The Philosophy of Ralph Waldo Emerson

This study offers the first comprehensive account of Emerson's philosophy since his philosophical rehabilitation began in the late 1970s. It builds on the historical reconstruction proposed in the author's previous book, *Emerson's Metaphysics*, and like that study draws on the entire Emerson corpus—the poetry and sermons included. The aim here is expository. The overall though not exclusive emphasis is on *identity*, as the first term of Emerson's metaphysics of *identity* and *flowing* or *metamorphosis*. This metaphysics, or general conception of the nature of reality, is what grounds his epistemology and ethics, as well as his esthetic, religious, and political thought. Acknowledging its primacy enables a general account like this to avoid the anti-realist overemphasis on epistemology and language that has often characterized rehabilitation readings of his philosophy.

After an initial chapter on Emerson's metaphysics, the subsequent chapters devoted to the other branches of his thought also begin with their “necessary foundation” in identity, which is the law of things and the law of mind alike. Perception of identity in metamorphosis is what characterizes the philosopher, the poet, the scientist, the reformer, and the man of faith and virtue. Identity of mind and world is felt in what Emerson calls *the moral sentiment*. Identity is Emerson's answer to the Sphinx riddle of life experienced as a puzzling succession of facts and events.

Joseph Urbas teaches American literature and philosophy at the Université Bordeaux Montaigne. He is author of *Emerson's Metaphysics: A Song of Laws and Causes* (2016) and of a number of articles on American Transcendentalism and philosophy. He is also co-editor of the French edition of Herman Melville in the *Bibliothèque de la Pléiade*.

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The Philosophy of Ralph Waldo Emerson

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The Philosophy of Ralph Waldo Emerson

Joseph Urbas

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To Michèle and Maud, and to my mother, father, brother,
and sisters—without whom not

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Abbreviations

Emerson's Writings

- CS: *The Complete Sermons of Ralph Waldo Emerson*. Ed. Albert J. von Frank, et al. 4 vols. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1989–1992.
- CPT: *Ralph Waldo Emerson: Collected Poems and Translations*. Ed. Harold Bloom and Paul Kane. New York: Library of America, 1994.
- CW: *The Collected Works of Ralph Waldo Emerson*. Ed. Joseph Slater, et al. 10 vols. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971–2013.
- EAW: *Emerson's Antislavery Writings*. Ed. Len Gougeon and Joel Myerson. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1995.
- EB-L: *The Emerson Brothers: A Fraternal Biography in Letters*. Ed. Ronald A. Bosco and Joel Myerson. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006.
- EL: *The Early Lectures of Ralph Waldo Emerson*. Ed. Stephen E. Whicher, Robert E. Spiller, and Wallace E. Williams. 3 vols. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1959–1972.
- JMN: *The Journals and Miscellaneous Notebooks of Ralph Waldo Emerson*. Ed. William H. Gilman, et al. 16 vols. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1960–1982.
- L: *The Letters of Ralph Waldo Emerson*. Ed. Ralph Rusk and Eleanor M. Tilton. 10 Vols. New York: Columbia University Press, 1939, 1995.
- LL: *The Later Lectures of Ralph Waldo Emerson, 1843–1871*. Ed. Ronald A. Bosco and Joel Myerson. 2 vols. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2001.
- PN: *The Poetry Notebooks of Ralph Waldo Emerson*. Ed. Ralph H. Orth, et al. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1986.
- TN: *The Topical Notebooks of Ralph Waldo Emerson*. Ed. Ralph Orth, et al. 3 vols. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1990–1994.
- UE: *Two Unpublished Essays*. Ed. Edward Everett Hale. Boston: Lamson-Wolffe, 1896.
- W: *The Complete Works of Ralph Waldo Emerson*. Ed. Edward Waldo Emerson. 12 vols. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1903–1904.

NB: For the multivolume works, the first number refers to the volume, the second to the page. For convenience, references to *CPT* are given after references to the poems cited in manuscript.

Other Writings

“Cabot”: Cabot, James Elliot, trans. “Philosophical Inquiries into the Nature of Human Freedom and Matters Connected Therewith,” by F.W.J. Schelling. “The Cabot Family Papers” (A-99, Box 4, Folder 62), Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University. [1844, unpublished.]

CC-RWE: *Critical Companion to Ralph Waldo Emerson: A Literary Reference to His Life and Work*. Ed. Tiffany K. Wayne. New York: Facts on File, 2010.

