Literary scholarship is about meticulous open-ended literary sleuthing and non-jargon-laden stylistics. While Virgilian, Dantean, and Spenserian similes are discussed (323), the focus on P B Shelley's 'habitual' (323) use of simile is refreshing and a testimony to the research that had gone into writing this entry. The fact that similes like sonnets have radical differences, which go beyond explicit comparison is often missed by many. The book under review is a necessary corrective to half-baked learning. How many of us knew that the Abbot of Tivoli was instrumental in establishing the octave-sestet sonnet form (328), which finally led to the Miltonic sonnet (329)?

Before concluding this review, one must mention the entry on 'Synecdoche' (360–2) which is a tour de force in contemporary semiotics and pertinently refers to Tzvetan Todorov's and Group μ's contribution (361) to the construction of synecdoche as a postmodernist trope. It is generally not noticed that synecdoche, within anthropology, 'mediates between the social structure and the species and genera found in nature ... [analogically] ... Synecdoche has become a crucial trope in arguments between environmentalists and commercial interests' (361). Once again we find that the structuralist connections between anthropology and literary studies, which started with literature scholars reading Claude Lévi-Strauss's *Tristes Tropiques* (1955) in the last century reaffirmed as a more nuanced understanding of synecdoche as an ironical ecocritical or anthropological qualia.

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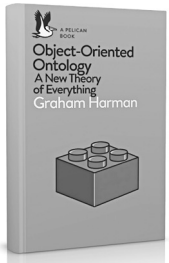

Object-Oriented Ontology: A New Theory of Everything

Graham Harman

Pelican, Penguin Random House, 20 Vauxhall Bridge Road London, SW1V 2SA, UK. Website: *https://www.penguin.co.uk/*. 2018. 304 pp. £8.99. PB. ISBN 9780241269152.

If Object-Oriented Ontology (OOO) is correct, only then would David Peter Lawrence's chapter 'The Linguistics and Cosmology of Agency in Nondual Kashmiri Śaiva Thought' in *Free Will, Agency and Selfhood in Indian Philosophy*, be a foundational exegetical error within the Pratyabhijna school of Somananda, Utpaladeva, and Abhinavagupta (See *Free Will, Agency, and Selfhood in Indian Philosophy*, eds Matthew R Dasti and Edwin F Bryant (New Delhi: Oxford University, 2018), 210–31). Lawrence agrees with David Gordon White's and Sudhir Kakar's libidinal understanding of the Pratyabhijna school's grammatical persons' participation in morally wrong praxes that stand rejected by Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Saradananda, and a contemporary living practitioner of the Shakta rhizome of the Anuttara Trika. If Graham Harman is foundationally right, only then is Simone Weil's *Is There a Marxist Doctrine?* (1943) right. Analysing the whatness of history, it is easy to see that David Peter Lawrence is wrong since David Gordon White in his corpus is wrong. Both White and Lawrence have applied to the Trika what are thought-objects within Western qualia in contrast to what makes for Abhinavagupta's grammatical persons. Further, twentieth-century history is a testament to the dystopias of Marxist regimes that makes Simone Weil prescient in her incomplete essay mentioned here.

Harman's humility in acknowledging the debt of OOO to past philosophers is undercut by his neglect of Eastern philosophies as valid disciplines. Harman wants all sorts of validation other than Asian or Indian validation of OOO. Such is his faith in American and European philosophers.

At the beginning of the book, Harman obsequiously mentions that Benedict Cumberbatch, the famous actor, listened to Harman in a private audience. As if, Cumberbatch's taking time off to indulge Harman is proof of the verity of OOO. Harman announces that OOO has all kinds of practical implications of which to him, the most important is its appropriation by architects and OOO's purported ability to annihilate deconstructionist modes of Francophone philosophising, beginning with Michel Foucault right down to Jacques Derrida. Harman appreciates only Bruno Latour since Latour has become a votary of OOO. This pride in the superiority of OOO is déjà vu for this reviewer. Martin Seligman, the propounder of positive psychology in freely available videos

online boasts that he receives enormous funding for his contributions to psychology. This funding and patronage by the wealthy, Seligman claims, has rendered classical psychoanalysis useless since Freud, according to Seligman, is too deterministic.

