



Methods of Analysis

Spiritual Analysis

Stephen Petrina (2021)

Spiritual analysis developed in response to challenges of romanticism in the nineteenth century to retain elements of the ineffable or supernatural in culture and nature. In short, the challenge of romanticism is analysis with heart or soul. Spiritual analysis first refers to a method for divining depths of inner life or what transcends material and mechanical processes and things, and second to the resolution of religious or sacred practices, processes, and things. Dilthey (1900/1921) notes that that this second focus may be on a range from cultic and devotional acts, conditions, and objects to spiritual attitudes and conduct to ideas and interpretations (p. 466). Hence, spiritual analysis, when focused on ascetic-mystical practices like Buddhist meditation, Christian, Islamic, or Judaic prayer, Sufism, or Yoga, is often conflated with religious analysis.

Spiritual analysts often see their task as revealing how seemingly secular objects or subjects are inspirited or how disenchanted things may be reenchanted. Although this is dependent on understanding how ascetic-mystical practices help in transcending human nature or achieving a higher ontological horizon or plane of being, analysts are wont to distinguish religion from spirituality. Distinctions are difficult to maintain; measures of spirituality are often measures of religiosity (Hall & Edwards, 2002). In non-oppositional terms, religion and spirituality involve some concept of what is sacred and a search for what is conceived to be sacred. Religion additionally includes group validated means and methods for this search (Hill, 2000, p. 66). What is considered sacred may be “scripture, a great person or high religious leader, a god, an ancestor, an institution like the Catholic Church, an aspect of nature such as a mountain or river, a path of discipline taught by a Buddha, or a sacred rite” (Paden, 1992, p. 72). People nonetheless generally have a sense that spirituality is more abstract than religion, but this does not mean that all spiritual phenomena are abstract in an ontological sense.

Spiritual practices and things seem necessarily abstract or immaterial in counterbalance to tangibles of materialistic lifestyles. Spiritual analysis specifies how and why this is so or whether and how the numinous animates the material or the eternal works its way through the temporal. Of course, this begs questions of the accessibility of metaphysical or numinous experiences to rational analysis. If analysis was partly responsible for “the disenchantment of the world,” how can it then also demonstrate that things remain enchanted or can be reenchanted (Weber, 1917/2004, p. 13)? Wouldn’t spiritual synthesis be more appropriate? One solution is accepting that we make sense of experience through intuition *and* analysis. Hence, spiritual phenomena or “God may be known either intuitively or analytically” (Smith, 1951, p. 103). Indeed, the difficulty is empirically demonstrating manifestations and traces of what at first thought seem intangible or unintelligible. Divine intervention is just one form of spiritual agency.

While spiritual culture, practices (e.g., honoring, humbling, praying, thanking, artifacts, symbols, etc.), and texts are common to analysis, spiritual agency presents unique challenges. Spiritual agents may be ancestors, angels, gods and goddesses, and supreme beings or related phenomena. Spiritual agency manifests or materializes in any number of perceptual forms and ways, including personal prayer, “paranormal (e.g., out of body) experiences, numinous states

(awareness of God's presence), conversions, and behavioral manifestations such as glossolalia or possession/trance. Less tangible examples include intuitions of a relationship with God, or unpredictable revelations or ruptures in worldviews" (Galen, 2017, p. 222). Certainly, anthropologists have a long history of accounting for spiritual agency, interpreted through the likes of animism, fetishism, folklore, hylozoism, magic, primitivism, superstition, totemism, vitalism, and witchcraft. Here, spiritual agency is invariably reduced to the vagaries of "culture." If spiritual phenomena exist, as natural phenomena exist, are they not independent of culture?

Explaining the elimination of spiritual agents *and* spiritual signs from the world or their reduction to "culture," historians have little recourse but to portray the Enlightenment and rise of science as a compressed cataclysmic event somewhat like a scaled down Cretaceous-Paleogene, which wiped out so many prehistoric agents 66 million years ago. The beginning of this event can be marked by the founding of the Royal Society of London and Hooke's (1663/1944) insistence that modern science demands "a rationally account of the causes of things," "not meddling with Divinity, Metaphysics, Moralls, Politicks, Grammar, Rhetoric or Logick" (p. 41).

