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RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE, THEOLOGICAL ARGUMENT, AND THE RELEVANCE OF RHETORIC

William J. Wainwright

In this essay, I argue that (1) philosophical arguments play an integral role in certain styles of piety, but that, (2) to achieve their purpose, these arguments must be good ones. (3) Good reasoning about religious matters depends upon the state of one's heart, however, and, if so, (4) the western philosophical tradition is mistaken in sharply contrasting philosophy and rhetoric, and denigrating the latter.

This essay is concerned with the bearing of religious experience in the broadest sense on religious argumentation, and the consequences that connection has for our understanding of philosophy's relation to rhetoric. The experiences I have in mind include not only noetic religious experiences or perception-like experiences of the divine but also, and more importantly, ordinary devotional experiences and religiously salient motions of the heart (Pascal and Edwards) or of what William James called our passional nature—our temperament, religiously relevant needs, desires, concerns, fears, hopes, loves, hatreds, passions, emotions, and “divinations.”¹ More generally, the relevant experiences embrace the religiously relevant portions of our inward history in all their emotional, affective, and intellectual particularity, the individual way in which each of us experiences the world. In what follows I shall argue that (1) religious experience in this broad sense provides the context within which religious argumentation takes place, that (2) religiously salient motions of the heart can be epistemically relevant, and that (3) once this is understood, philosophy must rethink its relation to rhetoric.

I.

In some well-known passages from the *Pensees*, Blaise Pascal asserts that, at best, “proofs only convince the mind.” (252) They make “little impression” upon the heart. (542) A successful theistic proof *might* establish the existence of “a God considered as great, powerful, and eternal.” It would not prove the existence of “the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob.” God is indeed great, powerful, and eternal. But He is also “a God of love and comfort...who fills the soul and heart of those whom He possesses.” (555) *This* God's existence cannot be established by philosophical



proofs.² More than two centuries later, William James claimed that philosophical proofs of God's existence, nature, and so on, "prove nothing rigorously." At most, "they only corroborate our preexistent partialities." "Feeling is the deeper source of religion and...philosophical and theological formulas are secondary products like translations of a text into another tongue."³

Pascal and James express a widely held view. Philosophical proofs are, at best, religiously useless. At worst, they are inimical to the religious life. I shall argue that this is seriously mistaken. Proofs can be, and often are, integral parts of a religiously engaged life.

Among the Madhyamikas, for example, philosophical argumentation is an essential part of spiritual discipline. Proofs are marshalled to demonstrate the incoherence of the concepts used to structure sense impressions (such as the concept of cause or the concept of substance) and thereby reveal the emptiness (*sunya*) of things. For when conceptual thinking is abandoned, the suchness of things (*tathata*) is then revealed in a non-dual, non-conceptual intuition called "the perfection of wisdom (*prajna paramita*)"—an insight into the nature of reality that frees us from the ignorance (*avidya*) and thirst (*trisna*) that bind us to *samsara*.

I shall focus primarily on theism, however. How are theistic arguments used in practice? They are sometimes addressed to unbelievers. For example, Anselm's *Monologion* is addressed to the "ignorant," and not only to his fellow monks. And Udayana's arguments are addressed to Buddhists as well as to devotees of Siva in his own Nyaya-vaisheshika tradition.⁴ But theistic arguments are also used to establish common ground and to settle intramural disputes.

Aquinas's *Summa Contra Gentiles*, for instance, was partly directed toward Muslims who already believed in God's existence. In that context, the proofs of God's existence and attributes were designed to establish common ground which could then be used as a basis upon which to construct specifically Christian arguments. Again, the Jesuit missionary Roberto de Nobili (1577-1656) used a version of Aquinas's five ways to establish common ground with (primarily theistic) Hindus.⁵

Theistic proofs have also been used to settle disputes within a common tradition. Udayana's theistic proofs were not only directed against Buddhists. They were also addressed to Mimamsakas in his own Hindu tradition who offered an atheistic interpretation of the Vedas. Or consider al-Ghazali who employed a version of the Kalam cosmological argument⁶ to show that the "philosophers" (preeminently Averroes' and Avicenna's) interpretations of the Quran were heretical.⁷

More interesting than either of these uses is the employment of theistic arguments in a devotional context. The title of Udayana's *Nyayakusumanjali* can be (very roughly) translated as "a bouquet of arguments offered to God." The work has three purposes—to convince unbelievers, to strengthen the faithful, but also to please Siva "by my presenting it as an offering at his footstool." Apart from whatever success Udayana's arguments may or may not have had in achieving his first two goals, they have value as a gift offered to God; their construction and presentation is an act of worship.

Or consider Anselm's *Proslogion*. As Marilyn Adams and others have argued, that the *Proslogion* is cast in the form of a prayer isn't accidental.⁸ In the first place, the entire project is framed by a desire to "contemplate God," or "see God's face." The attempt to understand what one believes by finding reasons for it is a means to this end. Second, the inquiry as a whole is a divine-human collaboration in which Anselm prays for assistance, and punctuates the course of his argument with praise and thanksgiving for the light he has received.

My contention, then, is that the practice of philosophical theology is an integral part of some styles of piety, some ways of living the religious life. Nor is this style of piety, or way of living the religious life, confined to a few religious intellectuals. Austin Warren has argued that Harriet Beecher Stowe's *OldTown Folks* and *The Minister's Wooing* "are the best [extant] recreations of [New England] theocracy's last days."⁹ Consider, then, her description of the latter's heroine, Mary: "Had she been born in Italy, under the dissolving influences of that sunny dreamy clime, beneath the shadow of cathedrals, and where pictured saints and angels smiled in clouds of painting from every arch and altar, she might like fair St. Catherine of Siena, have seen beatific visions in the sunset skies and a silver dove descending upon her as she prayed; but, unfolding in the clear, keen cold New England clime, and nurtured in its abstract and positive theologies, her religious faculties took other forms. Instead of lying entranced in mysterious raptures at the foot of altars, she read and pondered treatises on the Will, and listened in rapt attention, while her spiritual guide, the venerated Dr. Hopkins, unfolded to her the theories of the great Edwards on the nature of true virtue. Womanlike, she felt the subtle poetry of these sublime abstractions which dealt with such infinite and unknown quantities,—which spoke of the universe, of its great Architect, of man, of angel, as matters of intimate and daily contemplation...." (539f.) Stowe then comments as follows: "It is not in our line to imply the truth or the falsehood of those systems of philosophic theology which seem for many years to have been the principal outlet for the proclivities of the New England mind, but as psychological developments they have an intense interest. He who does not see a grand side to these strivings of the soul cannot understand one of the noblest capabilities of humanity. No real artist or philosopher ever lived who has not at some hours risen to the height of utter self-abnegation for the glory of the invisible. There have been painters who would have been crucified to demonstrate the action of a muscle,—chemists who would gladly have melted themselves and all humanity in their crucible, if so a new discovery might arise out of its fumes. Even persons of mere artistic sensibility are at times raised by music, painting, or poetry to a momentary trance of self-oblivion, in which they would offer their whole being before the shrine of an invisible loveliness. These hard old New England divines were the poets of metaphysical philosophy, who built systems in an artistic fervor, and felt self exhale from beneath them as they rose into the higher regions of thought." (541) Or consider this brief exchange between Deacon Twitchell and Dr. Hopkins: "'Well,' said Deacon Twitchell, 'Brother Seth...says you deny depravity. He's all for imputation of Adam's sin, you know; and I have

long talks with Seth about it, every time he comes to see me; and he says that, if we did not sin in Adam, its given' up the whole ground altogether....I wish Seth could talk with you sometime, Doctor. Along in the spring, he was down helpin' me to lay stone fence,—it was when we was fencin' off the south-pastur' lot,—and we talked pretty nigh all day; and the longer we talked, the sotter Seth grew. He's a master hand at readin'; and when he heard that your remarks on Dr. Mayhew had come out, Seth tackled up o' purpose and come up to Newport to get them, and spent all his time, last winter, studyn' on it and makin' his remarks; and I tell you, Sir, he's a tight fellow to argue with. Why, that day, what with layin' stone wall and what with arguin' with Seth, I come home quite beat out...." (565)

