

réponse à toutes leurs questions profondes ? » (138) À partir de son expérience clinique, elle décrit une spiritualité qui fait « l'accueil du non-sens et de l'absurdité enfin consentie » (138). Cette position fait écho aux propos de Jobin, qui déplorait au chapitre 3 l'« idéalisation esthétique » de la spiritualité en biomédecine (57), et à ceux de Caenepeel qui, au chapitre 2, faisait de la « dé-maîtrise » l'une des deux dynamiques qui caractérisent le soin « inscrit en hospitalité » (30). Force est de constater que la démarche du praticien réflexif peut s'avérer aussi féconde que celle de l'épistémologie !

Dans le dernier chapitre de l'ouvrage, ce sont les lieux de pèlerinage catholiques qui retiennent l'attention car il s'agit là d'espaces où les représentations de la santé et de la maladie sont modelées par une tradition religieuse. Plusieurs des considérations proposées par l'auteure sont fondées sur son « observation des pratiques et des discours sur les sanctuaires » (162) alors que d'autres sont moins clairement documentées.

Une réflexion critique sur les « efforts théoriques et cliniques déployés en vue [de] mobiliser les ressources spirituelles et religieuses dans le soin des personnes » (ix), c'est ce que veut amorcer cet ouvrage. Il éclaire des aspects contemporains du phénomène qu'est l'opérationnalisation du spirituel dans la pensée biomédicale. Au détour de certaines pages, le lecteur peut entrevoir ce qui relève peut-être de l'utopie ou du beau risque : une spiritualité qui serait partagée plutôt que véhiculée et une relation de soins qui serait un véritable échange, inégal dans la capacité d'agir et l'expertise, mais à visée égalitaire dans la qualité de présence.

Diane Laflamme

*Université du Québec à Montréal*

### **The Trace of God: A Rational Warrant for Belief**

Joseph Hinman

Colorado Springs, CO: Grand Viaduct Press, 2014. 424 pp.

Joseph Hinman takes a different, and in the end more personal, psychological alternative to traditional apologetics that argue believers' beliefs have a rational warrant. This work is geared to theist and atheist "apologists," as well as readers interested in the psychology of religion. Hinman turns to a large body of psychological research into subjective religious experience (RE). This subfield emerged in the 1970s, largely due to the work of Ralph Hood. Building upon a tradition from William James through Abraham Maslow and W. T. Stace, Hood developed the idea of the "M Scale," in which "M" stands for "mystical," to measure individual RE, assess subjective experiences scientifically, and distinguish bona fide Mystical Experience (ME) from other kinds of RE.

As a proper subset of RE, ME includes a range from everyday feelings about a divine to the trancelike states that so-called mystics attain. Hinman warns that ME, a technical term in the psychology of religion, must not be conflated with the thought and experience of mystics, as many non-mystics experience ME. Besides being ineffable and noetic, ME characteristically exhibits two elements: a sense of the numinous and a sense of undifferentiated unity; the former is more closely associated with Westerners and the

latter with Easterners, although one person may experience both. Hinman thus zeroes in on ME as a well-documented phenomenon that can serve as a basis for ensuring that belief is indeed rationally warranted. This psychological research then serves as a rational source of scientific, empirical data for a “God argument.”

In fact, some psychological work on religious belief is starting to show that irrationality (and other proposed Believer traits such as lower intelligence) does not distinguish Believers from Non-believers. If psychology is taken as a rational discipline, results from much research show that there is justification for religious beliefs:

My assertion is that empiricism [alone] is an inadequate path to truth. On the other hand, the true path is paved with empirical data; the engine that transports us down that road is powered by reasons.

The purpose of God arguments, in my view, should not be to prove the existence of God . . . God arguments need only engender confidence in the proposition “belief in God is rationally warranted.” . . . *Religious experience frees the believer from the need to prove.* (17–18, 19; italics in original)

Because of ME, believers can at least make a prima facie case for belief. It is incumbent upon a skeptic of religious belief “to unseat the prima facie status case” (22). By the end of the book, the author concludes that given the mass of evidence for ME, and its supports for the prima facie case for belief, the skeptic retains the burden of explaining this evidence. The empirical evidence supports the perspective of religion as experience, not formal structures. For people who have MEs, the experience is transformative, self-actualizing, and so affecting that believers exhibit lower-than-average rates of depression, mental illness, and divorce. Hinman argues that if such effects are real and have a cause, it is not illogical to conclude that God is the cause, and that this effect is the trace of God. “Scientists are willing to assume strong *correlation as rational warrant for a causal relationship*” (118, emphasis in original); therefore, argues Hinman, it is no less valid to do so with RE and its strong correlate with God as its cause. Such experience is often regular, consistent, and shared, so by common philosophical criteria for judging experience, REs can hold up to reasoned analysis.

