religious and non-religious subjects differ in how they mirror personal biases (for instance, my-side bias, belief bias, assimilation bias, false consensus, pluralistic ignorance)? Does the religious subject's response to religious multiplicity rely on peerhood denial through theologically-cast discrediting mechanisms? Does the religious subject's response to religious multiplicity rely on 'easy closure' inferences to support the falsity of all beliefs inconsistent with the home religion, or to support the reduction of complex multiplicity to simple contradiction and truth versus falsity? Does the religious subject mirror belief-bias and my-side bias more so than non-religious subjects? Is this mirroring more pronounced as the subjects studied move up the scale of fideistic orientation?
SAST (Epistemic State and Standing Tension) Effects a) Pressure on epistemic standing of beliefs/judgments	*Indicators of religious subjects having unresolved mismatches, for example, mismatches between explicit and implicit, or between religious credences and evidence/belief, etc.* When a task shows the religious subject that a (or preferably her own) doxastic strategy is epistemically risky, does she display expected contingency anxiety? Does she show marks of tension between asserting a religious absolutism and the cultural contingencies of religious identity? If so, how does this come with willingness for belief revision? If not, is the absence of contingency anxiety associated with marks of cognitive dissonance? Of confabulatory explanation?

	Are there indicators of religious subjects' cognitive attitudes as fitting profiles of alief rather than belief, conative rather than cognitive attitudes, etc.?
b) Slippage between models, and logical coherence faults	Is there observable 'slippage' in the subject's responses between emotional/affective responses and assertion of cognitive truth claims?
	Is there observable 'slippage' between the agent's espousal of an Independence model and a Conflict (or Warfare) model of the relationship between reason and faith?
	Does priming the subject for SAST effects increase her willingness to compensate with a higher reliance on a Conflict (Warfare) model of the relationship between faith and reason?
	Under what priming or assigned tasks do we observe religious subjects violate inductive norms, or express a willingness for teleological suspension of the logical, or the epistemological?

Table 4.2 CICI: Some Key Questions for Research on Relationships between the Appeal of

Counter-Intuitive Ideas and the Penchant for Counter-Inductive thinking

Part Two Conclusion

Part II of this book developed implications and applications of Part I's focus on problems of religious luck/risk. It did so by recasting many of the problems regarding luck-leaning asymmetric religious-trait ascriptions into more formal terms of assumed moral and epistemic risk. Inductive risk emerged as a central concept in this study, and as a concept that helps

operationalize problems of lucky belief, luckily true belief, and moral risk attending doxastic faith ventures. We gave fullest development to why there may be strong correlations between inductively risky cognitive strategies and religious fideism, what implications such correlations might have, and what sorts of reasoning tasks and self-reporting questions might be assigned to subjects of psychological experiments to test for these correlations and others involving specific religious orientation and disposition to violate inductive norms.

Chapter 3 more specifically elaborated how religious contrariety arises on the basis of etiological symmetries. It examined the *enemy in the mirror* phenomenon where multiple groups, while arising on a similar basis at least in terms of proximate causes, come to similarly absolutistic stances where unfriendliness towards religious outsiders is typical, and may even be taken as theological correctness. Uniqueness of content or standing with the divine is emphasized, and etiological symmetry and its epistemological implication is ignored. The emergence of the enemy in the mirror can be predicted to arise in testimonial traditions which promote strongly fideistic models of faith. A research program to examine fideistic orientation and its relation to epistemically risky doxastic strategies is one of potentially numerous research programs on which philosophers and psychologists might work collaboratively.

Chapter 4 took up the matter of the limits of reasonable disagreement more directly, examining critiquing both forms that salvific exclusivism can take, particularist exclusivism and mutualist exclusivism. Since mutualist exclusivism aims to get around power objections to the reasonableness of particularist or religion-specific exclusivism, that chapter developed a dilemma and other direct arguments to challenge it.

Chapter 5 presented a critical examination of the logical coherence of the two forms of religious exclusivism, religion-specific, and mutualist. Picking up where the Exceptionalist Dilemma of the New Problem in Chapter 2 left off, but utilizing more of the Inductive Risk 'Toolkit' developed in the intermediate chapters, I explained why post-liberal theologians have turned towards mutualist exclusivism when they try to defend the rationality or reasonableness of the two things that have been the focus of this book: exclusivist responses to religious multiplicity, and radically asymmetric religious trait-ascriptions. But I also argued that mutualist exclusivism on closer examination implies its own contradiction, and so is conceptually incoherent. I also argued that in its practical consequences it tends to produce the enemy in the mirror, and to mirror all manner on known biases by rejecting genuine inter-faith dialogue in favour of polarized and polemical apologetics. So not just the logical coherence, but the moral and theological adequacy of mutualist exclusivism were also directly challenged.

Chapter 6 then examined themes in CSR, and suggested a substantial fusion of concerns with counter-intuitive ideas (an assessment of content) and counter-intuitive thinking (an assessment of patterns of inference). We asked whether McCauley's study of the appeal of maturationally natural ideas, including those that have some degree of counter-*intuitiveness*, can be connected with observable counter-*inductive* propensities in their patterns of *inference*. I argued that philosophy of luck/risk allows us to investigate the many connections between strong or counter-inductive fideism and the counter-intuitive ideas of popular religiosity. I have argued that a proper *de jure* objection to the well-foundedness of belief and to the doxastic responsibility of the agent can at the least be made when the target of the *de jure* challenge is specific beliefs, attitudes, or doxastic strategies. Since our account is agent focused and, as pragmatist, holds an understanding of epistemology as a theory of inquiry and agency, we did not target theism