A great deal of evidence supports the general accuracy of Stowe's picture. New England sermons were typically "sequentially written and closely reasoned," and parishioners would sometimes take notes while they were being preached to refer to later.¹⁰ The Reverend Convers Francis—transcendentalist and professor at Harvard—said of Dr. Osgood, pastor at Medford: "...though [his sermons] contained a considerable share of learned criticism, I remember my father, a mechanic and with but a slender education, was always delighted with them and used to talk about them after meeting...."¹¹ Something of the flavor of New England piety is indicated by the fact that the missionary to the Algonquin, John Eliot, translated a treatise on logic into that language "to initiate the Indians in the knowledge of the Rule of Reason," and in that way help them read their bibles properly.¹²

The upshot is that precise argumentation and abstruse journeys into philosophical theology are an essential feature of some forms of authentic religiosity. But note that for arguments to play the roles assigned to them in this context, they must be sound. Bad arguments won't persuade intellectually sophisticated nonbelievers. Arguments designed to establish common ground fail if those to whom they are addressed reject their premises or doubt their validity. Although Anselm's ontological argument for God's existence is developed in a devotional context, his reply to Gaunilo makes it clear that he thought that even unbelievers should recognize its soundness. Nor will bad arguments help Anselm achieve his inter-related goals of contemplating God—"seeing His face," and understanding what he had formerly only believed. Finally, offering God a bad argument is like offering Him a blemished lamb; it dishonors Him. (Cf. *Malachi* 3.) In short, contextualizing arguments by situating them in the lives of the people who employ them and the persons to whom they are addressed in no way absolves their makers or recipients from the responsibility of assessing their validity, the truth of their premises, and their probative force. Theistic arguments will serve the purposes for which they are designed only if they are *good* arguments.

II

But are they? On the face of it, it seems that they aren't. The fate of theistic arguments in the modern period is instructive. Philosophical theology flourished in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. One thinks of

the Boyle lectures, for example, or the work of Samuel Clarke, or Malebranche, or Leibniz. Yet by the end of the eighteenth century, theistic arguments had lost much of their power to persuade, and those who (like Schleiermacher and Coleridge) wished to commend religion to its "cultured despisers" cast about for new approaches. The devaluation of theistic arguments was partly due to bad philosophy. (Hume's and Kant's critique of the traditional proofs, for instance, isn't clearly cogent.) It was also partly due to a *Zeitgeist* which overvalued sentiment and feeling, and undervalued close analytic reasoning. But whatever the causes, the fact is that theistic proofs lost much of their power to produce firm conviction in educated audiences. Unless I am very much mistaken, what was true by the end of the eighteenth century remains true today.

More troubling is the fact that theistic arguments fail to persuade many whom one would think would be persuaded if the arguments were probative. Let me cite a personal example which is, I think, typical. William Rowe and I are both analytic philosophers of religion, and were both trained at the University of Michigan in the late 1950's by the same teachers. We do philosophy in the same way, and have collaborated, corresponded, and exchanged ideas for the past thirty five years. Yet I think Samuel Clarke's cosmological argument for God's existence is sound and Rowe does not. Conversely, Rowe thinks that the evidential argument from evil provides a more or less conclusive reason for denying that God exists and I do not. What accounts for our disagreement? Not differences in training, information, or intelligence nor, I dare say, in intellectual fair mindedness or moral sensitivity.

So what *does* account for disagreements like these?¹³ In part, at least, biography. As William James noted, we approach issues with different personal histories, temperaments, commitments, and passions. As a consequence, equally intelligent and well-intentioned inquirers can evaluate the same body of evidence in radically different ways. James thought that, ultimately, our visions of the world are "accidents, more or less of personal vision." For they express "our temperament"—"our individual way of just seeing and feeling the total push and pressure of the cosmos." Belief in metaphysical hypotheses like determinism or indeterminism, supernaturalism or naturalism, or idealism or materialism is partly an expression of what James called our "willing" or "passional" nature—our temperament, needs, concerns, hopes, fears, passions, and deepest intuitions. Minds like Spinoza's, for example, have a "passion for simplification" whereas minds like Hume's have a "passion for distinguishing." The "tough-minded" find materialism compelling while the "tender minded" do not. A metaphysical pluralism and indeterminism that emphasizes the openness of the future and human moral capacity is an expression of days in which we are "in the full and successful exercise of our moral energy," and "the life we feel tingling through us vouches sufficiently for itself." A deterministic monism, on the other hand, is rooted in days when we are "all 'sicklied o'er' with the sense of weakness, of helplessness, failure, and of fear."¹⁴

Or consider another example. John Henry Newman distinguishes "real" and "notional" apprehension. Notional apprehension regards the terms of the propositions it considers as counters to be manipulated. Real

apprehension cashes the terms out in appropriate mental images and associations. Real apprehension is, as H. H. Price says, "thingish and imaginative."¹⁵ The importance of this is that one's assent to the force of an argument may depend on whether one's apprehension of its premises is real or notional. For example, the argument from evil won't unduly trouble those whose apprehension of "Evil exists" is largely notional, for they don't appreciate evil's horror. Cosmological arguments for God's existence are unlikely to impress people who aren't struck by the fact that the world exists when it might not have, or who lack a vivid sense of how odd it would be if a contingent being had no causes at all, and whose apprehension of the propositions "The world exists" and "Every contingent being has a cause" is thus merely notional. All of this creates a problem, however, for (as Newman points out) real apprehension depends on images and associations, and these depend on personal experience. Yet "the experience of one man is not the experience of another."¹⁶ As a result, real apprehensions, and hence assessments of the force of theistic and anti-theistic arguments, will vary radically from one person to another.

III

The facts I have called attention to in section II are, I think, obvious. But the conclusions to be drawn from them are not. My concern in *Reason and the Heart* was a response to the phenomenon of basic disagreements which surfaces from time to time in the Christian tradition—that one's ability to adequately evaluate the force of a body of evidence can be a function of the state of one's heart. This response was once a Christian commonplace; reason is capable of knowing God on the basis of evidence—but only when one's cognitive faculties are rightly disposed. It should be distinguished from two others that have dominated modern thought. The first claims that God can be known by "objective reason," i.e., by an understanding that systematically excludes passion, desire, and emotion from the process of reasoning. The other insists that God can only be known subjectively or by the heart. Both views identify reason with ratiocination or mental calculation. Both also assume that reasoning is objective only when it is unaffected by wants, interests, and desires. The tradition I discuss steers between these two extremes. It places a high value on proofs, arguments, and inferences yet also believes that a properly disposed heart is needed to see their *force*. This epistemic theory is deeply embedded in important strands of the Christian tradition. Calvin, for example, thought that rational arguments for the authority of scripture "will not obtain full credit in the hearts of men until they are sealed by the inward testimony of the spirit."¹⁷ And while Aquinas believed that there is good evidence for the divine origin of Christian teaching, he didn't think that it was sufficient to compel assent in the absence of the inward movement of a will grounded in a "supernatural principle," namely, "God who moves us inwardly through grace."¹⁸ Similarly, seventeenth century Anglican divines argued that "the gospel can only obtain 'a free admission into the assent of the understanding when it brings a passport from a rightly disposed will'.¹⁹ The notion that a proper disposition is needed to appreciate the force of

rational arguments for the authority of the gospel can be easily extended to rational arguments for the truths of "natural religion" when these, too, come under attack. John Spurr has argued that this process was well underway by the end of the seventeenth century. A recognition of the importance of the right moral and spiritual dispositions for philosophical inquiry into God's being and nature was already implicit in Christian practice, however. For example, Anselm interweaves his argumentation in the *Proslogion* with prayers to arouse his emotions and stir his will because he assumes that emotional and volitional discipline is as necessary for the success of his enterprise as intellectual discipline. The first two thirds of *Reason and the Heart* explored this theme in three figures—Jonathan Edwards, John Henry Newman, and William James.

