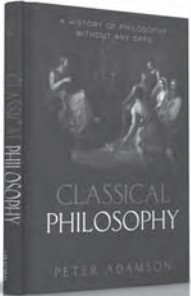


# REVIEWS

For review in PRABUDDHA BHARATA,  
publishers need to send **two** copies of their latest publications



## **Classical Philosophy: A History of Philosophy without Any Gaps, Volume 1**

Peter Adamson

Oxford University Press, Great Clarendon Street, Oxford OX2 6DP, UK. [www.global.oup.com](http://www.global.oup.com). 2014. £20. 368 pp. HB. ISBN 9780199674534.

Anthony Kenny (b. 1931) and Thomas Nagel (b. 1937) being sombre do not care for the Internet. Hence, their serious tomes will languish in libraries of philosophy departments most of which have already shut shop. There are few takers for philosophy. Adamson is lucid like Bertrand Russell (1872–1970) and William Durant (1885–1981). What availeth a philosopher if she or he cannot take *sophia* to the masses?

Adamson is not afraid to refer us to the online *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (317), is smitten with podcasts, and has his own podcast (xi). These show his readiness to be scrutinised by an international audience which determines a scholar's originality. And Adamson is original in his approach to classical philosophy. His *dub* attitude makes philosophy come alive (207). That does not mean that Adamson is not serious about the details of doing philosophy: 'Simplicity, they say, is a virtue. But is it really? ... modern attempts to provide a unified theory of physics [are naïve]' (243).

Who would have thought that in a book about ancient philosophers we will have scientists and their reductive thinking mocked? Aristotle's *Physics* (243–9) is a necessary antidote to these reductionists.

English literature students at Yale are disgusted that they have to read white male writers, at least so was their stance during early June 2016. (See <<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2016/jun/2/>

yale-students-white-male-writers-hostile-culture/> accessed 01 September 2017). Chapter 42 (300–8) of this book thankfully deals with ancient women philosophers and finally points to Luce Irigaray (307–8). If only someone could find Chaucer's female peers!

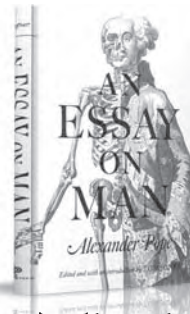
Professor Adamson's genius lies in connecting the ancient world with our zeitgeist. Writers like Adamson are needed if bright students are to see the value of being philosophers in a world which pays McDonald's employees more than philosophy adjuncts.

*Subhashis Chattopadhyay*

Psychoanalyst

Assistant Professor of English

Narasinha Dutt College, Howrah



## **An Essay on Man**

Alexander Pope

Edited by Tom Jones

Princeton University Press: 41 William Street, Princeton, New Jersey 08540–5237, USA. [www.press.princeton.edu](http://www.press.princeton.edu). 2016. \$24.95. 248 pp. HB. ISBN 9780691159812.

The Psalmist in the *Old Testament* asks God: 'What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?' (Psalms 8:4). Jesus in the *New Testament* answers the Psalmist that man is the proper concern of God (Matthew 6:26, 6:28–30). Later Thomas of Aquinas (1225–74) will write *The Treatise on Man* (*Summa Theologiae*, 1265–74, Prima Pars, Questions 75–89/102). This is the beginning of European modernity and not as erroneously thought, the start of Scholastic quiddities.

Neither did Shakespeare (1564–1616) nor earlier, Geoffrey Chaucer (c. 1343/45–1400) inaugurate Early Modernism. Chaucer, contrary to established criticism, in *The Canterbury Tales*