generally. Theism, deism, pantheism, and many other conceptions of godhead may be associated with texts considered scriptural, but we have explored how especially important the concept of special revelation is in the testimonial traditions, especially those of the Abrahamic family of religions. And we argued that the testimonial authority assumption is key indicator of fideism, and takes many different, culturally specific forms, but is only one of multiple markers of fideistic orientation. Such a restricted target as my own does not presuppose the truth or falsity of theism, and is methodologically agnostic about putative special revelations. If it is judged by the reader that my approach goes beyond neutrality to overt scepticism about purported special revelation, then the reader will associate it with the many European and American Enlightenment-era *philosophes* who were*,* This need and should not depend on the falsity of something so broad as what James calls "the religious hypothesis," though the relationship between de facto and de jure objections is an interesting and timely project that, Leeuwen's credence theory, philosophers of religion, CSR researches and theologians concerned with luck-free theologies should all pursue. I introduced my own collaborative research program, *CICI* that a) gives reason to think there are important hypotheses to be pursued at the intersection of CSR research on the popular appeal of counter-intuitive ideas, and research focused on counter-inductive thinking, as our inductive risk theory proposes. McCauley is always inviting new questions to spur further developments in CSR, and in answer to this we concluded with a list of more specific questions that allow us, a) to give more detail to the proposal for a new scale for religious orientation that focuses on characteristics of counter-inductive thinking as a key indicator of strongly fideistic orientation; b) to more specifically connect CSR with philosophy of luck, with problems of religious luck, and with the hypothesis of descriptive fideism; c) to develop all of these as a contribution to the advancement of the field of comparative

fundamentalism; and d) to balance in the proposed research program the powerful generalism of the cognitive approach with the careful attention to trait-dependent individual and group differences, including differences in doxastic methods, that is so important in philosophy and social science as well as in theology.

Book Conclusion

The explanatory relevance of measures of inductive risk connects it with cognitive and social psychology of religion, while its normative relevance connects with epistemology of testimony, the epistemic significance of disagreement, and the ethics of belief. The chapters of Part II have developed both sides of our inductive risk account, while trying to keep them properly separated.

On the normative side, the major theme of the book has been the limits of reasonable disagreement, and how these limits are surpassed in responses to disagreement or to religious diversity where one or more of the disputants relies explicitly or implicitly on counter-inductive thinking to judge matters of religious truth. We have argued for the intellectual and moral inadequacy of the exclusivist response to religious multiplicity, and insisted that at the least, faith and other theological virtues need to be rendered consistent with universal moral and epistemic virtues. We have emphasized that given the plurality of models of faith that the religious employ, a person's inherited model of faith should be the first, and not the last thing given critical attention by responsible believers. We therefore more constructively discussed moral and epistemic virtue, and how appealing to virtue-based conceptions of moral and doxastic

responsibility suggests a good deal of common ground between religionists and secularists, and a basis for dialogue.

Problems of religious luck can be debated in a lot of different ways, and I have tried to advance this debate rather than arguing that it must play out in one specific way in philosophy of religion. So we have tried to stay neutral with respect to certain debates about religious realism, so as to produce a proper *de jure* arguments against exclusivist attitudes to religious multiplicity, and theologically-cast, radically asymmetric trait-ascriptions to religions insiders and outsiders. I have not assumed that belief may never be permissibly responsive to non-epistemic reasons, and I reject one-size-fits-all answers to the question of how a person should reasonably respond to genuine peer disagreement. Since our focus has been on the *limits* of reasonable disagreement, we have not said much positively in support of a permissivist ethics of belief, although we have situated our account in close proximity to pragmatism and to Rawlsian reasonable pluralism.

Hence it is enough to say that the inductive risk account might be consistent with different accounts of the ethics of belief, and of proper philosophical guidance, but that my pragmatism leads me to view as permissible all such religious faith ventures as do *not* centrally ply on good/bad religious luck (or "aggravate" problems of religious luck, to go back to Zagzebski's original paper). I have on these issues basically taken a Rawlsian, broadly permissivist view, while developing with Bishop and Aijaz the important idea that recognition of a right to moderately fideistic assumptions is the most philosophically sound and practically effective way to constrain strongly fideistic faith ventures. In this way also, the book does not just explain how to present a proper *de jure* objection; it also suggests how to *answer* such an objection when its target is sweepingly broad (for instance, alleging the irrationality of all theistic belief), or when the objection is only belief and not *agent*-focused.

I had earlier thought to conclude this book with reference to William James' famous 1896 Preface to *The Will to Believe and Other Essays in Popular Philosophy,* where he writes,

> [I]f we are empiricists, if we believe that no bell in us tolls to let us know for certain when truth is in our grasp, then it seems a piece of idle fantasticality to preach so solemnly our duty of waiting for the bell. Indeed we *may* wait if we will, —I hope you do not think that I am denying that— but… in either case we *act*, taking our life in our hands. No one of us ought to issue vetoes to the other, nor should we bandy words of abuse. We ought, on the contrary, delicately and profoundly to respect one another's mental freedom: then only shall we bring about the intellectual republic….[72]

The Preface ends with James' prescription that we "live and let live" in spiritual or secular experiments of living, tolerating them so long as they are tolerant themselves. A self-consistent permissivism allows that there is no duty to tolerate the intolerant; the logical coherence of pluralism is clearly decreased, not increased, by the notion of toleration of anti-pluralism *without limit*. But there is keen recognition in James' view that religious and philosophical overbeliefs serve positive functions personally and socially, and that in them "the negative, the alogical, is never wholly banished." Thus I agree strongly with James' permissivist recommendation to value and support that "*spirit of inner tolerance* without which all our outer *tolerance* is soulless, and which is *empiricism's glory.*"[73] *But I will make one qualification of James' claim, to conclude instead that rational support for a spirit of inner tolerance is empiricism's conclusion, and God's glory.*