Jonathan Edwards, for example, argued that the possession of "true benevolence" or "the love of being in general" is a necessary (though not sufficient) condition of properly evaluating arguments for God's existence, his providential government of human affairs, and the like.

Edwards' view is briefly this. "Actual ideas" are ideas that are lively, clear, and distinct. Thought has a tendency to substitute "signs" (words, images) for actual ideas. This tendency is useful and normally quite harmless. But it impedes reasoning when "we are at a loss concerning a connection or consequence [between ideas], or have a new inference to draw, or would see the force of some new argument."²⁰ Now if accurate reasoning about a subject matter involves attending to actual ideas of it, then one can't accurately reason about religion if one lacks the appropriate actual ideas. To have an actual idea of God, for example, one must have actual ideas of the ideas that compose it. But most of us do not. Those parts of the idea of God that everyone has (ideas of power, knowledge, and justice, for instance) either aren't attended to or, when they are, fail to elicit the proper affective reactions. Other parts of the idea of God are simply missing. Without the simple idea of "true beauty" (the radiance or splendor of holiness) we can't understand God's holiness and the facts that depend on it such as the infinite heinousness of sin (and, hence, the necessity of the atonement). And because we can't properly understand ideas of affections if we haven't experienced them, we can't understand God's benevolence if we aren't benevolent ourselves. True benevolence remedies each of these deficiencies. Because the desires of the truly benevolent are properly ordered, they are suitably affected by the ideas of God's attributes and activities which everyone has. (They fear his wrath, for example, and are grateful for his benefits.) They also understand God's benevolence since their own benevolence mirrors it. Finally, the truly benevolent delight in the benevolence in which holiness consists, that is, they "perceive" or "taste" or "relish" its beauty. Edwards' claim, then, is that to reason accurately about God one must possess an actual idea of God, and to have that one must be truly benevolent. Right reasoning about religious matters requires right affections.

James' account of "passional reason" isn't tied to Christian theology. The aim of epistemic rationality is to increase our stock of significant truths, and James never disputes this. But, in his opinion, the tendencies "in one's emotional life can be prophetic." Our passional nature includes "concrete per-

ceptions" and "insight giving passions," "instincts" and "divinations,"²¹ and these can be reliable indications of "theoretic" (objective) truth.²²

Is this plausible? It is *if* we can assume some sort of congruence between the mind's structure and the structure of reality. And James does. Our faculties and powers have evolved as they have because they are adaptive. The best, or most natural, explanation of the fact that these faculties and powers are adaptive is that the beliefs they produce when properly used "correspond" (in a rough and ready way) to the way things are.

Nor are positions like these confined to theists. For consider the following example from the iconoclastic Neo-Confucian Wang Yangming: "The *liangzhi* is the innate...faculty that enables one to know the *li* (...principle) of the mind and universe...All things possess all the *li* of the universe within them," and, for Wang, "the mind is itself *li*: 'knowing is the conscious aspect of *li*.'" The *liangzhi*, or "complete and perfect mind," enables one to distinguish "naturally and spontaneously between right and wrong," and everyone possesses it.²³

What then explains our bad choices? The obstructions of *qi* ("material force" or "lively matter") which Wang primarily identifies with self-centered desires.²⁴ The most important point in the present context, however, is this: the *liangzhi* is at once a cognitive and an affective faculty. To truly know something, the mind must therefore be in the proper affective state. And, for Wang, the proper state is "the affective state of selflessness." Without this "one's mere true belief" cannot be transformed "into what [he] calls 'real knowledge (*zhenzhi*)' or simply knowledge (*zhi*).'" To accomplish this one must engage in the "rectification of thoughts" (*gewu*) and "the extension of knowledge" (*zhizhi*). One rectifies one's thoughts by attending to and eliminating one's self-centered thoughts, and one extends one's knowledge by engaging in the appropriate practical activity. (For example, one extends one's 'knowledge' [i.e., true belief] of one's filial duty by lovingly caring for one's parents.) The bottom line in all this is that the right affections are a necessary condition of right knowledge.

It is important to appreciate how radical views like these are. Since the rise of modernity, the standard Western view has been that the effect of passion on reasoning is inimical; emotion, interest, and commitment distort inquiry by blinding us to the force of counter evidence and weakening our commitment to rational standards. To be rational one must be *objective*, and to be objective one must be dispassionate. Theologians and philosophers such as Edwards, James, and Wang oppose this view, contending that the effect of passion on reason is sometimes *epistemically beneficial*.

Positions like these are open to objections of subjectivism, circularity, and relativism. I will comment briefly on the first.²⁵ The objection is this. Allowing passion and feeling to influence our judgment opens the door to bias, distortion, and wishful thinking. Beliefs are made true by the states of affairs they represent. The concept of a true belief involves "the thought of a causal chain stretching back from the belief" to the state of affairs which makes it true. Passional believing, like wishful thinking, severs this connection. Once we learn that our beliefs are caused by passion and feeling, and not by the states of affairs they represent, we can no longer regard them as true.²⁶

This objection rests on a misunderstanding. Views like Edwards' or Newman's or James' or Wang's do not deny that beliefs are made true by the states of affairs they represent. Nor do they deny that justified true beliefs are causally connected to the states of affairs that make them true. On the contrary, the passions they privilege are believed to be *correlated with the way things actually are*. These passions are *reflections* of reality, causal products of the states of affairs represented by the beliefs they generate. James, for example, thinks that our "willing nature" has evolved as it has because following its dictates has enabled us to more successfully adjust to reality. Behavior based on our *passional nature*²⁷ wouldn't be so successful if it led us to egregiously misrepresent things as they are. Similarly, Edwards attempts to show that the "mechanism" underlying our renewed epistemic faculties, namely, true benevolence, "agrees" with reality. Reality's core is an infinite benevolence—the world's only true substance and its only true cause. The benevolence of the saints is grounded in this and mirrors it. Edwards concludes that benevolence isn't "arbitrary" but agrees "with the necessary nature of things."²⁸ Again, if Wang's Neo-Confucian conception of ultimate reality as *li* is true, and if his identification of our minds in their own nature with *li* is correct, then the beliefs that have been generated by a mind that has been purified of the obstructions of *qi* are probably true and probably warranted. Because charges of wishful thinking, rampant subjectivism, and so on, presuppose that links of this kind don't exist, they beg the question against views of this type.

The view that I am articulating is not as outlandish as might at first appear. That certain dispositions and attitudes are needed to reason rightly in moral matters is a commonplace in both classical Chinese and classical western moral philosophy. I have already alluded to Wang's views. As for the west, Plato thought that "neither quickness of learning nor a good memory can make a man see when his nature is not akin to the object...no man who is not naturally inclined and akin to justice and all other forms of excellence, even though he be quick at learning and remembering this or that...will ever attain the truth that is available about virtue."²⁹ And Aristotle believed that the first premises of moral reasoning are general propositions about what is good for people in general, or for certain kinds of people, or for people in certain circumstances. General propositions of this sort are partial articulations of the good life. Men and women whose natures have been warped by training or circumstance will have a perverted sense of the good (identifying it with the life of pleasure, say, or the life of worldly honor). These people (as Plato says) have a "lie in their soul," and so are incapable of reasoning correctly about moral matters. A properly cultivated emotional nature is thus essential to sound ethical reasoning.