Nietzsche (1874/1997) puts it this way: "life itself caves in and grows weak and fearful when the *concept-quake* caused by science" robs humans of their "belief in the enduring and eternal" (s. 125, pp. 120-121). Nietzsche (1882/2001) later problematizes the peak of the event through an infamous fable: On a bright morning, a "madman," likely a scientist, "lit a lantern and ran around the marketplace crying incessantly, 'I'm looking for God! I'm looking for God!'" A small crowd of non-believers gathered nervously and shouted back, "is he hiding?" The madman/scientist snapped, "'where is God? I'll tell you! *We have killed him*— you and I! We are all his murderers.... God is dead!" Sensing confusion in the crowd, the madman/scientist-become-messenger threw the lantern on the ground and exclaimed, "'I come too early... my time is not yet. This tremendous event is still on its way'" (pp. 119-120). Basically, the event is nihilism— a rapid slide from "God is truth" to "All is false"— as Nietzsche (1888/1968, p. 7) worried.

The Enlightenment/s had mixed effects. Instead of death, religion and spirituality got life and grew in popularity through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Sheehan, 2003). Indigenous cosmology, magical or mythical realism, metaphysics, and religion continue to dignify the existence of spiritual agents. Gordon (2012) sums up the challenge of spiritual analysis:

A post-Enlightenment discourse that treats spirits as distant, prayer as an ineffective intervention, and miracles and curses as false makes it difficult to understand a world in which people believe that spirits wield influence. The secular mind struggles to appreciate invisible worlds where spirits mobilize bodies to action in a fashion comparable to the invisible forces of their society, such as the state and its laws. Unfortunately, since the burden of the truth about the past weighs heavily on historians, they have had an especially difficult time dealing with worlds invisible and implausible to them. (p. 8)

Here, we might also question the hypocrisy of excluding spiritual agents from historical or scientific accounts while naïvely including ephemera and fictions of economics and finance (Just, 2019). The enforcement of scientific authority with a vengeance throughout the Covid crisis in nearly all matters of health and nature makes spiritual analysis all the more timely.

1. What is Analysis?

- a. Pepper (1942, p. 249): Water, it is assumed, can be completely analyzed into atoms; or, if not into atoms, into electrical elements; or, if not into these, then into other elements. But that there is an ultimate and final and complete analytical constitution of water is assumed. This assumption is categorically denied by contextualism... there is no final or complete analysis of anything. The reason for this is that what is analyzed is categorically an event, and the analysis of an event consists in the exhibition of its texture, and the exhibition of its texture is the discrimination of its strands, and the full discrimination of its strands is the exhibition of other textures in the context of the one being analyzed— textures from which the strands of the textures being analyzed gain part of their quality. In the extended analysis of any event we presently find ourselves in the context of another event, and so on from event to event as long as we wish to go, which would be forever or until we got tired.
- b. Geertz (1973, p. 9): analysis, then, is sorting out the structures of signification... and determining their social ground and import.
- c. Guentchev (2018, p. 113): I use the term “analysis” broadly here, just as Langer uses the term “logic” broadly, to apply to any discernible pattern. She writes that works of art are the result of artistic analysis of feeling, presenting the logic or pattern of feeling to an audience through a sensuous medium. Just as the term “logic” is not restricted to the study of language, so I use the term “analysis” to apply to the perception of articulated patterns. When I say that the audience analyzes the pattern of a work, I mean that it becomes more sensitive to its structure. This analysis need not be a cognitive exercise of the order of art criticism.