End

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Chapter Six Notes

1 Wittgenstein, "Lectures on Religious Belief."

2 Philosophers since Thales and Xenophanes since ancient times have offered insight into religious psychology, sometimes contrasting the poets and priests who employed *mythoi* to explain events, and natural philosophers who by employing *logoi* gave impetus to Greek science. Some of the ancients, like Hippocrates, the father of medicine, criticized the philosophers *along with* the poets and priests, contrasting all of them with his more empirical approach to the causes and treatment of disease. But the turn from myth and supernaturalism at the dawn of philosophy in the Greek tradition needn't be thought of as pitting science and faith, Enlightenment-mode thinking versus irrationalism. CSR seemingly draws as easily from counter-Enlightenment thinkers like Montaigne, Pascal, James, as it does from Enlightenment mode thinkers like Lessing, Locke, Hume, Kant, and Voltaire.

3 Adam Green (2013, 417) for example writes that, "the cognitive science of religion can actually be used as a tool when doing theology from within the perspective of a faith tradition. It can, in effect, help to clarify religious doctrine from the inside."

4 D. Xygalatas and R. McKay, "Announcing the *Journal for the Cognitive Science of Religion*," 1.

5 Hume, *Natural History of Religion,* Introduction. Compare what James calls the "intellectual operations" related to religion (*Varieties,* 433) include primarily those that of our overbeliefs,

those of philosophy, and those of a science of religion. Graham Wood (2011, 734) notes, "as Hume's famous distinction makes clear, there is an important difference between the reasons for religious belief and the causes of religious belief."

[6] We will engage them more later, but they are strictly speaking limit questions for science, if we are not to conflate science and values, description and naturalistic explanation with endorsement of a strongly naturalistic metaphysics. The explanatory scope of CSR falls well short of deciding such things as the reality of miracles. Theistic and atheistic worldviews, and spiritualist and materialist metaphysics are in the domain of controversial views, whereas science and religious studies are methodologically "agnostic" or neutral on questions of religious metaphysics. They may still be a source of well-grounded empirical premises that might be used in arguments that aim to establish a metaphysical conclusion. This may be a simplistic answer, but for our study we will hold tightly to the neutrality of CSR to questions metaphysical.

[7] To reiterate, *de facto objections* state that purported force *f* likely does not exist, or that the claim that p is likely false *rather than* true. *De jure objections* state that force x is explanatorily spurious or superfluous, or that the claim that p, whether true or not, is rationally or morally deficient. The epistemological use is typically that the claim that p lacks positive epistemic standing, on account of its being epistemologically unjustified/unsafe/insensitive, etc. This mildly generalizes Plantinga's description. Focusing only on "Christian belief" he writes, "*De facto* objections are relatively straightforward and initially uncomplicated: the claim is that Christian belief must be false (or at any rate improbable), given something or other we are all alleged to know. *De jure* objections, by contrast… are much less straightforward. The conclusion

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of [a *de jure*] objection will be that there is something wrong with Christian belief – something other than falsehood – or else something wrong with the Christian believer: it or she is unjustified, or irrational, or rationally unacceptable, in some way" (*Warranted Christian Belief,* ix). I am treating *de jure* challenge, and the concept of reasonableness more generally, as something that can be framed so in terms open to any or all of the three kinds of "adequacy" objections: epistemological, ethical, and theological. The overlap in these approaches strengthens is appropriate to the dialectical setting where disputants may not have a lot of common ground; they need multiple modes of criteria in order to assess the normative force of a *de jure* challenge, and the three-pronged approach supplies this.

[8] Philosophers, theologians, and others can talk about CSR as having implications that support or undermine the rationality of belief, or support or undermine the truth aptness of theistic beliefs, but these issues are not scientific. Truth aptness is closely connected with sensitivity, since the sensitivity principle imposes a modal constraint on true belief: if the proposition believed were false, one would not believe it. Sensitivity, for those who would defend it as a condition on justification or knowledge, requires is that one would not believe P by the same method were P false.

[9] Theologians often posit final in addition to efficient causes, or they take natural laws discoverable scientifically as "secondary" causes, with "primary" causes standing beyond or before them. To the extent that the "final" or "primary" causes are understood to be consistent with natural law (as contrasted, say, with the view that God controls all things directly), these faith-based tenets are part of an Independence rather than a Conflict model of the relationship

between religion and science. Their problem is not direct tension with discoverable facts, but mainly their apparent unfalsifiability and superfluous nature from the scientific point of view. These concerns are taken here as ones for philosophers and theologians; while they are material in understanding *de jure* and *de facto* challenges, CSR as an empirically-oriented science can proceed neutrally to them. For better or worse, religious studies scholars usually refer to this as methodological agnosticism.

[10] McCauley 2010, 779.

[11] The debate is more broadly recognizable even in the contrasting focus on "religion" (CSR favors the singular term) versus "religions" (for instance the hermeneutic study that calls itself "theology of religions").

[12] Tremlin, *Minds and Gods*, (2010, 9.)

[13] This suggests to me that religious exclusivism may be a special expression of other, well-recognized sorts of us – of them separations, in that despite the unique content of the beliefs, they are produced by many of the same processes. What is different is the metaphysical explanation, but ideas are maintained and passed on which have social evolutionary advantages that others do not.

[14] Jack Lyons and Barry Ward, *The New Critical Thinking,* Introduction. As articulated earlier by Paul Thagard, "Attempts to improve inferential practice need to consider psychological error

tendencies, which are patterns of thinking that are natural for people but frequently lead to mistakes in judgment." Philosophical rationalism tends to lead philosophers to conflate thinking and reasoning, but, for instance, "It would be highly misleading to depict motivated inference as a sort of fallacious argument akin to wishful thinking, of the form: I want X, therefore X is true….Motivated inference is more complex than wishful thinking because it involves selective recruitment and assessment of evidence based on unconscious processes that are driven by emotional considerations of goals rather than purely cognitive reasoning" (2011, 156).