The book offers copious, fascinating empirical documentation on RE/ME, much using the M scale. Hinman notes that his approach goes further than earlier efforts to look to RE as a basis of an argument for belief, such as Alston’s, Swinburne’s, and Franks-Davis’s, offering a more solid grounding in social-science methodologies. Incidence of RE or ME among the population has been found to be around 20–40% and for most people these are rare—yet not pathological, in fact “indicative of good health” (147). They are found cross-culturally. “[M]ystics the world over are probably experiencing the same thing, but they load that into different cultural constructs in order to explain it” (168). Psychological research also firmly establishes that these experiences are distinct from psychotic episodes, which lack salubrious effects.

As for whether God experiences can be traced to the brain and thus explained away, Hinman exhaustively examines the literature and follows neuroscientist Andrew Newberg: “Tracing experiences to neurological behavior does not disprove its realness” (252). The book takes on attempts—in studies involving drugs and placebos, as well as

evolutionary explanations for religiosity—to explain away the God-of-experience. Even Maslow (an atheist) argues for the noetic, or knowledge-creating, quality of REs, whereby a “personal and existential knowledge about living” (325) is gained.

While Hinman’s data-based case is powerful, there remains plenty of room for criticism. Controversy over data-interpretation is found in many areas of psychology, such as in the nature versus nurture debate. Skeptics may well criticize Hinman’s heavy reliance upon Kuhn for explaining science. Although the book flows well, narratively, and although the author outlines the argument, sometimes the overall argument structure is hard to grasp and could use more markers. In all, this highly learned and readable text should stand as a just counterpart to popular books such as those by Dawkins and Harris that use science to argue against religious belief.

Lantz Miller  
City University of New York

### **Comparative Mysticism: An Anthology of Original Sources**

Steven Katz (ed.)

Oxford : Oxford University Press, 2013. 618 p.

Steven T. Katz est le directeur du « *Elie Wiesel Center for Judaic Studies* » à *Boston University*. Il occupe aussi la chaire d’études juives et d’études sur l’Holocauste. Après une longue gestation, l’anthologie de Katz voit finalement le jour (l’éditeur a remis la date de publication à plusieurs reprises). Le livre proposé ici est le bienvenue, car il y a relativement peu d’ouvrages en circulation offrant une perspective comparative du mysticisme. Notons à cet effet les publications de William Kingsland, *An Anthology of Mysticism and Mystical Philosophy* (2007), et de F. C. Happold, *Mysticism: A Study and an Anthology* (il y a eu plusieurs rééditions et réimpressions de cet ouvrage depuis 1963). L’anthologie de Katz est composée de sept excellentes contributions d’universitaires de premier plan. La part du lion appartient cependant à Moshe Idel ; celui-ci consacre 151 pages (le quart de l’ouvrage) à divers aspects du mysticisme dans la tradition juive. Dans l’ordre suit la tradition chrétienne, Bernard McGinn, avec 87 pages ; Peter Awn consacre 72 pages au soufisme ; Arvind Sharma, 81 pages à la tradition hindoue ; John Powers, 68 pages au bouddhisme ; Livia Kohn, 57 pages au confucianisme et au taoïsme ; John Grim, 72 pages aux traditions autochtones. Il est à noter que les auteurs ont rédigé d’excellentes introductions à chacun des chapitres. Bref, cette anthologie, dans les mots de Katz, « provide[s] students at all levels with a reliable, wide-ranging, methodologically sophisticated, philosophically and logically coherent introduction to the complex subject at hand » (v).

L’introduction générale (« General Editor’s Introduction ») est de la main de Katz (3–22). Nous aimerions concentrer notre attention sur cette partie de l’ouvrage, car la perspective méthodologique de Katz domine toujours la recherche dans le domaine des sciences des religions, cela depuis maintenant deux décennies. Son « contextualisme » a pris forme dans diverses publications (1978, 1983, 1992, 2000). L’auteur a non seulement campé sur ses positions, mais a construit de solides assises auprès de ceux qui