Now classical Christian theism identified God with Goodness itself. If this identification is correct, it is not surprising that the proper dispositions and feelings should be thought necessary to perceive Him.

The relevance of my remarks about ethics is more general than my application of them to Christian theism might suggest, however. The most obvious instances of the thesis that basic disputes reflect different passionately inflected assessments of the same body of evidence is furnished by conflicts over comprehensive world-views. Some of these world-views are religious.

But many are not. It is at least arguable, however, that *all* comprehensive world-views integrally incorporate values. If they do, and values can't be grasped in the absence of the right feelings and emotions, then appropriate dispositions of the heart will be needed to discern the truth of a world-view. If this is correct, then reflective adherents of *any* world-view may be forced to adopt epistemic positions similar to those I find in Wang Yangming, and in Edwards and much of the Christian tradition, and in William James. It will ultimately prove impossible to defend the rationality of one's basic intellectual commitments without at least implicitly assuming that *some* passions, emotions, and feelings are epistemically beneficial.

If the views discussed in this section are on the right track, however, then western philosophy, at least, must rethink its relation to rhetoric. To that I now turn.

IV

An important strand in western philosophy drives a wedge between rational discourse and persuasion. Rational discourse is the domain of philosophy. Persuasion, however, is the domain of rhetoric, and rhetoric is epistemically and morally suspect. Thus, Plato argues that it isn't a species of knowledge but, rather, a mere "knack" or "technique" (*empeiria*). The rhetorician has mastered the devices and stratagems which enable him to speak persuasively but lacks a theoretical understanding of their nature, of the psychological and social mechanisms which ensure that some techniques will be effective and others not. Furthermore, the rhetorician's aim is not to produce knowledge or true opinion but to convince his audience of the truth of his assertions whether they are in fact true or not. And because rhetoric's aim is persuasion, its mastery involves a command of those devices which *make* speakers persuasive. These include sound arguments. But they *also* include plausible but specious proofs, *ad hominem* attacks, appeals to one's hearers' baser emotions and prejudices, the creation of a favorable personal impression whether it is warranted or not, verbal style and ornament, and so on.³⁰ The rhetorician's means of persuasion are thus both rational and non-rational. And this is morally problematic. *Genuine* arts aim at the good of their subject matter. The aim of medicine, for example, is to produce health. By contrast, rhetoric is not concerned with the spiritual and moral well being of its potential audiences but only with persuasion. The rhetorician *qua* rhetorician is indifferent to whether he produces knowledge or true opinion, on the one hand, or false opinion, on the other, and to whether he persuades us by employing reason and appealing to our nobler sentiments or convinces us by using specious arguments and pandering to our worse desires. The *philosopher* wishes to benefit the souls of her hearers and so employs *rational* means to produce knowledge or true belief. The rhetorician *as such* is not concerned with what would benefit us.

But, of course, matters aren't so simple. Plato himself concedes (in the *Phaedrus*) that the first defect could be remedied. The second cannot. But the force of this admission is mitigated by four things. First, Plato himself is a master of rhetoric as he must surely have recognized. Second, while

techniques don't *aim* at the good (as arts do), they can be used for people's benefit. The gourmet chef, for example, can make nutritious food tasty. Third, there is a place for a chastened rhetoric in Plato's ideal community. The use of "noble lies" is a notorious example. More important, children are surrounded from infancy by "beautiful forms" (objects, practices, *and words*) in an attempt to induce harmony and order in both their bodies and souls. Finally, Plato's mature account of moral failure explains why rhetoric is still needed. Moral failure is rooted in either of two causes. The first is reason's failure to discern the good. The second is a failure in the lower parts of the soul which prevents them from concurring in reason's judgment (sensuality or avarice, for example, which are failures of appetite, or cowardice or arrogance which are failures of spirit [thymos]). The function of rhetoric in the ideal state is to induce "friendship" (Plato's term) or psychic harmony in the soul, so that appetite and thymos willingly concur in the judgment of reason. So there is a place for rhetoric, after all, *but only when directed by philosophy*.³¹

Or consider Augustine. Rhetoric is useful when properly deployed. "While the faculty of eloquence...is of great value in urging either evil or injustice, [it] is itself indifferent." Why, then, "should it not be obtained for the uses of the good in the service of truth if the evil usurp it...in defense of iniquity and error?" And indeed, in certain contexts and for certain purposes, rhetoric is indispensable. "If those who hear are to be taught," clear and careful exposition is needed, and "in order that those things that are doubtful may be made certain they must be reasoned out with the use of evidence. But if" one's hearers "are to be *moved* rather than taught, so that they may not be sluggish in putting what they know into practice and so that they may *fully accept* those things which they acknowledge to be true, there is need for greater powers of speaking. Here entreaties and reproofs, exhortations and rebukes, and whatever other [rhetorical] devices are necessary to move minds must be used."³²

Following Cicero, Augustine asserts that "he who is eloquent should speak in such a way that he teaches, delights, and moves." The first "resides in the things which we have to say, the other two in the manner in which we say it...Just as the listener is to be delighted if he is to be retained as a listener, so also is he to be persuaded if he is to be moved to act." Even so, "instruction should [not only] come before persuasion" but may make persuasion unnecessary if one's hearers are "so moved by a knowledge" of things necessary "that it is not necessary to move them further by greater powers of eloquence." If, however, they are "taught and pleased and still [don't] consent," persuasion is needed. For "what use are" teaching and delight if consent "does not follow. But delight is not necessary either."³³

The upshot of all this is that while teaching is always necessary, persuasion is necessary only when teaching itself doesn't lead to action, and delight (being pleased with the speaker's manner of presentation) is of value only when needed to hold the hearer's attention and make him more receptive to the teaching of the speaker. The implication is that rhetoric has ancillary value only; it is subordinate to "teaching" (wisdom, or Christian philosophy) and should be directed by it.

This theme reechoes throughout the history of western philosophy.

Hobbes's and Locke's animadversions on metaphor and rhetoric are examples. Thus Hobbes thinks that one of language's most important functions is to communicate knowledge, and that this function is impeded whenever we "use words metaphorically; that is, in other sense than they are ordained for; and *thereby deceive others*."³⁴ "Metaphors, tropes, and other rhetorical figures" can be used to decorate discourse or "in common speech,...yet *in reckoning, and seeking of truth*, such speeches are not to be admitted."³⁵ Or as Locke says, "All the art of rhetoric, besides order and clearness; all the artificial and figurative application of words eloquence hath invented, are for nothing else but to insinuate wrong ideas, move the passions, and thereby mislead the judgment; and so indeed are perfect cheats: and therefore...they are certainly, in all discourses that pretend to inform or instruct, wholly to be avoided....It is evident how much men love to deceive and be deceived, since rhetoric, that powerful instrument of error and deceit, has its established professors, is publicly taught, and has always been had in great reputation."³⁶

A less familiar, and potentially more interesting example for the philosopher of religion, is provided by the Puritans' attitude towards rhetoric. John Penry insisted that "the lord doth not ordinarily bestowe [full comprehension of the Word] upon any in our days, without the knowledge of the artes, especially the two handmaydes of all learninge, Rhetoricke and Logick...."³⁷ Rhetoric "was the means by which the logical analysis of the Word was brought home to the congregation to spur repentance and conversion."³⁸ Indeed, "where there is one injunction to expound the will of God 'out of soundnesse of argument and plaine evidence'...there are a hundred that exclaim in more passionate accents 'O brethren let the fire burn clear; let there not be more smoke than fire'." "It is not enough," said Thomas Hooker, "that we be stirring in the house and people be up, but we must knock at men's doors, bring a candle to their bedsides, and pinch the sluggard, and then if he have any life he will stir."³⁹

But heat without light is equally undesirable. "The ministers of the gospel" are to "apply themselves...to Rational Men, who are to be led, not driven; who follow the conduct of Reason rather than force."⁴⁰ Thus, Jonathan Edwards says, "When light and heat are...united in a minister of the gospel, it shows that each is genuine....Divine light is attended with heat; and so, on the other hand, a truly divine and holy heat and ardour is ever accompanied with light."⁴¹ It is true that, in their reflections on the sermon, Puritan divines emphasized "application," and hence rhetoric. For as Edwards also asserts, "Though...clearness of distinction and illustration and strength of reason, and a good method, in the doctrinal handling of the truths of religion is in many ways needful and profitable, and not to be neglected...our people don't so much need to have their heads stored, as their hearts touched."⁴² Nevertheless, it is clearly assumed that the minister's use of rhetoric will be guided by his grasp of the truths of sacred science. The Puritan divines share Plato's view that, however necessary, rhetoric is a mere handmaid of right reason (philosophy, sacred science). Until recently, at least, this view has dominated the west.