[15] Vainio 2017, 94.

[16] Vainio, 112.

[17] Vainio anticipates a potentially strong *de facto* objection even against theological adequacy of such a view, since by the theist's own account of divine attributes, God should not be a deceiver. Theologically, a method of belief formation that resulted in a great deal of false positives would be, at the least, inefficient. Morally, it raises all kinds of problems like those of non-culpable nonbelievers, and intellectually, it puts human beings in a terrible epistemic position. This is why Visala and Leech describe such a scenario as a deceiving god scenario, and why they develop a deceiving god argument (*Deus deceptor*), in that "it seems that God is responsible for creating a set of cognitive processes that, for the most part, prevent real knowledge of spiritual reality, while allowing multiple false conceptions to develop freely" (2011, 95). Religious rationalists like Descartes would be rolling over in their graves at the reliance on an assumption that God is a deceiver. There are some theological responses intended to support exclusivism. Vainio thinks

that from a Molinist perspective, one can consistently claim that because God has middle knowledge, he can set apart those who would not believe in any possible world. "These individuals (i.e., those who are not elected) are then located in a time and place for Christian faith are nonexistent or rare." Also possible he thinks is a sterner Calvinist response: "God wishes to save only those whom he has elected from *massa perditionis.*" On both scenarios, the saved must be few, and those justly condemned outnumber them massively. Limited atonement is very controversial, both morally and as a biblical interpretation. It is biblical enough if one is literalist about Revelations 7, which says the 144,000 are to be saved, which, if one does the math against the 7 billion estimate of humans that have ever lived, comes out to $(144000/7000000000) \times 100 = 0.002\%$. For literalists, then, 99.998% of the population goes to hell. More importantly, in his subsequent treatment of NERBs, Vainio conflates the distinction between *de facto* and *de jure* objections, a distinction we have made efforts to carefully delineate. It is not my point to go back to moral and theological critique, but my earlier thesis stands that it is a radically fideistic account that separates theological qua biblical adequacy from moral and epistemological concern, as both of these response to the *Deus deceptor* argument appear to do.

[18] Barrett's account suggests that religious traditions are more or less coincidental conglomerates of cognitively optimal concepts, possibly epiphenomena without causal effect. "[P]psychologist Justin Barrett has demonstrated that, when performing under pressure, people tend to make inferences that are often in sharp contrast to their explicitly held theological convictions, and instead fall back on intuitive ideas. This distinction between explicitly held theological ideas and implicit theological incorrectness highlights the question whether we can understand behaviour by reference to the teachings of religious systems" (J. Sorensen, 2005, 476).

[19] Vainio, 83. Vainio utilizes studies in cognitive science of religion, but also criticizes the reductive spirit of many of its practitioners, or at least of the non-scientists who try to use it as grounds for religious skepticism. He complains, for example, that "the cognitive science of religion has concentrated almost solely on religion as a product of type I cognition. This tends to distort the religious reality the theories are trying to depict and explain. It is not clearly the case that religious believers are not engaging in higher and refine forms of cognition, or that theologians ideas are systematically disregarded… The image that a casual reader gets is that type II cognition (theology and philosophy) are *post hoc* rationalizations of fundamentally irrational for beliefs. However, if we investigate, we see immediately how odd and *ad hoc* this claim is. The same dialectic also pertains to scientific theories and philosophical arguments as they supervene on folk beliefs and try to control and refine them" (83).

[20] However, Vainio seems to miss that unlike the ideal of psychology that reductive eliminativism upholds, many theorists in CSR today like Jong and McCauley are explanatory pluralists, holding that "theories at different levels can co-evolve and mutually influence each other, without reduction of the higher-level theory to the lower-level one." Schouten and de Jong (2012), Introduction.

[21] Cleveland's *Disunity in Christi* is far less concerned than Vainio with the implications of these psychological studies for religious epistemics, but in more practically concerned with their implications for the prospects of Christian unity. For example she discusses the implications of the study of *group polarization* for religious philosophy. Studies suggest that people reason

better in groups when there is diversity of opinion, and willingness to voice dissent and the reasons for it. On the other hand, "In the absence of diverse influences, homogenous groups tend to adopt more extreme and narrow-minded thinking as time passes." This is so even though, as Cleveland notes, churchgoers today to an unprecedented degree tend to 'shop' for the church and community that express their values. Indeed, those who "exit adolescence without interacting across cultural lines can easily evolve into churchgoers who continue to maintain these divisions in culturally homogenous churches. Ultimately, homogeneity within churches lives on while meaningful cross-cultural and cross-ideological interactions are limited" (Cleveland 2013, 26-27).

[22] See my "Thinking Twice about Virtue and Vice" (2017c). I there argue that credit theories can treat many cases of cognitive success through heuristic cognitive strategies as credit-conferring, It depends on whether the heuristic strategy of inquiry (described at the right level of generality to address the "Generality Problem") is reliable in that type of epistemic situation/domain. This all bears on the philosophical implications of dual process theory, arguing that the ecological nature of human cognition has strong normative implications for epistemology, including virtue epistemology. A genuine convergence between virtue epistemology and dual-process theory is called for, while acknowledging that this effort may demand new and more empirically well-informed projects on both sides of the division between Conservative virtue epistemology (including the credit theory of knowing) and Autonomous virtue epistemology (including projects for providing guidance to epistemic agents). See also Church and Samuelson (2014) for a similar attempt to reconcile virtue theory and dual-process theory/ecological rationality. Our papers both respond directly to the situationist challenge to

virtue epistemology, and I also respond there to the "Trade-off Dilemma" of John Doris, and Lauren Olin and their "vicious minds" hypothesis. See Keith Stanovich (2011), West, Toplak and Stanovich (2008) for an introduction to dual-process theory, and philosophers such as Nancy Snow (2006; 2009) and Holly Smith (2015), Table 1 reflects further ideas about philosophy and current cognitive science.