2. What is Spiritual?

- a. Chenery (1984, p. 23): By spiritual I mean relating to spirit or soul, to the ground of being, whatever we may conceive it to be.... "Spiritual" suggests contemplation of the intangible, whether it is a spirit within oneself or a spirit in nature. "Spiritual" suggests that there are higher levels of being and higher levels of human capability.... Spiritual development refers to the cultivation of the higher levels of human capability and the contemplation of higher levels of being.
- b. Besant (1991, pp. 74-75): The word "spirit" is restricted to that divinity in us that manifests on the highest planes of the universe and is distinguished by its consciousness of unity. Unity is the keynote of spirit, for below the spiritual realm all is division.... The spirit is that part of human nature in which the sense of unity resides, the part in which primarily we are one with God [the sacred, spirit], and secondarily one with all that lives throughout the universe.
- c. Stockton (1992, p. 118): Spiritual discourse, as I will define it, is not merely language-use bound to religious institutions or to the representations of traditionally religious behaviors. Spiritual discourse, defined more broadly, is discourse on what exceeds human sign systems; discourse on where human meanings fail; discourse on escapes from discourse; and, most importantly, culturally constructed discourse on escapes from culture, though from the present standpoint these escapes are always incomplete and deferred.
- d. Sheldrake (1995, pp. 40, 41): Spirituality, as an area of study, must be capable of definition. If it has no conceptual limits, effectively it means nothing.... In short, part of the contemporary problem with defining ‘spirituality’ is associated with the fact that it is not a single, transcultural, phenomenon but is rooted within the lived experience of God’s presence in history— and a history which is always specific.
- e. Cole (1999, p. 22): Spirituality really means inner beauty revealed in a "visible" expression of virtues. If you relate constantly with peace, understanding, wisdom and mercy, then you will be influential on the basis of spirituality. Others will trust in your love and acceptance of them. It is such a personality that the effort of appreciation leads to.

- f. Queensland School Curriculum Council (1999, p. 26): a sense of connection to phenomena and unusual events beyond self and usual sensory and rational existence; a sense of place within the universe.
 - g. Hill (2000, pp. 56, 57): The word “religion” comes from the Latin root *religio* which signifies a bond between humanity and some greater-than-human power. Scholars identify at least three historical designations of the term: 1) a supernatural power to which individuals are motivated or committed; 2) a feeling present in the individual who conceives such a power; and 3) the ritual acts carried out in respect of that power.... The word “spirituality” is taken from the Latin root *spiritus* meaning breath or life, with the Latin *spiritulis* designating simply a person “of the spirit.” The term, frequently mentioned in the Hebraic Old Testament (*ruach*) and the Greek New Testament (*pneuma*), has historically been referenced in the context of religion and is still both experienced and expressed by many through conventional religious understanding. Not all current conceptions of spirituality are linked to religion, though the use of the term apart from religion has a surprisingly short history.
 - h. National Church Life Survey (NCLS) (2001): any aspect of humanity's connection to something other than itself. This includes deism (natural revelation), and theism (revealed revelation), yet also expands to include even other human relationships. Spirituality in its broadest sense is the evidence of, or attempt to explain, human transcendence.
 - i. Ghaderi (2018, p. 2): The word “spirit” is derived from the Latin words “*spiritus*” (meaning breath, courage, vigor, or soul) and the word “*spirare*” (meaning to breathe) (1). Five characteristics of spirituality include: meaning, value, transcendence, connecting (with oneself, others, God/supreme power and the environment), and becoming (the growth and progress in life).
 - j. Some have sought to argue that religion refers to an institutional dimension whereas spirituality is to do with more subjective personal perspectives (Hill & Pargament 2003, p. 64). Such distinctions are often used to paint religion in a negative light in contrast with more 'enlightened' contemporary spirituality. Of course, there can be both helpful and unhelpful religions and spiritualities. Religion can also be intensely personal (e.g., Wuthnow 1998) just as some contemporary spiritualities can form part of large international business complexes. Further, in practice, many experience spirituality in a religious context and do not draw such distinctions (Marler & Hadaway, 2002) (Defining spirituality <http://www.ncls.org.au/default.aspx?sitemapid=5075>)
3. What is Religious?
- a. James (1902/2002, pp. 29-30): Religion, therefore, as I now ask you arbitrarily to take it, shall mean for us *the feelings, acts, and experiences of individual men in their solitude, so far as they apprehend themselves to stand in relation to whatever they may consider the divine*. Since the relation may be either moral, physical, or ritual, it is evident that out of religion in the sense in which we take it, theologies, philosophies, and ecclesiastical organizations may secondarily grow. In these lectures, however, as I have already said, the immediate personal experiences will amply fill our time, and we shall hardly consider theology or ecclesiasticism at all.
 - b. Carus (1904, p. 767): union with, or relation to God... or to gods [or a supernatural world order], that is to say, in general to supernatural beings who answer prayers and exercise an influence upon the world.
 - i. (p. 770): In brief, religion covers [hu]man's relation to the entirety of existence. The characteristic feature of religion is conviction, and its contents world conception which serves for the regulation of conduct.
 - c. Griffith and Griffith (2002, p. 17): Religion represents a cultural codification of important spiritual metaphors, narratives, beliefs, rituals, social practices, and forms of community among a particular people that provides methods for attaining spirituality, most often expressed in terms of a relationship with the God of that religion. In this sense, God