But a closer look reveals internal tensions. Arguably, philosophical debates are structured on a forensic model.⁴³ In the Platonic dialogues,

opinions are broached and subjected to philosophical scrutiny in the hope that the truth will emerge through a process of questioning and answering. The medieval practice of examining philosophical and theological theses in public debates is reflected in the structure of Aquinas's *Summa Theologiae*. Modern philosophers proceed in the same fashion. Someone advances a thesis, offers arguments for it, and then responds to the criticism of other philosophers. The thesis that best survives criticism is then regarded as the closest approximation to the truth currently available. It may therefore be significant that the medieval *disputatio* in which "a specific problem [was] put to the speaker in the form of a question to which he had to formulate a satisfactory answer" bears a "strong resemblance...to the *declamationes* of the Roman oratory schools. When rhetoric disappeared from public life at the end of the Republic...and became a matter for the school, similar tasks were given to the pupils. Suetonius provides us with the following example." A group of young men and some fishermen agree that, for a fixed price, the fishermen will let the young men have their catch. They haul in their nets and, while there are no fish, there is a basket of gold. "'The buyers claimed that the catch belonged to them, while the fishermen said that the basket of gold was theirs.' The pupils had then to deliver a well-constructed speech to defend one of the two positions."⁴⁴ It may also be significant that the medieval *disputatio* is modeled on a judicial procedure and that, in the ancient world, rhetoric was principally prized as a tool for persuading others of the truth of one's assertions in the assembly and law courts. Rhetoric was highly valued, in other words, as the most effective means to power.

But what precisely follows from the fact that philosophical discussion follows a forensic model? Not that rational discourse and philosophical argumentation are no more than disguised expressions of the speaker's will to power (as Nietzsche and Foucault claim) but, rather, that, because the lines between them are less sharp than has been traditionally supposed, philosophy shouldn't be too quick to dismiss rhetoric.⁴⁵

I have already alluded to Plato's masterly deployment of rhetoric to defend philosophy's hegemony. I have also called attention to the seventeenth and eighteenth century Puritan and Anglican divines' insistence that both the gospel and arguments of natural theology can only obtain "a free admission into the assent of the understanding when [they] bring a passport from a rightly disposed will." We have seen that Plato, too, thought that "neither quickness of learning nor a good memory can make a man see [the Good] when his nature is not akin to the object." In his view, reason has its own loves and desires⁴⁶ which must be carefully nurtured if it is to function as it ought. And Augustine, as well, says something similar. Reason should not be discarded once faith has been achieved. For "God forbid that He should hate in us that faculty [reason] by which He has made us superior to all other living beings. Therefore, we must refuse so to believe as not to seek a reason for our beliefs." Nevertheless, faith (*with its appropriate motions of the heart*) is a precondition of the success of this enterprise. For some things must first be believed to be understood. "Therefore the prophet said with reason: 'if you will not believe, you will not understand.'"⁴⁷

Plato's and Augustine's official view is that even when properly

employed, rhetorical persuasion is second best, a mere *substitute* for rational persuasion. I have argued, however, that, *in their own view*, certain affective and conative states are needed to achieve knowledge. If this is correct, then rhetoric isn't a more or less dispensable *tool* which reason employs to induce acceptance of its dictates; a properly deployed rhetoric must, instead, be *part* of rational discourse. Rational persuasion *includes* rhetorical persuasion., the arousal of the passions, desires, and emotional states needed for the sort of knowledge in question—a love of justice in the case of ethical knowledge, perhaps, or (if Jonathan Edwards or Pascal are right) “true benevolence” or a hunger for God in the case of natural theology, or (if Wang is right) selflessness.⁴⁸

But precisely *how* should rhetorical tools be employed in philosophy (rational discourse)? In the same way we use them to inculcate such standard intellectual virtues as fair mindedness, honesty in the handling of evidence, openness to criticism, or the elimination of “unjust” prejudice or bias.⁴⁹ The practice of philosophy involves cherishing, exemplifying, and advocating values like these. Commitment to them is *intrinsic*, not *extrinsic*, to it. Teaching philosophy involves inducting students into a rational practice that involves possessing and exercising these intellectual virtues; their acquisition is *part* of what is involved in becoming a good reasoner. Yet If I am correct about the role our passionate nature plays in good reasoning about religious matters and, more generally, in good reasoning about any value saturated subject matter,⁵⁰ then the same is true of certain virtues of the heart—true benevolence, for example, or a love of God, or human-heartedness, or (if the Buddhists are right) wisdom and compassion. In my view, example, praise and dispraise, imaginative and emotional appeals⁵¹—rhetoric, in short—play an essential role in the practice of philosophy because they are needed to inculcate and reinforce the intellectual, ethical, and spiritual values which infuse good reasoning.^{52 53}

V

In concluding I want to consider three objections to the claim that the deployment of rhetoric is intrinsically bound up with good philosophical reasoning about religious matters. The first two purport to demonstrate that philosophy and rhetoric are essentially opposed. The third attempts to show that even if *some* uses of rhetoric are inseparable from the practice of philosophy, appeals to our passionate nature should play no part in it.

(1) Kant thinks that poetry is an expression of our freedom, of the pure play of the imagination. But poetry “plays with illusion,” it does not use “illusion to deceive us...it does not seek to sneak up on the understanding and ensnare it by a sensible exhibition.”⁵⁴ Rhetoric or the art of persuasion, on the other hand, “is a violent threat” to its audience’s autonomy, depriving its hearers of their “freedom to think, decide and judge for” themselves.⁵⁵ Rhetoric “move[s] people like machines to a judgment that must lose all its weight with them when they meditate about it calmly...oratory..., the art of using people’s weaknesses for one’s own aims (no matter how good these may be in intention or even in fact), is unworthy of any respect whatsoever.”⁵⁶ For “the motto of enlightenment” is

"have courage to use your own reason!"⁵⁷ By substituting her own judgment for ours, the successful orator keeps us in "tutelage," and thereby prevents us from achieving our full humanity.

But Kant's polemic is successful only if (a) what we most essentially *are* is pure reason, and (b) the emotions, feelings, and passions *as such* play no role in good reasoning. If these presuppositions are correct, then appeals to our emotions, feelings, and "prejudices"⁵⁸ are attacks on our autonomy. Yet both claims are suspect. Our subjectivity (Kierkegaard) or passionate nature (James) helps *define* who we are; it is as much a constituent of our being as is our reason. The second presupposition is equally dubious. If the epistemological position I am defending is correct, our emotions, passions, and feelings play an essential role in good reasoning about value laden subject matters.⁵⁹

(2) Henry W. Johnstone, Jr. also thinks that rhetoric and philosophy are essentially opposed. The devices of the rhetorician are effective only when they are concealed from his audience since "it is impossible to be persuaded by a technical device [of rhetoric] at the same time that one sees it as *merely* a device." By contrast, not only are the "devices" (namely, rational arguments) of the philosopher transparent to those to whom they are addressed, their endorsement by the latter is essential to securing the *kind* of agreement he aims at (namely, *rational* agreement). Moreover, the very enterprise in which the philosopher is engaged includes making his "tools" available to his audience to criticize his own assertions.