EM: *Emerson’s Metaphysics: A Song of Laws and Causes*. By Joseph Urbas. Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2016.

MME-L: *The Selected Letters of Mary Moody Emerson*. Ed. Nancy Craig Simmons. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1993.

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Figures

- 1.1 Emerson's Fair-Copy "Index Major" Entry for "Identity,"
Houghton Library, Harvard University, MS Am 1280H
106, p. 161.

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Introduction

Listening to the “Undersong”

Identity & Centrality, the one law for atom & sphere, for atom & universe, is indignantly denied by children, whether two years old or a hundred, & is affirmed by those whose eyes are opened. Every breath of air is the carrier of the Universal mind. The child sees the single fact; the philosopher sees in it only the eternal identity.

—Emerson in his journal (1867, *JMN* 16:65)

This study proposes a comprehensive account of Emerson’s philosophy focusing on the principle of *identity*. It builds on the historical reconstruction of his causationist metaphysical doctrine I proposed in *Emerson’s Metaphysics*. The aim here is to present Emerson’s philosophy as a whole, starting from the thesis I developed there, that metaphysics (or his general account of the nature of reality)—and not epistemology or ethics—is Emerson’s first philosophy and that a full account of his *prima philosophia* is a necessary first step for any comprehensive view of his thought. Emerson is a strong metaphysician, if not always obviously or explicitly so. He does not spend most of his time writing about metaphysics, nor does he hesitate to criticize its dangers as a “single pursuit”¹ untethered from everyday life. He does however have a general theory of the world’s nature that grounds his epistemology and ethics, as well as his esthetic, religious, and political thought. The chapters devoted to these other branches of his philosophy begin, accordingly, with their foundation in his metaphysics. Working thus from the ground up is, I submit, the best way to get a vision of his thought as a whole.

Acknowledging the primacy of metaphysics also enables us to give Emerson’s *poetry* its proper place in his philosophy, for Emerson styled himself a poet-metaphysician who sings “a song of laws and causes.”² It is hardly accidental that in the poem “Woodnotes II,” for example, Emerson’s philosopher-figure is urged by nature herself—a pine tree whispering to him—to “listen to the undersong,” a lyrical cosmogony that sings “the genesis of things” and “the chorus of the ancient Causes.” The tree invites the philosopher to come and learn this “fatal song / Which knits

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the world in music strong.”³ In Emerson’s poem “May-Day,” similarly, a man-made version of the whispering pine, an eolian harp, “speaks not of self”—as we might imagine it would do in the “age of the first person singular”—but of something prior to self in the order of being.⁴ The wind harp “trembles to the cosmic breath” and in so doing meekly obeys “the primal Cause.”⁵ In listening *first* to the metaphysical “undersong,” then, I also take my cue from Emerson *the poet*.

Why *identity*? Because identity is, on Emerson’s own account, the first fundamental law of his philosophy. Identity—that is to say, “causal identity”⁶—is for him the primary principle of world and mind alike. Emerson believed in “the Identity of the Intellect with Nature,” in the “identity of man’s mind with nature’s, for he is a part of nature.”⁷ A “like cause” makes them one and makes us, as a result, fundamentally at home in the universe, producing in us a feeling of intimacy in the experience of shared being or “life.” We are one with the world because we “share the life by which things exist.”⁸

Identity is the law *of things*. “I see the same fact everywhere,” Emerson says, for identity lies “at the base of things.” All things have “an identity in their frame.” A “guiding identity runs through all the surprises and contrasts of the piece, and characterizes every law.” Identity is for Emerson the first of “two cardinal facts” lying “forever at the base” of reality. The second is *variety*. Together they form his dynamic vision of reality as bipolar, with “the endless passing of *one* element into new forms.”⁹ This is what David Dilworth has aptly termed Emerson’s “overarching metaphysics of identity and metamorphosis.”¹⁰

Identity is also a law *of mind*, since “he who enunciates a law of nature, enunciates a law of the mind.” That is to say, “identity of law, perfect order in physics, perfect parallelism between the laws of Nature and the laws of thought exist.” Identity “at the base of things”—a reflection of the One Mind—explains the emergence of individual mind. “So only,” says Emerson, is “intellection” even “possible.” In the perception of identity, which characterizes “every mental act,” “we unite all things by perceiving the law which pervades them.” At the same time, this act reveals the fundamental bipolarity of the world: “this very perception of identity or oneness, recognizes the difference of things.”¹¹