- personifies and objectifies the relatedness of spirituality. By working out a relationship with his or her God, a religious person can bring into proper focus other relationships.
- d. Taylor (2007, p. 12): Religion is an emergent, complex, adaptive network of symbols, myths, and rituals that, on the one hand, figure schemata of feeling, thinking, and acting in ways that lend life meaning and purpose and, on the other, disrupt, dislocate, and disfigure every stabilizing structure.
4. What is Spiritual Analysis?
 - a. In simplest terms, spiritual analysis is the illumination of data with an intention to inspire as well as inspire and elucidate.
 - b. Beringer (2011, p. 151): The cosmological-spiritual root causes of (Western, modern) unsustainability are revealed in changes to and in the ecosphere, and the spiritual handshake analysis tool proposed here seeks to highlight and illustrate these as yet largely invisible dimensions to bring them into full awareness, to be transformed and healed in human collective consciousness.... In sum, then, the spiritual handshake is an assessment tool that seeks to capture the metaphysical, non-material, non-biophysical dimensions of (human) life on Earth. It measures a candidate's (individual, group, organization, nation, etc.) spiritual input and output—the give-and-take of non-material, spiritual resources, and assets. Against an as yet unquantified, qualitative score of selfishness/greed vs. goodwill/service, the spiritual handshake strives to determine what a candidate extracts from life and what she/he/it/they contribute/s back to the common good and to the planet.
 - c. Gordon (2012, p. 5): One way to relate spirits to the nonlinguistic world is to view them as symbols for the sensory, visible world. Indeed, the symbolic form of analysis is a conventional way of reflecting on *religious* discourses. On the other hand, *political* discourses are not usually viewed in this symbolic fashion. But, as pointed out, there is no intrinsic reason for treating discourses that we term religious and political differently. Religious ideas, especially when they refer to this-worldly spirits, are also conscious statements on and about power, rather than subconscious or metaphoric reflections.
 5. Spiritual Agency and Agents
 - a. Janet (1924, p. 29): The characteristics of gods, or "spirits", may be summed up as follows.
 - i. A spirit is a *[hu]man*. To [hu]man[s] of this period, the gods are thoroughly anthropomorphic and concrete.
 - ii. A spirit is powerful. This does not imply infinite power, or any other kind of infinitude. In actual practice, the gods are always finite; each [hu]man has "*un petit dieu à son usage*."
 - iii. A spirit has a special *function*, incapable of performance by an ordinary human being.
 - iv. A spirit is *invisible*. Not that one would wish to have it so; but since the gods do not exist, it is obvious that one can go on believing in them only on this hypothesis.
 - b. Alston (1999, p. 185): First, I am taking seriously and realistically the idea of God as a personal agent, an agent Who performs actions in the light of knowledge and in order to realize divine purposes. I am taking seriously in that I do not construe talk of God's doing this or that as 'symbolic,' 'pictorial,' or 'poetic' ways of making points about human life or the natural world or history, or about anything else that leaves God and God's activity out of account. To put it crudely, if what we say about divine action is true, then God really does what we are saying God does!
 - c. Gordon (2012, pp. 201-202): Historians have imposed their own civilizing mission on the spirits that refuse to abide by the constraints of a post-Enlightenment historical imagination. They have separated out the spiritual from the secular, recasting spiritual beliefs as symbolic systems, statements about something else, metaphors for economic struggles, indigenized manifestations of class consciousness, or viewed only their limited functions (such as "healing"). Some political historians have not even bothered with the spirits, considering them to be legitimizing devices (ignoring why they provide legitimacy), beliefs that can be

explained away by focusing on the secular, on supposed material interests, on forms of power and patronage politics familiar to them. In their attempts to record a history of a sphere of politics distinct from spirits, the civilizing mission of such historians shares a genealogy with the missionary and the postcolonial nationalist. The premise of this book is that for many central Africans, spirits have power, and thus accounts of human agency must involve spirits. This premise becomes even more interesting when the nature of the agency that spirits have facilitated and encouraged is examined.

