

Foreword

This special issue of *The Conrad Grebel Review* comprises the proceedings from the first two sessions of the Anabaptists & Philosophy Roundtable, an occasional webinar series established in 2022 featuring scholars discussing Anabaptist life and thought in relation to philosophical themes, topics, and methods. The roundtable is sponsored by Doopsgezind Seminarium in Amsterdam, the Biblical and Religious Studies Division of Fresno Pacific University, the Institute of Mennonite Studies at Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary, and Pandora Press. I am grateful to Laura Schmidt Roberts, Professor of Biblical and Theological Studies at Fresno Pacific University and member of the organizing committee for acting as guest editor of this issue.

The essay by Diane Enns reflects on the ambiguous and inescapable nature of human inheritance and explores the legacy of her Mennonite past and the broader implications of inheriting traditions. Tensions between an inner life and community life, between a restless, questioning and a solidified certainty, between freedom and security, challenge readers to consider their own inheritance and agency. The nature and basis of belonging and alienation and the right to a tradition's inheritance predominate consideration of the preservation and alteration of philosophy and religion as traditions. Enns's skepticism regarding the capacity of a tradition's internal resources for facilitating its transformation raises important questions about boundaries, authority, and choice of interlocutors. John Caruana's response explores the ambiguous and inescapable nature of religious language and meanings in shaping modern Western philosophical, political, and ethical discourse and calls for engaged, critical awareness of this fact.

Maxwell Kennel's essay challenges the narrow field of interlocutors Anabaptism engages, pressing for intentional engagement with secular and philosophical voices from within and outside of the tradition. Methodologically, Kennel finds the tradition itself provides resources for such a broadened, risky engagement in its both/and, neither/nor "third way" identity and practices, even as many within the theological stream fear loss or amendment of long-held convictions and practices may result. Readers encounter poignant questions that probe apparent fears of difference. Christian Early's response affirms Kennel's interest in "risky engagement"

with voices external to Anabaptism for the way these might clarify and enrich convictions, observing the risk entails more honest dialogue born of self-awareness and openness to not knowing how the conversation will end, including the possible amendment or overturning of convictions. In the case of philosophy, Anabaptism's scant engagement provides substantial opportunity, the pluriform and undetermined nature of which should be preserved as a space for ongoing exploration and testing. In particular, Early applauds Kennel's concern for "the inner world" of the affective and psychological, challenging readers to consider how fear, anxiety, or resentment of the other can shape responses to difference that retreat to the safety of tradition instead of risking open, underdetermined engagement.

Across the provocative work in this special issue, several themes emerge: the importance of risking engagement from outside of tradition in service of its transformation and vibrancy, the need for self-reflective examination of what inhibits us from doing so (e.g., fear, anxiety, desire for certitude), and the reality of nontheological grounding for Anabaptist and Mennonite convictions and lifeways—a reality which calls for more thoughtful and respectful engagement among the tradition's perceived insiders and outsiders.

As always, *The Conrad Grebel Review* invites submissions of articles or reflections on a wide range of topics in keeping with our mandate to advance thoughtful discussion of theology, ethics, peace, society, history, and culture from broadly-based Anabaptist/Mennonite perspectives.

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