Another difference between the philosopher and the rhetorician is that the latter needn't share the beliefs, attitudes, or prejudices to which he appeals to be effective nor privately endorse the views he is advocating. Yet this would be totally inappropriate for the philosopher. Because philosophy is a search for truth, the philosopher undercuts her enterprise if she employs premises she regards as false or dubious, or attempts to persuade her audience of the truth of opinions she believes to be false.⁶⁰

What Johnstone has shown at best, however, is that philosophy and a certain *kind* of rhetoric are opposed. He has not shown that the sort of rhetorical appeal I am defending can't play a legitimate role in philosophical argumentation. Note first that the rhetorician's devices don't always lose their effectiveness when his audience becomes aware of them. Appeals to the audience's emotions, for example, don't lose their effectiveness when the audience is convinced that the emotions the speaker is evoking are relevant or appropriate. Sermons, or an impassioned discourse designed to arouse one's compassion for the less fortunate, are examples. In cases like these the hearer may be fully aware of what the speaker is doing and yet legitimately endorse and be moved by it because he rightly regards the emotions in question as epistemically relevant to the discernment of spiritual or moral truth. Moreover, where both speaker and hearer agree that the emotion to which the speaker is appealing belongs to a *class* of emotions which are epistemically relevant, the hearer can appeal to other members of that class to criticize and/or refine the speaker's own assertions. Nor does Johnstone's last point militate against the use of rhetoric I am advocating. For, in the cases, I am envisaging, the speaker shares and prizes the emotions and attitudes she appeals to or is attempt-

ing to elicit, and endorses the conclusions she is advocating. (Cf. our attempts to elicit a commitment to the appropriate epistemic virtues in our philosophy students.)

But the most important point is this. The underlying assumption of Plato's or Locke's or Kant's or Johnstone's dismissal of rhetoric is that appeals to emotion and "prejudice" are not just epistemically irrelevant but undermine the search for truth. If I am correct this assumption is false. When the emotions and "prejudices" in question are of the right sort they may be needed to discern it.

(3) The third objection to my position is more serious, however. Even if there are *accidental* connections between particular cultures or historical periods and good reasoning,⁶¹ the connection isn't essential. Similarly, if the universalist pretensions of the world religions are legitimate, then neither the acceptance of their claims nor the experiences of conversion or enlightenment they foster should be dependent upon the adoption of a particular culture. Now, if I am right, our passional nature plays a role in good reasoning. Our passional nature is shaped by our personal histories, however, and these, in turn, by our culture. The following example is illustrative. William James appeals to hopes and fears, interests and sentiments, which he believes are universal and, in particular, to humanity's alleged horror of meaninglessness and its need for significant action. Yet is the latter really universal? Or is the need for significant action, instead, rooted in western (and especially American) society as that took shape in the second half of the nineteenth century? Would a Buddhist or Taoist, for instance, acknowledge its power or (more significantly) agree that any satisfactory world-view must satisfy it? Since the Buddhist believes that ignorance (*avidya*) and *craving* (*trishna*) are the source of suffering (*duhkha*), it is pretty clear that he, at least, would not. There is a tension, then, between classical ideals of rationality, and the world religions' universalist pretensions, on the one hand, and appeals to our passional nature, on the other.

In so far as philosophy and philosophical theology share these ideals and make claims on universal assent, their use of rhetoric must be sensitive to the distinction between aspects of our passional nature that are culturally specific or personally idiosyncratic and those which aren't. If reason and truth truly *are* universal, then *even if* good reasoning in religion is passional reasoning, appeals to the culturally specific or personally idiosyncratic should at best play no more than an ancillary role in philosophical discourse. (It should be noted, however, that states of the heart can be culturally non-specific and non-idiosyncratic without being universal. Fairness to one's intellectual opponents, for example, may be rare but isn't *essentially* tied to particular cultures.⁶²)

Whether the classical ideal of rationality is consistent with my account of the role of passion and rhetoric in reasoning and speaking about religious and other value laden topics may stand or fall on the outcome of a research project in comparative philosophy. This project involves three elements. First, an examination of Christian, say, or Buddhist theories of rhetoric as well as of logic, and Buddhist and Christian accounts of the relation between them. Second, an examination of Christian, say, or Buddhist rhetorical practices in contexts in which arguments are offered,

examined, and rebutted. And, third, an examination of the passions and virtues valued in Christian, say, or Buddhist inquiry, and the extent to which these passions and virtues are culturally or temperamentally specific.

An investigation of Chinese philosophy may prove especially illuminating in the present connection since "rhetoric has always been an integral aspect of philosophizing in the Chinese tradition without it ever having been bifurcated off as a separate tradition."⁶³ For example, in many Confucian texts, rhetorical appeals are seamlessly interwoven with structured argumentation and systematic reflection. Of course the latter *can* be abstracted from the former. The price of doing so, however, is to undermine the *rational* (and not merely emotional) force of the text.⁶⁴

I think that these investigations will reveal that rhetorical strategies are essentially connected with rational inquiry into religious and other value laden matters. I think that they will also show that while some of the passions and virtues intrinsically connected with practices of rational inquiry are essentially tied to specific *world-views*,⁶⁵ they are *not* essentially bound to particular *cultures* such as ancient China or the western middle ages or medieval India,⁶⁶ or to particular temperaments or psychological types. Whether I am right will largely depend on the outcome of this inquiry.

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NOTES

1. "A sort of dumb conviction that the truth must lie in one direction rather than another" ("The Sentiment of Rationality," in William James, *The Will to Believe and Other Essays on Popular Philosophy* [New York: Dover, 1956], p. 93), something in us that "whispers...it must be true," (*A Pluralistic Universe* [New York: Longmans, Green, 1947], pp. 328-29).

2. Quotations are from W. F. Trotter's translation of Blaise Pascal's *Pensees* (New York: Random House, 1941). The numbers in the text refer to the number of the fragment (in the Brunschvicg ordering).

3. William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (New York: The Modern Library, c1902), pp. 429 and 422, my emphasis.

4. For my remarks on Udayana and al-Ghazali I am indebted to John Clayton, "Religions, Reasons, and Gods," *Religious Studies* 23 (1987): 1-17, and "Piety and the Proofs," *Religious Studies* 26 (1990): 19-42.

5. Cf. Clayton 1987, pp. 11-13.

6. Roughly speaking, the Kalam argument attempts to show that the space-time world must have a beginning and therefore requires a cause.

7. The philosophers argued that the world was eternal, and that texts like Sura 10 ("Surely your Lord is God, who created heaven and the earth in six days") should be interpreted in a way that is consistent with that fact. Given the Aristotelian framework within which the philosophers were working, however, eternity and necessity are coextensive. So if God eternally creates the world, he *necessarily* creates it, and hence doesn't freely choose it. A God without free will, though, isn't a personal agent and so isn't the God of theism.

8. Marilyn Adams, "Praying the *Proslogion*," in Thomas Senior, ed., *The Rationality of Belief and the Plurality of Faith* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995).

9. Austin Warren, *New England Saints* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan

Press, 1956), p. 28f. Quotations from Stowe are from The Library of America edition of *Uncle Tom's Cabin, The Minister's Wooing, and Oldtown Folks* (New York, 1982).