- d. Igboin (2014, pp. 237-238): Attempting to account for the experience of spiritual agency has been a significant challenge within the professional study of religion. And it should come as no surprise that scholars have examined the subject of spirits and spiritual agency through a variety of approaches. Some have focused on the manifestation of spiritual agency through body chemistry, proposing that the cultural discourse about spirits has aimed to explain the effect of physiological substances, fluids, or body chemistry. In this sense, a spirit is an element of humanity that might drive people to act in certain unexpected ways or to adopt a certain intellectual or moral attitude that can be exercised in taking decisions. In a related fashion, Geoffrey Parrinder argues that “spirits must exist because Nature is composite and exists for use,” while for Aylward Shorter, “the rural dweller is open to the spiritual dimension of life because he is less attached to, and less dependent on material things.” On this account, the composite nature of the worldview common to African spirituality makes it perfectly comprehensible that spirit beings might interact freely with the living community of people. A spiritual entity is believed to exercise an “important influence on religions and philosophies”; it affects human conduct and galvanizes actions.
 - e. Taylor (2015, p. 47): Finally, from an anthropological perspective, I have demonstrated that taking spiritual belief seriously means recognising the extent to which agency is ontologically embedded and shaped, and that human agency is articulated and mediated within worlds in which sacred powers and spiritual beings are themselves both sources and bearers of agency.
 - f. Galen (2017, p. 222): Other instances interpreted as evidential of external agency include paranormal (e.g., out of body) experiences, numinous states (awareness of God's presence), conversions, and behavioral manifestations such as glossolalia or possession/trance. Less tangible examples include intuitions of a relationship with God, or unpredictable revelations or ruptures in worldviews.
 - g. Purzycki (2017, p. 415): claims of the existence of spiritual agents are a human universal and we are remarkably promiscuous in our attribution of mental states to non-agentic entities (Guthrie 1995). The targets of our religious devotions are quite readily conveyed with appeals to mental states even though they are explicitly or theologically considered more complex and/or non-agentic. We do this all the time (e.g., “my car hates me”). Mentalizing anchors and delimits the range of their expression; no one prays to feathers or Feynman diagrams. People all around the world do, however, claim to ritualistically communicate with all sorts of spiritual agents and forces that undoubtedly have culturally unique information, elaborate myths, embodied symbolic representations, and strange details attached to them. We make inferences and reason about such entities’ minds using resources that are not exclusively “cultural.” If those resources partly explain religion, then some theory or theory-ish body of knowledge beyond “culture” is required. Enter the cognitive science of religion.
6. Spiritual Signs and Signification
- a. Gandhi (1933/1987, p. 215): The first question that has puzzled many is about the Voice of God. What was it? What did I hear? Was there any person I saw? If not, how was the Voice conveyed to me? These are pertinent questions. For me the voice of God, of Conscience, of Truth or the Inner Voice or 'the still small Voice' mean one and the same thing. I saw no form. I have never tried, for I have always believed God to be without form.... The inspiration I got was this: The night I got the inspiration, I had a terrible inner struggle. My mind was restless. I could see no way. The burden of my responsibility was crushing me. But what I did