[23] Vainio (2017), 98.

[24] Vainio (2017), 99.

[25] Vainio (2017), 99.

[26] Barrett (2011, 150-51), quoted by Vainio (2017, 98).

[27] Mahmut Aydin (2004) emphasizes this about the Abrahamic religions in particular, that the main cause of enmities, conflict and hatred "is to be found in the way believers so exaggerate their differences that they forget their common core" (235). He reminds us that taking other religions' beliefs as contradictory rather than contrary is a *choice* dependent on such exaggerations. On the ancient South Asian parable of the *Blind Men and the Elephant,* retold by the Sufi mystic Rumi, had the men been given sight on their partial views of the Absolute, 'they would have found there were no contradictions between their words.' Aydin argues that not just for Rumi, but in the Hebrew bible and also on Quranic ground, "There is a taste of Divine Being in the heart/soul of every religious community" (224).

[28] Unreliability can be cast at a level of more proximate causes, as we saw from contingency arguments in Chapter 2. That religious beliefs conflict, and that most religious believers themselves attribute falsehood to most religious beliefs, would seemingly be enough to establish unreliable mechanism if beliefs all rooted in a single source. Yet of course conformist fideists — those who assume the special authority of the home religion's testimonial tradition —typically deny that their belief uptake is grounded in the *same* mechanism or doxastic method as those that produce all those beliefs they judge false. The level of generality at which (AS) describes the doxastic strategy (belief-forming function) they would hold to be too wide. But if plausible relevant difference reasoning is not forthcoming to support this reply, the position threatens to give up philosophical response, and to collapse into merely negative apologetics.

[29] Griffiths and Wilkins 2013, 143. On evolutionary debunking and moral and religious beliefs, see also M. Bergmann and P. Kain (eds.) (2014), *Challenges to Moral and Religious Belief: Disagreement and Evolution.* D. Enoch and E. Guttel (2010) also argue that we need a more nuanced understanding of the philosophical significance of debunking explanations. D. Leech and A. Visala (2012) nicely distinguish evolutionary from co-evolutionary and from cognitive explanations among naturalistic explanations of religion.

[30] Vainio, 96-97. I want to thank John Bishop for comments on a draft paper that steered me to focus on soteriological exclusivism as the more interesting target of philosophical interest. This is supported further by the fact that Griffiths (2001) defends mutualist salvific exclusivism, while interestingly enough finding doctrinal exclusivism unsustainable. Griffiths also makes use of the

open/closed exclusivism distinction (see also Marbaniang 2010, who says that fundamentalist faith evinces three epistemic conditions: unconditional subjection to authority, existential identity, and closed exclusivism, and also absolutist ethics and a utopian eschatology), but I find the open/closed distinction vague in its meaning and application to individuals. On the other hand, McKim (2012) supplies very detailed treatment of the overlaps and differences between doctrinal and soteriological exclusivism, and cogent critiques of both forms.

[31] Vainio's characterization of exclusivism is suspect, since his account of it leaves out no moral requirements on heaven and the religion-specific cognitive components the salvific exclusivist insists upon. Salvific exclusivism is not "open" in the way that doctrinal exclusivism logically may be. For instance, escapism or potential universal salvation looks good from a perspective of moral theology, but in Paul's treatment of works of the flesh for instance, he insists that "those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God" (Galatians 5:22 – 23). Also, without the stronger salvific exclusivist riders, Jesus could have served to redeem human sin, *regardless* of whether his life and teachings were actually remembered and honoured, or he was forgotten.

[32] For example, "Because of our cognitive biases, we often have a comfortable default position, which resists change. An open-minded person is able to transcend this… open-mindedness entails that we must sometimes remain in a state of uncertainty…." (158). Everyone probably thinks of themselves as open-minded, but under the supplied description this is not something most exclusivists endorse or live up to, as least as I read them, since the models of faith they adhere to call explicitly for resistance to change, and for conceiving faith as immune to standing intellectual uncertainty, or momentary wavering into doubt.

[33] "We call an argument which links true belief with pragmatic success a "Milvian bridge" (recalling how Constantine's victory in the battle by that name was traditionally ascribed to the truth of his Christian beliefs, and the falsity of his enemies' beliefs).… Milvian bridge: X facts are related to the evolutionary success of X beliefs in such a way that it is reasonable to accept that and act on X beliefs produced by our evolved cognitive faculties" (134). But at the same time, Griffiths and Wilkins take those would-be debunkers of religious belief to task who simply dichotomize between truth-tracking and fitness tracking in order to argue that the evolutionary fitness of religious beliefs is wholly independent of truth. The idea of domains where there is or isn't such a "bridge," nicely corrects for the dichotomizing tendency Vainio alleges to find in CSR.

[34] Griffiths and Wilkins 2013, 136-137. Note that this author, Paul E. Griffiths is not Paul I. Griffiths, the Christian thinker whose apologetics for exclusivism we previously critiqued.

[35] Griffiths and Wilkins, 144. See also Griffiths and Wilkins 2010.

[36] "If the explanation shows *either* that X's belief in the claims P is due to an unreliable mechanism *or* that X would have been likely to believe the claims P whatever their truth – value, then X's beliefs do not amount to knowledge." (Pigden, "Subversive Explanations" (2013), 147; see also Nola's "Do Naturalistic Explanations of Religious Beliefs Debunk Religion?" in the same volume).