Positive psychology is preached by Seligman as 000 is touted here by Harman as the much awaited tectonic shift in both American and European philosophy. All because 000 has implications in the real world like nothing before 000 had. However, nowhere in this book does Harman explain what he means by the 'real' and how are we to access this 'real'? Within the economy of the Latour-Harman bind which Harman thinks exists, Harman takes it for granted that some non-sentient *dasein*—an impossibility—exists apart from consciousness. Thus, in one stroke Harman purports to destroy centuries of phenomenological discourse beginning with Plato, through Hegel, Edmund Husserl, Martin Heidegger, and to Hans Georg-Gadamer. Then how is 000's methodology correct in assessing Lawrence's non-existent ontic comprehension of Trika praxes and right in proving Simone Weil's assessment of Marxists of Marx's generation as 'dupes'? (See Simone Weil, *Oppression and Liberty* (London: Routledge, 2004), 179).

000, which is so dismissive of previous modes of philosophising like positive psychology is dismissive of most psychological theories before Seligman had his eureka moment(s), has nothing to do with those questions which were raised in the beginning to prove the vacuity of 000 and thus, the book under review.

A simple engagement with Trika practitioners will expose Lawrence's superficial armchair Trika. A little historical sleuthing proves Weil correct. 000 is redundant in these analyses since Harman, and the Latour Harman presents to us, are both insufficient in their exposition of ontology and the being or whatness of objects and of perception.

000 would not be a failure as a philosophy were Harman to pay heed to Gadamer's warning in the second edition of Gadamer's *Truth and Method*. Thought objects are never to be put to applied uses in the real world. Then objects, orientations, and ontologies lose meaning.

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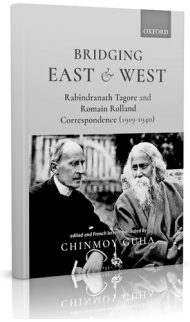

Bridging East and West: Rabindranath Tagore and Romain Rolland Correspondence (1919–1940)

Translated and Edited by Chinmoy Guha

Oxford University Press, 2/11, Ground Floor, Ansari Road, Daryaganj, Delhi 110002. Website: *https://global.oup.com*. 2019. 288 pp. ₹995. HB. ISBN 9780199489046.

In the last issue of this journal, this reviewer had pointed out the prescience of Walter Benjamin in connecting the rise of fascism with the rise of what now goes by the name of popular culture, which in one of its variants is 'nobrow' as Peter Swirski points out in his *From Lowbrow to Nobrow* (2005). It is at this crucial juncture when we see a global resurgence in mass histrionics around the 'nobrow', which is a marker for the rise of extremism, that we have Chinmoy Guha intervening through the book under review. Guha's cultural intervention has been through translation, editing, and compiling with illuminating endnotes, the correspondence between Rabindranath Tagore and Romain Rolland.

In the aforementioned context of Walter Benjamin, aesthetics, and the nobrow which stoke the fires of fascism, we need to quote Tagore's letter to Charles Andrews reproduced in its entirety in this book (45–50). Guha's meticulous scholarship adds that this letter was written by Tagore from Hôtel Bristol, Vienna on 20 July, 1926: 'In Rome I [Tagore] came to know a professor of a genuinely spiritual character, a seeker of peace, who was strongly convinced not only of the necessity but of the philosophy of Fascism' (47) and then, while Tagore goes on to relate to Andrews his two encounters with Mussolini, in this same letter Tagore is ironically weary of his own impressions of Mussolini since, 'There have been times when history has played tricks with man and ... magnified ... small persons into a parody of greatness' which 'produces a mirage that falsifies the real and startles our imagination into a [misplaced] feeling of awe and exaggerated expectation' (50). The letter is relevant to our zeitgeist since the alt-right and powerful economists like Nial Fergusson are