- hear was like a Voice from afar and yet quite near. It was as unmistakable as some human voice definitely speaking to me, and irresistible. I was not dreaming at the time I heard the Voice. The hearing of the Voice was preceded by a terrific inner struggle within me. Suddenly the Voice came upon me. I listened, made certain that it was the Voice, and the struggle ceased. I was calm. The determination was made accordingly, the date and the hour of the fast were fixed. Joy came over me. Could I give any further evidence that it was truly the Voice that I heard and that it was not an echo of my own heated imagination? I have no further evidence to convince the sceptic. He is free to say that it was all self-delusion or hallucination. It may well have been so. I can offer no proof to the contrary. But I can say this—that not the unanimous verdict of the whole world against me could shake me from the belief that what I heard was the true voice of God.
- b. M.L. King (1963/1981, pp. 159-160): More than ever before I am convinced of the reality of a personal God. True, I have always believed in the personality of God. But in the past the idea of a personal God was little more than a metaphysical category that I found theologically and philosophically satisfying. Now it is a living reality that has been validated in the experiences of everyday life. God has been profoundly real to me in recent years. In the midst of outer dangers I have felt an inner calm. In the midst of lonely days and dreary nights I have heard an inner voice saying, "Lo, I will be with you." When the chains of fear and the manacles of frustration have all but stymied my efforts, I have felt the power of God transforming the fatigue of despair into the buoyancy of hope. I am convinced that the universe is under the control of a loving purpose, and that in the struggle for righteousness man has cosmic companionship. Behind the harsh appearances of the world there is a benign power.
- c. Muller (1985, pp. 72-73): Today, after many years of observation, I do't believe that it is a capacity inherent in certain persons. I am rather inclined to believe that there are spirits "alive" around us, good spirits and evil ones. The good ones try to give us signals in their own way, but usually we do not look out for them. In certain cases of extreme danger they almost succeed in becoming physical or exercising physical effects: they shake us, they make us see, hear or feel something; they accelerate our heartbeat, they try to make us run away from an impending danger. Extrasensory perceptions may therefore be a misnomer dating from the scientific rational age. Instead of being a "capacity," they may be spiritual warnings by the still "living" souls of persons who love us, who follow us, who see what will happen to us, of a dead father or mother, a grandfather or grandmother, a peacemaker, a saint or an artist who want us to live and to continue their work. My life is filled with such spiritual signs. I am alert to them and I record them carefully. I am deeply intrigued by a phenomenon which is increasing in intensity all over the globe and which may be part of the spiritual transcendence and increased sensitivity of the human species to a world yet unknown to us.
7. Age of Enlightenment and Age of Modern Science
- a. Lee (1936, pp. 78-79): The eighteenth century is called the Age of Enlightenment. People of the time prided themselves on having thrown off superstition and ignorance, and exposed all beliefs to the searching light of reason. But this did not mean that what could not be demonstrated by reason was not to be believed. On the contrary, humanity, natural law, the visibly harmonious nature of the cosmos, the God of deism— all were objects of implicit belief. Reason itself was "the natural light." Kant could write toward the close of the century that the stars above and the moral law within fill man with awe; and properly so, for they exemplify the wonderful and universal lawfulness of nature, both visible and spiritual. The nineteenth century was a second Enlightenment, but far more deadly than the first, for it destroyed completely the belief in nature, a natural order, and man's place in that order. For the man of the nineteenth century, humanity as a significant object of faith had been destroyed by evolution, and the natural light of reason had become an imperfect tool in the struggle for survival. Natural law had become merely the shorthand account of a few

observed events that happened, by a strange coincidence, to be similar in some respects. Since the power of man over nature was increasing fast and without apparent limit, the notion that man has a settled place in nature had gone out of date. The currents of the century combined gradually to spread the belief that values are arbitrary, established either by a class or by individuals in their own interests, and enforced entirely by power.