[37] This idea about asymmetry of content (religious multiplicity or diversity) manifesting out of symmetry of process of belief-uptake does not seem to have been carried out by Kitcher, but I would argue that it is complementary with Kitcher's articulation of a naturalistic and humanistic worldview. Kitcher's humanism allows the reasonableness of alternative religious orientations. I agree with Kitcher most when he targets his criticism on the Belief Model of faith, while allowing reasonable agents other models that do not so much incite bigotries or religious intolerance, or conflict with science.

[38] In the laboratory setting, with variables controlled as far as possible, and auxiliary conditions are adequately independent, if the hypothesis predicts something and it isn't observed, it simply isn't there. In science there are few quick kills, and tenacity can be a personal virtue where synchronic theory virtues do not supply a definitive choice among competing theories; adjustments to auxiliary assumptions or tweaks to the hypothesis might work, but if *ad hoc* adjustments continue to be made this tends to rob the hypothesis of its testable empirical content rather than increases it as is what happens in progressive research programs of any kind (Imre Lakatos). And what, after all, is more *ad hoc* than, in response to a call for explanation of an asymmetrical ascription of good religious luck, explaining it in terms of another? But it may be different in religion because the singular proposition, "God exists" is not *expected* to be verifiable by the five senses. If I tell you, "I have a green genie in my briefcase," and my class then dissects my briefcase and no one finds any trace of it, it will not help that I tell my class, "It is an invisible green genie." Unless highly credulous, they will be green genie atheists, not green genie agnostics. Ditto with what you think about weapons of mass destruction under Saddam Hussein Iraq: holding out that there *might* be WMDs there naturally-enough gave way to overt

skepticism, given the strong but failed efforts to locate them. How different is it with evidencing theistic claims, or classes of supernatural event claims, such as miracles? Does absences of evidence ever legitimately become evidence of absence? I have no definite thesis on this, but the inference would seem to be much sounder if there is also a naturalistic story to tell about how these beliefs arise in people, and would arise, even if they are not true.

[39] Later Enlightenment figures who were skeptical of special revelation took this from Hume. Thomas Paine wrote that "It is revelation to the first person only, and hearsay to every other, and consequently [these others] are not obliged to believe it." Paine (1967) [1776], 292-293.

[40] All Hume quotes are from *Enquiry,* Section 10, 'Of Miracles.'

[41] The performance of miracles as proof of divine connection is often demanded by characters in Abrahamic narratives. The performance of miracles for the confirmation of faith is a repeated trope, though attitudes vary from ecstatic reception to being critical of a 'Doubting Thomas' for his unfaith, and from prophets pleased to show God's power through them, to prophets who refuse to perform them precisely when others ask or demand it of them as proof. Historical-critical methods point to another and more subtle form of persuasion. They raise concerns about *prefiguration* in miracle stories. For example, Jesus in some gospel accounts repeatedly does things that the intended readership would recognize as the fulfillment of older Jewish prophesy of a coming messiah. This suggests a persuasive intent on the part of the authors; for New Testament readers may be seen as the most significant of Jesus' miracles. Events that (whether through conscious prefiguration or not) confirm an older prophesy function to legitimize the

narrative of a new covenant with God, and they add an intellectual element to the ever-present persuasive role in miracles in instilling faith.

[42] I am not here offering a full account of the relation between the *de jure* and *de facto,* either in regards to miracle claims, or to luck-leaning asymmetric religious trait-ascriptions. I can just summarize some of the questions to ask. One is, 'Under what conditions does absence of evidence comport to rationally sufficient evidence of absence?' On the one hand, there is the appeal to ignorance *fallacy.* On the other hand, we know that in science and everyday life, absence of evidence after careful and prolonged efforts at inquiry, and especially under controlled conditions where we do our best to eliminate hidden variables, *does* typically comport to evidence of absence.

[43] De Cruz, "the relevance of Hume's natural history of religion for cognitive science of religion." *Res Philosophica.*

[44] The epistemological literature agrees Dani Rabinowitz that, "In some cases sensitivity is the more stringent condition, while in others safety is….[T]he following pair of conditionals are false: If *S* safely believes *P* then *S* sensitively believes *P;* If *S* sensitively believes *P* then *S* safely believes *P*. The logic of these conditionals makes explicit the respects in which safety is similar to and different from the sensitivity condition." "The Safety Condition on Knowledge," Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy. http://www.iep.utm.edu/safety-c/ Accessed June 10, 2018.
Part of what I am saying connects sensitivity failure to truth-aptness considerations is supplied by understanding that the scope of the sensitivity condition does not extend to necessary truths or

to knowing the falsity of radical skeptical scenarios. The condition is thus limited to, but also especially illuminative of, rational justification for "contingently true propositions." These points hold whether sensitivity is a necessary condition on knowing or not (as a virtue epistemologist, I think an aretaic conditions serves better, but that sensitivity *concerns* are nevertheless important especially in regard to environmental epistemic luck). The insensitivity of belief and cognitive overdetermination, in the form of what John K. Davis calls trait-dependent belief, are also linked. I develop these connections further in Axtell, 2019.

