

Chapter Ten (“Epilogue”) revisits the central question: what usage do past environmentalisms serve in today’s ecological crisis? Guha cautions against romanticising ‘indigenous’ ecological traditions or the uncritical application of Euro–American frameworks to South Asia. Instead, he urges a grounded and pluralistic approach, which is drawn critically from the intellectual history of India. Also, the epilogue successfully portrays the complex, layered nature of Indian environmentalism, rooted in cultural, religious, scientific and political ideas. Guha does not offer detailed answers to the current ecological crisis, but his scholarly restraint allows for a more engaged and meaningful discussion between past and present environmental thoughts.

In conclusion, Guha’s *Speaking with Nature* stresses that Indian environmentalism cannot be understood through the lens of Western environmentalism. Instead, the book calls for a critical synthesis that respects traditional ecological wisdom, subject to critical inquiry and scientific rigour. Its lucid, classy and engaging essays call for participation by both academicians and lay audiences. They are a repository of lesser-known historical details and analysis, but without jargon or abstraction. However, Guha’s documentation cannot go away without critique, because of its focus on elite figures and organised movement, which marginalises undocumented and diffuse forms of ecological resistance. Also, the representation of insufficient marginalised voices limits the book’s claim to be of a comprehensive nature. Nonetheless, as the world confronts the crises of environmental degradation and democratic decline, the book effectively urges us to regain the wisdom of those who spoke with nature out of necessity, solidarity, and hope.

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THE PHILOSOPHY OF WORSHIP: DIVINE AND HUMAN ASPECTS. By Aaron Segal and Samuel Lebens (Eds.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2025. 345 pp.

In the field of the philosophy of worship, one of the most important contributions in recent decades has undeniably been Tim Bayne and Yujin Nagasawa’s 2006 essay, “The Grounds of Worship”. In the years before, the discussion often revolved around faith, but it was not so much its expressions. That is what makes Bayne and Nagasawa’s essay such a seminal one in the field. The authors, in the first half, raise a few points under four larger umbrellas of: “the analysis of worship”; “the *objects* of worship”; the “*epistemology*” of worship; and “the grounds of worship”. Two of them (the analysis and grounds of worship) they addressed in more detail in their work. In the time that has followed, we observe a certain pattern in most academic additions to the field, which is that the points raised by the two authors have largely dictated the direction of most subsequent work to this day. Some direct responses emerged, such as Benjamin Crowe’s “Reasons for Worship: A Response to Bayne and Nagasawa” (2007), and the subsequent “The Grounds of Worship Again: A Reply to Crowe” (2007). And many others emerged that addressed them not so directly. *The Philosophy of Worship: Divine and Human Aspects* (2025) is a bibliography that brings together thirteen entries that fall in the tradition of the former. This is not to say that it was not intended to.

In their introduction, Lebens and Segal draw our attention to “a taxonomy of *problems*” in the field and the so far unaddressed range of questions, and how they reflect in the volume structurally, again, as a response to Bayne and Nagasawa. While in the second introduction, “The Metaethics of Worship”, Elliot Salinger provides “a taxonomy for philosophical *theories* of worship” (Segal and Lebens, p. 6) primarily by distinguishing “A-accounts” (attitude-oriented) and “X-accounts” (action-oriented) and provides us with a comparative-integrative (re)view of the practice. Therefore, as stated

earlier, this volume clearly is presented as a response to both Bayne and Nagasawa and addresses the silence that has followed thereafter. The book then transitions flawlessly into the problems of definition in Part II through Eleonore Stump and Maria Beer Vucó. The two cover the paradoxical phenomenology of worship, i.e., how it combines awe with intimacy, by drawing on Thomistic surrender and Buber's I–Thou relation. In the two essays that follow, the question of worship as distinction and that of worship as union are explored by Brandon and Craig Warmke and Omar Fakhri, respectively.

The entries focusing on normative issues make up the bulk of the book, with six articles. Robert Adams, this being one of his final contributions, argues that worship symbolises standing for the good. Robert Wallace explores the tension between worshipping and blaming God, suggesting that epistemic irrationality may be unavoidable. Scott Davison connects worship to intrinsic value, while Brian Leftow sharpens the critique of idolatry as ethically inexcusable. Mark Murphy clarifies obligations to worship, and Saul Smilansky provocatively defends the possibility of “atheist worship.” The issues at hand in said articles, interestingly, are not independent of analysing what worship means in each of these cases, which also stands true for the concluding section.

The final section witnesses another fluid transition from abstract and theoretical territory into the applicatory and anthropological. In Part IV, Andrew Chignell develops a “ladder of liturgical sincerity,” describing the cyclical, or rather, helical relationship between worship and belief. Josef Stern retrieves Maimonides to argue that worship should be understood adverbially to make such acts “worshipful”. Sharon Krishek's Kierkegaardian account describes worship as guiding the believer from despair to faith, while Dean Zimmerman proposes a metaphysics of divine presence that reconciles omnipresence with special presence.

To understand the significance of this volume, we must situate it within the overlap of analytic philosophy of religion as well as the anthropology of ritual. While philosophical discourse around the holy and its relationships with the faithful, and how it is to be imagined in various contexts, has been covered by many throughout the twentieth century, including Rudolph Otto (1950), Richard Swinburne (1981; 2004), and Robert Adams (2002), among various others. The question of worship has only seen tangential mentions or occasional focus, as in Evelyn Underhill (1936) and Ninian Smart (1972). But the question of ritual action has been analysed in the field of anthropology for decades now as embodied praxis. Specifically observing the likes of Catherine Bell (1992) and Talal Asad (1993), we can see that the embodiment lens, as Asad's work makes especially clear, may also apply to the praxis of worship. Worship, after all, is a ritual. Rituals can rarely be limited to singular, generalised definitions. This is why, throughout the book, owing to the multifaceted nature of the practice, aspects that are believed to make worship what it is are put to the test.

The contribution of *The Philosophy of Worship* is twofold: First, it works well to achieve what the editors intended, i.e., to establish ‘worship’ as a topic of concern in the field of theology and philosophy. The volume puts worship on par with subjects like theodicies and divine aspects of God, some of the most debated topics. Secondly, we observe a diverse set of interdisciplinary methodologies that are incorporated throughout, grounded in liturgical analysis, philosophy, phenomenology, and theology. Although there remain many concerns that could benefit from social-anthropological analyses, such as the question of the roles of the individual and the communal in worship, we see more references than engagement with material in said discipline. However, that gives both the contributors and the readers more reason to engage and experiment with more such approaches, rather than taking away any opportunities. That is also to say that one may find more reason to explore notions of worship, divine veneration and adoration, in both Abrahamic religions as well as non-Abrahamic ones. This will potentially bring us new perspectives on how said religions and religious practices change through interaction with the various cultures globally.

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