10. See, for example, the introduction to *Sermons and Discourses 1720-1723* (Works of Jonathan Edwards, vol. 10), ed. Wilson A. Kimnach (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), p. 33f.

11. Warren, p. 28f.

12. Perry Miller, *The New England Mind: The Seventeenth Century* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1961), p. 114.

13. At this point, readers familiar with my *Reason and the Heart: A Prolegomenon to a Critique of Passional Reason* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995) can proceed directly to section IV.

14. Quotations are from the following works of James: *A Pluralistic Universe*, *op. cit.*, p. 10; *Pragmatism* (New York, 1907; reprint, New York: Meridian Books, 1955), p. 18; "The Sentiment of Rationality," *op. cit.*, p. 66; and *Essays in Religion and Morality* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982), pp. 61-62.

15. H. H. Price, *Belief* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1969), p. 330.

16. John Henry Newman, *An Essay in Aid of a Grammar of Assent* (London, 1870; reprint, Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1979), p. 82.

17. John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, vol. 1, trans. Henry Beveridge (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1957), book 1, chapter 7, section 4.

18. Thomas Aquinas, *The Summa Theologica*, vol. 2, trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province (New York: Benziger Bros., 1947), part II, question 6, article 1; and *The Disputed Questions on Truth*, vol. 2, trans. James V. McGlynn (Chicago: Henry Regnery, 1953), question 14, article 1.

19. John Spurr, "'Rational Religion' in Restoration England," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 49 (1988), p. 580. The internal quote is from Robert South (*Sermons* [5 vols.; Oxford, 1842], vol. I, p. 116).

20. Jonathan Edwards, "Miscellany 782," in Ava Chamberlain, ed., *The Miscellanies* 501- 832 (Works of Jonathan Edwards, vol. 18) (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000).

21. Including religious ones.

22. Quotations are from the following works of James: *The Meaning of Truth* (New York, 1907; reprint, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975), pp. 5, 140, 141; "The Will to Believe," in *The Will to Believe and Other Essays*, *op. cit.*, p. 29; "The Sentiment of Rationality," *op. cit.*, p. 93.

23. "The mind in its original state...or the original mind." All quotations in this and the next paragraph are from David W. Tien, "Warranted Neo-Confucian Belief: Religious Pluralism and the Affections in the Epistemologies of Wang Yangming and Alvin Plantinga," *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 55 (2004): 31-55.

24. Not just selfishness in the usual sense but any affective orientation which makes oneself the center of existence.

25. All three objections are discussed in detail in *Reason and the Heart*, *op. cit.*, chapters 4 and 5.

26. Louis Pojman, *Religious Belief and the Will* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1986), pp. 172-175.

27. Including religious behavior.

28. Jonathan Edwards, *The Nature of True Virtue* (Boston, 1765; reprinted in *Ethical Writings* [Works of Jonathan Edwards, vol. 8], ed. Paul Ramsey [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989]), p. 620.

29. *Plato's Epistles*, trans. with critical essays and notes, by Glenn R. Morrow (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1962), pp. 240-41.

30. See Aristotle's *Rhetoric* 1356a (in Jonathan Barnes, ed., *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, vol. 2 [Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1984]) for a discussion

of these devices. The effective speaker persuades by his "personal character," by stirring his hearer's emotions, and by "proof, or *apparent* proof." (My emphasis.)

31. My account of Plato relies heavily on the work of A. E. Taylor and Gregory Vlastos. See especially the former's *Plato: The Man and his Work* (Edinburgh, 1927; reprint, New York: Meridian Books, 1956), and the latter's "Justice and Happiness in the Republic," in Gregory Vlastos, ed., *Plato, A Collection of Critical Essays II: Ethics, Politics, and Philosophy of Art and Religion* (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Books, 1971).

32. Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, trans. D. W. Robertson, Jr. (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1958), pp. 118f., 121, my emphases.

33. *Ibid.*, pp. 136-37.

34. Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), Part I, chapter 4, my emphasis.

35. *Ibid.*, Part I, chapter 5, my emphasis.

36. John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (London, 1690; reprint, New York: Dover, 1959), book iii, chapter x, no. 34. Compare Hume: "Eloquence, when at its highest pitch, leaves little room for reason or reflection; but addressing itself entirely to the fancy or affections, captivates the willing hearers, and subdues their understanding." (David Hume, "Of Miracles," Part II, *An Enquiry concerning Human Understanding*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000, p. 89.) My thanks to Jeff Jordan for calling this passage to my attention.

37. Quoted in John Morgan, *Godly Learning* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), p. 106.

38. *Ibid.*, p. 108.

39. Miller, *op. cit.*, p. 300f.

40. John Edwards, *The Preacher* (London, 1705), quoted in Kinmach, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

41. From an ordination sermon on *John* 5:35 entitled "The True Excellency of a Minister of the Gospel" (1744), quoted in Kinmach, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

42. Jonathan Edwards, *Thoughts on the Revival of Religion in New England*, in *The Great Awakening* (Works of Jonathan Edwards, vol. 4), ed. C. C. Goen (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972), pp. 387-88.

43. The debates can of course be internal, with the investigator assuming the roles of both advocate and critic.

44. Samuel Ijsseling, *Rhetoric and Philosophy in Conflict: An Historical Survey* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1976), p. 50.

45. Again, while metaphor and other tropes have historically been regarded as belonging to rhetoric, philosophy itself is saturated with metaphor. Philosophers like Plato, Plotinus, and Bergson are obvious examples. But, arguably, most if not all metaphysical schemes are structured by metaphors (the world as mechanism or organism, for instance, or as spirit or force). Nor is it clear that these metaphors are dispensable, that the insights they express could be as adequately conveyed without them. Aristotle thought there was an important connection between metaphor and resemblances, claiming that to metaphorize well "is a sign of genius, since a good metaphor implies an intuitive perception of the similarity in dissimilars." (*Poetics* 1459a 5, in Barnes, *op. cit.*) The poet, he says, is one who "perceives similarity," and in the *Rhetoric* adds that "in philosophy also, an acute mind will perceive resemblances even in things far apart." (*Rhetoric* 1412a 10-15, in *ibid.*, my emphasis.) Pace Hobbes and Locke, the deployment of metaphors (and hence rhetoric) is essentially embedded in philosophy itself. See, however, Paul Thagard and Craig Beam ("Epistemological Metaphors and the Nature of Philosophy," *Metaphilosophy* 35 [2004]) who argue that the use of metaphors in philosophy is more closely akin to their use in science than to their use in poetry and rhetoric. Metaphors and analogies play a role in both disciplines in the "discovery, development, evaluation,

and exposition of theories" (513). In neither case is the point of introducing them primarily to delight or to persuade (regardless of the truth or adequacy of the discourse in which they are utilized). Yet notice three things: (1) Because "there is not much empirical evidence directly relevant to the assessment of theories of knowledge [or to other philosophical theories for that matter], ...metaphors and analogies carry much more of the evaluative burden than is the case in science" (514). In other words, metaphors and analogies play a much larger role in *justifying* the theories (in persuading oneself and others of their rational superiority) than they do in science. (2) As already noted, metaphor has traditionally been part of the theory of rhetoric. So if the deployment of metaphors is indispensable to philosophy, *rhetoric* (as traditionally understood) is indispensable to it. (3) If Thagard and Beam are right, then while metaphor is indispensable to the discovery, development, and exposition of scientific theories, it plays at most a comparatively minor role in their articulation (which is typically mathematized) and evaluation. Neither is true of philosophical theories. Hence, metaphor and analogy (and thus rhetoric) is essential to the latter in a way in which it is not to the former.