[45] Brian C. Barnett (2019) provides a strong discussion of the debate. He also supports the conclusion that Plantinga's General Reduction Argument fails, and therefore that "theists must deal with each *de jure* objection one at a time, and independently of the *de facto* objection" (14). An example of skeptical evidentialists who make quite sweeping *de jure* objections to theistic belief, see Todd Long (2010). By contrast I think that a sweeping *de facto* objection (for instance, that that are no sound miracle claims, or no special revelations) is better motivated than a claim that everyone must be irrational who believes such a thing. I believe many Enlightenment thinkers (for example Thomas Paine, or Voltaire) made both *de jure* and *de facto* claims, but didn't confuse them in the ways that modern-day impermissivism will drive one to do. On this view one might possibly still move from the one kind of argument to the other, but not without a clear argument: *de jure* and *de facto* arguments are to be constructed with as much independence from one another as they can, *unless* one is quite explicitly trying to argue for an entailment. Entailment from *de jure* to *de facto* might be exampled in one's arguing the 'mutual destruction' of miracle claims in different religions. It is possible that the one's we have studied as ill-founded but others are well-founded, but it is more likely that they are all false claims, not

just some. Entailment from *de facto* to *de jure* might be exampled in the "unfriendly" inference from there is no proof positive for God's existence, all people are "irrational" who believe that God exists. These are just schematic examples.

[46] Bishop and Aijaz's account is clearly closest to my own, and I develop a character-focused and neo-Jamesian permissivism in Axtell 2015 and Axtell 2019. Bishop and Aijaz's (2004) aims "(1) to argue that Alvin Plantinga's Reformed epistemology does not provide a categorical affirmative answer to the 'de jure question' about Christian belief; (2) to argue that – on the assumption that our total independent evidence leaves it open whether Christian belief is true or false – a categorical affirmative answer to the de jure question requires defending doxastic venture in favour of Christian belief; and (3) to suggest that PRE's appeal to epistemological externalism may play a significant role in defending the epistemic propriety of doxastic venture in favour of Christian belief. On (3), the authors were correct to concede to Buckareff (2005) that a venture of faith might sometimes be sub-doxastic, so long as "full practical commitment" can still be made to faith-propositions without actual belief. For further debate with Bishop and Aijaz's thesis, see Griffeon 2015.

[47] Wittgenstein, 56.

[48] Wittgenstein continues, "What we call believing in a Judgement Day or not believing in a Judgement Day – The expression of belief may play an absolutely minor role.
If you ask me whether or not I believe in a Judgement Day, in the sense in which religious people have belief in it, I wouldn't say: 'No. I don't believe there will be such a thing.' It would

seem to me utterly crazy to say this. And then I give an explanation: 'I don't believe in ...', but then the religious person never believes what I describe. I can't say. I can't contradict that person" (57). "In one sense, I understand all he says – the English words 'God', 'separate', etc. I understand. I could say: 'I don't believe in this,' and this would be true, meaning I haven't got these thoughts or anything that hangs together with them. But not that I could contradict the thing."

[49] Wittgenstein, 57, 59.

[50] "Here we are distinguishing between the views of those who think that they need not rest on the evidential basis and those who hold the far more radical belief that faith needs neither evidences nor the facts themselves" (Gary Habermas, 1991).

[51] Overdetermination theory is still a largely unexplored approach in debates over the basing relationship. But it is motivated by the holistic nature of people's reasoning about worldview beliefs, and under conditions of uncertainty and other pragmatic constraints, as Rawls alerted us to. It is motivated also, we have now seen, by some specific psychological studies, research that illuminates how trait-dependent judgment contributes to psychographic contrariety. See Axtell 2019 for development.

[52] A further paper by Leeuwen (2007) argues that self-deception does not typically result in "belief" but in "avowed belief." Since CSR is interested in popular religiosity and theological

incorrectness, there are some rich CSR connections here as well, and Leeuwen develops them to a degree.

[53] This language, though, might be confusing, since many epistemologists of internalist and probabilist orientation use "credence" as an evidence-based confidence level, such as .6. Compare Lara Buchak (2014), who nicely tries to mediate what she sees as two robust traditions that dealing with doxastic attitudes. In our terms, the one tradition focuses on the etiologically and axiologically deep (Leeuwen), while the other, the probabilistic tradition, focuses on the shallow side of Table 1. Still, Leeuwen and Buchak might both endorse what Carter, Jarvis, and Rubin (2016) refer to as "doxastic state pluralism," and I accept this latter as an essential aspect of the epistemology of controversial views.

[54] Leeuwen's distinction seems related to the better-known distinction between "sensory" and "emotional" experience. On the latter, Foresman, Fosl and Watson (2017) note that many of our beliefs are formed on the basis of both kinds of experience. They remind us of Montaigne's claim "What we see and hear when we are transported with emotion we neither see nor hear as it is." Some thinkers and traditions disparage emotional experience as evidence in epistemic or critical matters, while others (James, for example) champion it. Realistically, "even if we are suspicious of the role emotional experience plays in reasoning we cannot completely eradicate it" (234). For Foresman et. al., it is important first that we distinguish them rather than conflating them, and then that we assess carefully: "*Emotional experience* refers to our affective impression of all those things that are brought into our perception through our senses…. There are a number of similarities between these two types of feeling [sensory and emotional]. First, both happen

independently of our *wills*; …Secondly, both kinds of feeling happen largely independently of conscious, critical *judgments* we make about them.…Despite the similarities between sense experience and emotion, there are strong reasons for distinguishing them… [including that] the content of sense experience is about a different type of reality from emotions. Experience seems to direct our attention to something *outside* of ourselves, which may or may not be presented to us accurately …. The content of our emotions, however, seems to be about something quite different. For the most part, the content of emotions seems to be to something *inside us.…"* (222).

[55] Leeuwen 2014, 698.

[56] Buckareff (2005) argues that faith is best conceived of as a *sub-doxastic* venture, and that "Bishop fails adequately to show that faith in the face of inadequate epistemic reasons for believing is, or can even be, a uniquely *doxastic* venture." Bishop (2005) responds that "it is indeed impossible intentionally and directly to acquire a belief one judges not to be supported by one's evidence. But Jamesian doxastic venture does not involve any such direct self-inducing of belief: it is rather a matter of an agent's *taking* to be true in practical reasoning what she *already*, through some 'passional', non-epistemic, cause, *holds* true beyond the support of her evidence." Eklund (2014) updates this debate.