- b. Lodge (1933, pp. 44, 45, 46): The religious man cultivates his feelings of faith and awestruck wonder by acts of contemplation and worship. He traces the Finger of God in action everywhere.... There is another equally extreme set among the devotees of science, who, by close application to the detailed phenomena which appeal to the senses, are so satisfied with what they have learned about the complexity of the working and the completeness of the explanation, that they are ready to exclude every other mode of expression, and consider all attempts in that other direction the outcome of baseless superstition.... Between these extreme groups there is an intermediate set of people, who have in some respects a more difficult, and in others an easier and more peaceful, task. They recognize a truth on both sides.... When in a scientific mood, they are as loth as the others are to appeal to the Finger of God or to any spiritual agency as part of the mechanism to be appealed to in order to get an understanding of the process. They know that such appeal is illegitimate in science, and is equivalent to admitting defeat; and yet they do not deny that such operations are continually occurring, and they believe that for a comprehensive understanding of everything, including Design and Purpose, such appeal must be made. Their doctrine is that in the last resort, for an ultimate explanation even of the simplest thing, the Divine Will must be evoked. Consequently they can reconcile the two modes of thought.
 - c. Latour (1991/1993, pp. 35, 36): The Laws of Nature allowed the first Enlightenment thinkers to demolish the ill-founded pretensions of human prejudice. Applying this new critical tool, they no longer saw anything in the hybrids of old but illegitimate mixtures that they had to purify by separating natural mechanisms from human passions, interests or ignorance. All the ideas of yesteryear, one after the other, became inept or approximate.... But the modern critique did not simply turn to Nature in order to destroy human prejudices. It soon began to move in the other direction, turning to the newly founded social sciences in order to destroy the excesses of naturalization. This was the second Enlightenment, that of the nineteenth century. This time, precise knowledge of society and its laws made it possible to criticize not only the biases of ordinary obscurantism but also the new biases created by the natural sciences. With solid support from the social sciences, it became possible to distinguish the truly scientific component of the other sciences from the component attributable to ideology.
8. Interpreting the "Death of God"
- a. Dawson (1883, p. 201): science is light, and light is good; but it must be carried high, else it will fail to enlighten the world. Let us' strive to raise it high enough to shine over every obstruction which casts any shadow on the true interests of humanity. Above all, let us hold up the light, and not stand in it ourselves.
 - b. Davis (1928, p. 371): The modern Diogenes is a scientist. In place of the old Greek philosopher's lantern, with which he peered into doorways seeking to reveal a truly upright Greek, the modern scientist depends on carefully prepared tests of character.
 - c. Weart (1989, pp. 28, 29): The mad scientist stereotype— so ominously significant for the public image of science and the recruitment of future scientists— can be understood best through history. This figure stems from an ancient heritage, which was reshaped in surprising ways during the first half of the 20th century.... Through the 19th century both Faustian tales and Mesmeric cults grew in popularity. A stereotype was being refashioned. Popular authors from hack newspaper writers to Nathaniel Hawthorne modified the old tales of witch and sorcerer to create a new fictional figure, the Mesmeric "scientist" who endangered himself and those around him with a mixture of demonic and scientific powers. The stereotype was widely seen.

- i. *Wilson Quarterly* (1988, p. 32): The "mad scientist," a sinister figure who lives to manipulate, create, or destroy life, is a surprisingly persistent archetype still appearing in everything from children's TV cartoon programs to debates over genetic engineering. But where did this archetype originate?
- d. Picht (1980, p. 66): Anyone with ears for this text at all grasps immediately what can otherwise hardly be made conceivable— that the event which Nietzsche expresses with the proposition "God is dead" is not just some dreamed-up fable, but an actual event in our actual history. This is possible only if the anterior condition, the condition in which God was living, was equally actual, that is to say, if this God, as long as he was living, was likewise an actual power in our actual history. It makes no difference whether Nietzsche is speaking of the God of the theologians or the God of the philosophers, for in either case he is speaking of the actuality [*Wirklichkeit*] and truth of the world and of the actuality of history. But is this statement still true today? Is it tenable in our phase of history, the phase to which Nietzsche looked ahead. For the representative directions of thought today, philosophy and theology have become historical sciences; the actuality of God is regarded as only a fairytale that one reads about in ancient books. At the same time, however, no one wants to admit this condition for himself. Religion is still needed as an alibi. That is the attitude of the masses in the marketplace who first break into laughter over the raving man but then look at him with dismay. As Nietzsche expressly says, they do not believe in God, and yet the tidings of God's death have not yet penetrated their ears. They know neither of the reality [*Wirklichkeit*] of the living God nor of the new reality that has already emerged with the colossal event of God's death. They can take seriously neither the one nor the other. Neither the one nor the other possesses enough obligation for them to shape their lives in one way or another. By that very fact they attest the truth of the event of which Nietzsche reports.