

Wikipedia has replaced *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. Yet if one reads the entries of each of the ten Mahavidyas in *Wikipedia*, then one longs for *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. Each *Wikipedia* entry has the same information and are haphazard. For example, the entries on Mothers Dhuvavati and Matangi are mirror-articles. And the entry on Mother Chinnamasta is a disaster. (See ‘Mahavidya’ and the links to the ten Mahavidyas <<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mahavidya>> accessed 06 September 2016).

Online searches regarding Mother Chinnamasta return arcane facts, mantras, and esoteric non-historical nonsense.

Elisabeth Anne Beard’s monograph is a readable source on Mother Chinnamasta. Unlike the material online that confuses the Buddhist Vajrayogini with the Hindu Mahavidya, Beard knows her subject. ‘Comparison of Buddhist and Hindu Tantra’ (75–8) is a concise discussion of the distinction between Buddhist and Hindu tantras available within the academic study of Hinduism and Buddhism. Studying Beard one understands that worshipping Mother Chinnamasta is to destroy ‘the internal enemy—ignorance which creates the illusion of separateness between a being and Brahman’ (105).

Motilal Banarsidass has done a great service by publishing this monograph as a paperback. But the book needs updating. Beard mentions that there is a temple of Mother Chinnamasta in Bishnupur. How is it possible that in spite of the Internet neither Beard, nor her Indian publisher has cared to either put in more about that temple or change the black and white pictures to colour? The plight of Hinduism as a missiologically oriented religion is apparent from this book. It is as if both the writer and the publisher want this book to be read by seekers after cultic and esoteric knowledge. But Mother Chinnamasta is not the patrimony of either Hindus or misleadingly fearsome tantrics. She is the Mother of all. Appendix I of this book detailing the Mother’s thousand names proves her universal Motherhood.

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Hatred and Forgiveness

Julia Kristeva

Trans. Jeanine Herman

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The author Julia Kristeva says: ‘The disabled person opens a *narcissistic identity wound* in the person who is not disabled.’ She addresses ‘the very *borders of the human species*’ and finds it exploding (29) since disabilities cause anxiety in those who feel themselves mistakenly integrated. In short, disability evokes hatred in the non-disabled. Kristeva’s knowledge of the Bible and Catholic Religious Orders in relation to the polis (35–8) is central to understanding this book as itself a work of *caritas*, a theological virtue. This book in particular might have prompted Giorgio Agamben (b. 1942) to write on the Franciscans in his *The Highest Poverty* (See Giorgio Agamben, *The Highest Poverty: Monastic Rules and Form-of-Life* (Palo Alto: Stanford University, 2013)). Kristeva unabashedly praises the Franciscan way of life in this book (35). It surprises this reviewer that while Kristeva feels the need to study monasticism and Christianity and other religions to enact psychoanalysis, which is *caritas in praxis*, psychoanalysts and philosophers of the mind and cognition are stuck at Jacques Lacan’s (1901–81) clinical positions vis-à-vis clinical psychoses. To appear learned and confuse beginners, Lacan’s being a medical doctor is often forgotten. In universities around the world his *Seminars* (See *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan*, 20 vols (New York: Norton, 2007)) have nearly made psychoanalysis theoretical, therefore redundant, and something so obscure that few understand what the *real*, the *imaginary*, and the *symbolic* are in Lacan! Kristeva’s book under review could replace Lacan in universities where Lacan is meaninglessly taught and generations of students search the Internet to understand terms which only clinical practice can make explicit.

Kristeva, on the other hand, is the real heir to

the legacy of the misread Freud who ‘makes psychoanalysis a treatment of the passions by way of the passions: *he impassions in order to disimpassion*’ (93). Kristeva clearly understands the power and effect of psychoanalysis as distinct from medical intervention in the form of SSRIS and SNRIS: ‘We belong to a divided civilization ... globalisation hopes passions will be reduced under ... Prozac’s biological well-being’ (92–3). Lacan treated psychotics with anti-psychotics; Kristeva in her clinical practice treats patients through the hermeneutic of her own understanding of religion and classical psychoanalysis.

The ‘exciting word, *hatred*’ is generally seen as a ‘symptom or pathology’ (183) from which Kristeva will go on to vehemently differ since in her earlier clinical work she found that ‘hatred and desire [are] indissociable from speaking humanity’ (184). Hatred as seen by Kristeva in this book is part of the construction of what she had earlier written on: abjection (see Julia Kristeva, *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*, trans. Leon S Roudiez (New York: Columbia University, 1980)). According to Kristeva, the abject is neither ‘*ob-jeu ... or a transitional object*’ nor is it ‘a correlate of the ego ... The abject has only one quality of the object—that of opposing the I’ (184). This opposition is primal hatred.

Kristeva reads Freud here as he had never been read before, even by her. ‘Digression on the Timeless’ (132–6) brings into focus the most neglected quality of the unconscious in psychoanalytic literature: ‘The unconscious ignores time’ (132). See note 8 on page 311 for an explication of this. This irrevocability of hatred and the transformation of hatred at most to hysteria—‘A humanity capable of laughing, out of love, and making light of love’ (227)—can only be understood through the timeless character of the unconscious from where arise fairy tales, myths, and even Renaissance tragedies like *Macbeth*. The first scene of *Macbeth* lends credence to the importance of hatred being entwined with timelessness and how forgiveness qua paranoia is a psychoanalytic trope which has little value unless we abandon Freud and accept Kristeva’s readings on religions. The third part of this book is important for psychoanalysts like this reviewer. It

makes explicit the techne of practising psychoanalysis. It is recommended that mental health-care professionals, humanities scholars, and those interested in various talk-therapies read this book as a summary of all previous books on the subject. What Horacio Etchegoyen in his monumental *The Fundamentals of Psychoanalytic Technique* (See R Horacio Etchegoyen, *The Fundamentals of Psychoanalytic Technique* (London: Karnac, 1991)) could not accomplish, Kristeva has done so in this book. She has revived the endangered but effective therapy begun by Freud and misread by so many others.

Kristeva’s choice of religious photos in this book (180–1) is refreshing as also her chapter ‘Healing, A Psychological Rebirth’ (153–8). Keeping with her rightful concern with the body she begins this chapter with those afflicted with cancer and then she goes on to detail the inner signs and internal logic of those who care for the terminally ill since ‘physical life is atrophying, the soul is dying. Modern man ... is somatising’ (157). Those who have not studied psychoanalysis from Freud up to Kristeva fail to understand that psychoanalysis is not a religion by itself or a substitute to religion. What Freud could not do, Kristeva has done. She has at last made psychoanalysis part of the arsenal for those whose jobs are to help others to self-actualise.

This reviewer suggests that this book be read in formative spirituality courses globally and within theology departments of all major religions. And non-theology syllabi framers should set portions of this book and if possible, the entire book, as set syllabi in domains as diverse as women’s studies (129–52) to studies in narratology (251–6). Kristeva strangely sounds more and more like Carl Jung. The eighteenth chapter, ‘The Triple Uprooting’ (213–21) is a psychoanalytic and extraordinary reading of *Exodus* and of the Old Testament prophets. This is the chapter which transforms Kristeva from a dry Freudian couch-therapist to a theologian who has earned her invitation to the College of Roman Catholic Cardinals to whom she had given Lenten talks for the latter’s spiritual retreat! This book is caritas and a rebuttal to hatred.

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