46. Desires distinct from those of thymos and appetite.

47. Augustine, *Letters*, 5 vols., trans. Sister Wilfred Parsons; vol. 2, *Letters 83-130* (The Fathers of the Church, vol 18); Washington, D. C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1953), p. 302. Moreover, teaching and speaking are themselves rooted in prayer and hence faith. The successful Christian orator who "speaks of the just and holy and good" in such a way "that he may be willingly and obediently heard" owes his success more "to the piety of his prayers" than "the skill of his oratory, so that, praying for himself and for those whom he is to address, he is a petitioner before he is a speaker." And, indeed, in so far as his prayers are granted, the *real* speaker is the Holy Spirit who speaks "in those who give over Christ to learners." (Augustine, *Christian Doctrine*, *op. cit.*, p. 140f.)

48. What "passional states" are epistemically needed? One's answer depends on the subject matter and on one's philosophical anthropology and metaphysics. For example, whether a hunger for God is needed to successfully do natural theology depends upon whether God exists, what He is like, and the nature of the relationship between God, on the one hand, and human beings, on the other. (I have discussed this at some length in *Reason and the Heart*.)

49. As contrasted with what Edmund Burke calls "just [i.e., reasonable] prejudice" or bias.

50. And, arguably, values are at stake in all basic disputes.

51. The importance of imaginative and emotional appeals is often overlooked or underestimated by philosophers but how many would pursue a life of philosophy whose imaginations weren't captured, and hearts stirred, by figures like Socrates or Augustine, or by projects like Descartes' or Hume's?

52. Note that even if one rejects my account of the epistemic role played by passion in good reasoning, rhetoric may still be epistemically relevant. John Wisdom, Ian Ramsey, John Hick, and others have argued that religious discovery involves seeing one thing as another (nature as God's handiwork, for example, or the saints as manifestations of Reality itself). If they are right, then rhetoric may be needed to effect the necessary gestalt shift. If the gestalt shift is *appropriate*—involves a richer, truer, more satisfying (including *rationally* more satisfying in James's sense) view of reality, then rhetoric has performed a valuable *epistemic* role. Rhetoric (preaching, spiritual literature, the admonitions of a spiritual director, and so on) may also help effect religious perceptions (cognitively valid religious experiences). In either case, there is an analogy with the tools and/or training one needs to make the subtle discriminations typical of wine tasters, good judges of music or art, or the observations of experienced trackers or sailors. If the discriminations or observations are epistemically virtuous, then so too are the tools or training needed

to make them.

53. In commenting on Aristotle, Arash Abizadeh notes that the "phronetic rhetorician can, when faced with an unvirtuous crowd, use the power of rhetoric itself to attempt to persuade the audience by appealing not to the virtues that the crowd actually has but to an ideal virtuous image of the crowd which the orator rhetorically paints and inspires the crowd to emulate." Similarly, the speaker, "in order to deploy the *pistis* ["proof"] of *ethos* ["character"]" must "represent himself in his speech as virtuous—a creative representation which in turn can inspire the good-willed speaker [a speaker who wishes well to his audience] to rise up to his own rhetorical model." The resources of rhetoric can thus be deployed "to instill virtue in both the speaker and the crowd to a degree not previously realized." (Arash Abizadeh, "The Passions of the Wise: *Phronesis*, Rhetoric, and Aristotle's Passionate Practical Deliberation," *Review of Metaphysics* 56 [2002], pp. 294-95) It seems to me that these remarks can also be applied to the phronetic reasoner. Because the deliberator qua persuader wishes well to the deliberator qua persuadee, she will appeal to an ideal image of the self, not just to the emotions and character traits she actually has. Similarly, in constructing and deploying her arguments she will represent herself (play the role of) a virtuous phronetic deliberator, thus inspiring herself to "rise up to [her] own rhetorical model." This has important implications for the sort of reasoning appropriate in religious matters. One's reasoning in these areas should not only be informed by epistemically relevant emotions and character traits one has but also (or, rather?) by those one thinks one *should* have. This may involve role playing. But role playing can be morally and epistemically virtuous. For example, one should morally deliberate *as if* one were a morally good agent, and one should reason *as if* one possessed the standard epistemic virtues. (Suppose, for instance, that one tends to be intolerant of criticism. One can attempt to reason *as if* one weren't so that, while one doesn't presently find the conclusions that would be reached by a virtuous epistemic agent fully persuasive, one may, by continued exercises of this sort, come to *be* a virtuous epistemic agent and, as a consequence, end up by wholeheartedly endorsing those conclusions.) Moreover, when the epistemically relevant virtuous dispositions are also morally and spiritually virtuous (as many of them are in moral and religious reasoning), the case for epistemic role playing becomes even more compelling.

54. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgment*, trans. Werner S. Pluhar (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1987), #53 (p. 197f.).

55. Ijessling, *op. cit.*, p. 85.

56. Kant, *op. cit.*, p. 198.

57. Kant, "What is Enlightenment?", in *Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals and What is Enlightenment?*, trans. Lewis White Beck (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1959), p. 85.

58. In Burke's sense, namely, established biases of the mind, valuations which have become settled habits or sentiments.

59. Or, in any case, play an essential role in good reasoning on value laden topics. Note that Kant too sometimes talks as if "feeling" (respect for the moral law, our sense of the sublime, and the like) play a legitimate role in reasoning about morality, religion, and aesthetic issues, and clearly does *not* think that this threatens our autonomy. All that saves Kant from inconsistency is the rather dubious claim that feelings like these actually belong to *reason*. (They are no more than the affective resonance of pure rational judgments in beings with inclinations, and are therefore *necessarily* felt by all rational beings with animal natures.)

60. Henry W. Johnstone, Jr., *Validity and Rhetoric in Philosophical Argument: An Outlook in Transition* (University Park, Pa.: The Dialogue Press of Man and World: Publishers, 1978), pp. 15-19, my emphasis. Note that this is one of Johnstone's earlier essays. In later essays in this collection, Johnstone disavows the sharp distinction

between rhetoric and philosophy he draws here.—But not for the reasons I will give shortly.

61. A. N. Whitehead, for example, argued that Christian theism cleared a metaphysical space within which modern science became possible. Since the Christian God is a God of reason and order, any world he creates will exhibit pattern and regularity. But because he *freely* creates the world, its order will be contingent. So the world's structures can't be deduced *a priori* but must be discovered by observation and experiment. Others claim that, because of its insistence that God alone is holy, Christian cultures desecralized the world which thereby becomes an appropriate object for manipulation and detached observation. There may be some truth in these views though, in my opinion, they are overstated. (For example, early Buddhism also "desacralized" the world, and Islam's and Indian theism's picture of God is quite similar to the Judeo-Christian one.)

62. This may be doubted. Robin Horton ("Tradition and Modernity Revisited," Martin Hollis and Steven Lukes, eds., *Rationality and Relativism* [Cambridge: MIT Press, 1982]) suggests that the intellectual virtue in question is peculiar to pluralistic cultures. But while these cultures may encourage the development of this virtue, I am not convinced that it is essentially tied to them.

63. Correspondence from Roger T. Ames. Quoted with permission.

64. Nietzsche, and perhaps Kierkegaard, provide modern western counterparts. Since values are at stake, divesting their texts of their rhetorical components distorts them. Their expression of and appeal to passion is an integral part of the cases they are making. For a fascinating study of an apposite Chinese work from the Warring States period (453-221 B. C), see Carine Defoort, *The Pheasant Cap Master (He gaun zi): A Rhetorical Reading* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997).

65. Edwards' true benevolence, for example, is intrinsically tied to his brand of theistic metaphysics. True benevolence is an epistemic virtue if and only if the latter is basically sound.

66. This presupposes, of course, that world-views aren't essentially tied to specific cultures. The success of Islam and Christianity in Africa, for example, or of Buddhism in America and Europe, suggests that many of them, at least, are not.