[57] At least where we are focusing on problems with theological methods on which having faith mean *believing the factual truth* of narrative events in scripture, the foremost problem is that

agents may actually be conflating cognitive states if the states they self-report having are emotionally-charged or held above challenge or serious revision.

[58] Leeuwen's project like my own is not well-aided by the generic scales of religiosity and spirituality the psychologists have often applied, but suggests a need for more detailed scales, informed by theory. But cognitive scientists already recognize that avowals cannot simply be taken at face value. Studies of differences between explicit measures of religiosity such as self-reports and implicit measures throw some light on that subject. This firstly goes to the question of whether one *can* believe theological claims that they may not actually understand. It secondly goes to the CSR distinction between times when "theologically correct" beliefs are maintained to people, and times when they tend to slide back into theologically incorrect" assertions, for example, in more "freely elaborated" or anthropomorphic claims about godhead.

[59] Van Leeuwen writes that "This theory locates religious credence and factual belief in relation to other cognitive attitudes, like fictional imagining, hypothesis, acceptance in a context, and assumption for the sake of argument," and he argues that "religious credence has key features in common with these latter attitudes that that distinguish them from factual belief" (2014, 699). Among these features that religious credence shares with fictional imagining and other secondary cognitive attitudes is that that they are not typically held to "norms of truth and evidence" (712).

[60] Does being self-deceived that p entail believing that p? Leeuwen cites Robert Audi for this revisionary claim that Leeuwen himself rejects. But he defines avowal as "a tendency to affirm verbally (both privately and publicly) that lacks normal belief-like connections to non-verbal

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actions" (2007, 419). My account is neutral on this debate and on the question of whether or not

a bias, for instance ethnocentrism, involves believing certain things to be true. I hope my use of

"avowal" as a general term that could be cognitive *or* non-cognitive, doxastic or sub-doxastic,

doesn't confuse my description of Leeuwen's views.

[61] After all, the models of faith that most highly insist upon "belief" but exhibit the Epistemic

Tension are also the models of faith that support a Conflict model of the relationship between

faith and reason. Proponents of Conflict, whether of the biblical literalist or aggressive atheist

sort, agree that religions make overt empirical truth claims; the only question is whether these

claims are factually true or not. Conflict is to be avoided where possible, and Leeuwen's

proposed distinction is a step in that direction.

[62] Leeuwen 2014, 711.

[63] Leeuwen 2014, 713.

[64] McCauley and Whitehouse, 2. Compare Sorensen: "We need to address the universal

questions raised above and this cannot be done by means of localised interpretations. Further,

explanatory theories not only enable us to address such general questions but also to fertilise

local interpretations by supplying a more solid terminological grounding and presenting new

potential lines of enquiry. All interpretations are theory-dependent and the more explicit the

theories are, the better. Thus the cognitive science of religion does not reject the role of

interpretation in the academic study of religion, but merely attempts to right an unbalance by

insisting on the necessity of explanatory theories" (2005, 467). Sorensen insists that public representations are only one side of the coin, and that "keeping universal cognitive mechanisms in mind can help historians avoid historical exoticism, in the same way as it helps anthropologists avoid cultural exoticism."

[65] This idea together with some aspects of HADD are anticipated in Hume's observation that, "we have a strong disposition to read mentality into what is not really mental. Thus, we tend to treat these unknown causes as agents to be appeased" (Hume 1993, 141).

[66] Brunner 1937, 155. See Blanshard for critical commentary.

[67] Perhaps extending from Paul (1 *Corinthians* 1:23), the strong fideism of Tertullian informed his ironic claim, "The most ignorant peasant under the Christian dispensation possesses more real knowledge than the wisest of ancient philosophers" (*Apologeticus*).

[68] Sorensen 2005, 487-88.

[69] For example with SAST Effects, priming a subject might be on the lines of Leeuwen's point (2014) that cognitive attitudes are attributed to what is "evidentially vulnerable" and subjection to "general cognitive governance." Test subjects can be primed to acknowledge this with respect to other people's beliefs, before being asked about their own. If their reports about their own faith-based precepts are revealed by subsequent self-reports to be evidentially *in*vulnerable and

to *lack* general cognitive governance characteristic of belief, then the subject is displaying SAST Effects.

[70] Tasks for measuring attitudes towards inductive risk include religious versions of tasks and the well-known assimilation bias: the tendency to favorably interpret and evaluate information that supports their existing beliefs (Jong, 69). They might include covert measures of belief that x, where x accords or breaks with inductive norms.

[71] There are numerous relations between counter-intuitive, counter-evidential, counter-schematic ideas, and counter-inductive thinking or inference. While I have focused only on the latter, counter-schematic ideas are absurd, and potentially a test of weak inductive inferences: causal, generalizing, or analogical/disanalogical.

[72] James, the 1896 Preface to James' *The Will to Believe and Other Essays in Popular Philosophy*.

[73] *This, despite how often members of both groups –epistemologists and theologians– seem to unite in principled opposition to James spirit of inner tolerance.* Decades later, James would respond to his critics, secular and theistic, who accused him of 'preaching reckless faith': "I have preached the right of the individual to indulge his personal faith at his personal risk. I have discussed the kinds of risk; I have contended that none of us escape all of them; and I have only preached that it is better to face them open-eyed than to act as if we did not know them to be there." Quoted in Bruce Kuklick's introduction to James's *Pragmatism* (1907, xv). While I do

not find James's version of permissivism is adequately risk-averse (see Axtell 2018 for my critique, and compare Aikin and Talisse 2018) I think this permissivism-with-teeth is on the right track.