Perception of identity is, furthermore, an “index or mercury of intellectual proficiency.” It is what characterizes philosophy, poetry, and science. For Emerson, “perception of identity through endless mutations of form” is properly “philosophical.” It characterizes “men of faith and philosophy.” Thoreau, for example, had “the philosopher’s perception of identity.” The poet, too, “contemplates the central identity.” He sees “that the object is always flowing away, whilst the spirit which causes it subsists.” The poet can read the flowing forms, see identity in metamorphosis, and “detect essential resemblances in natures never before

compared.” As master of tropes, he knows that “all thinking is analogizing,” that analogy, metaphor, and metonymy appeal to identity. Analogy and figural language are thus applications of the identity principle, instances of the poetic imagination perceiving “the endless passing of one element into new forms.” Science is, likewise, “a search after identity.” It obeys “the impulse to search resemblance, affinity, identity, in all its objects.”¹²

The perception of identity thus characterizes the philosopher, the poet, and the scientist alike. The *gaie science* that unites all three callings is for Emerson another name for identity philosophy. “Men of faith” must of course also be included, as we have just seen, among the perceivers of identity. And as we shall see in Chapter 6, the historian and political analyst participate in the general philosophical effort to “extricate . . . the Identical Nature from its manifold forms.” As Emerson put it in the essay “History,” “the identity of history is equally intrinsic, the diversity equally obvious. There is at the surface infinite variety of things; at the centre there is simplicity of cause.”¹³

But of course the best minds perceive the omnipresence of both identity and difference: “The eyes of Plato, Shakespeare, Swedenborg, Goethe, never shut on either of these laws.” We may add Emerson himself to the list, as a joyful reincarnation of the pre-Socratic identity philosopher Xenophanes, who grew “weary of seeing the same entity in the tedious variety of forms.” Emerson, by contrast, always delighted in the spectacle of metamorphosis. Recognition of the same in the different typically produced in him a “shudder of joy.”¹⁴

Emerson counted himself among the “Professors of the Joyous Science,” who are “affirmers of the One Law.”¹⁵ In an 1845 lecture, he elevated his own class of identity philosophers to the status of darlings of Creation, thinkers specially, lovingly formed as interpreters of its law:

I find a provision in the constitution of the world for the class of scholars, for the theorist, the *uniter*, for him who is to show *identity and connexion* where men see nothing but fragments, and to supply the axis on which the frame of things turns. In all the tastes and endeavors of men in reference to *all that is permanent and causal*, we are made to feel that nature has dearly at heart the formation of the speculative man or scholar. It is an end never lost sight of, and is prepared in the original casting of things.¹⁶

If we look past the grandiosity, we can see in the terms I have italicized a number of central features of Emerson’s metaphysics: unity or identity,¹⁷ connection, permanence, and causation. Emerson’s Identity or One is causal. Emerson is a “*causationist*” or, as he wrote in his journal (coining a second neologism), a “*connexionist*.” The “eternal Cause” is “the permanent in the mutable and fleeting.” Reality is for him one great

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causal continuum, without “a weak or a cracked link in the chain that joins the first and last of things.” As a “causationist,” then, he believes in “causality, or strict connexion between every pulse-beat and the principle of being.”¹⁸ Emerson’s metaphysical commitment to *continuity* is one of the things that makes him a precursor—broadly considered—of Charles Sanders Peirce and John Dewey.¹⁹

I would insist, finally, on identity as *felt*, in what Emerson calls *the moral sentiment*, which is our intimate experience of the causal continuity of self and world. The moral sentiment is “that Thought through which we communicate with absolute nature,” and this communication is, at the primary level, through *feeling*. With the moral sentiment, the “man of thought must feel the thought that is parent of the universe.”²⁰ With the moral sentiment, a person of “any inwardness” cannot but “feel the inwardness also of the Universe.” With the moral sentiment, “it is the same fact existing as sentiment and as will in the mind, which works in nature as irresistible law, exerting influence in nations, intelligent beings, or down in the kingdoms of brute or of chemical nature.” Emerson’s most extended early treatment of the moral sentiment, the Divinity School Address, provides a striking example in its closing evocation of the “identity of the law of gravitation with purity of heart,” the oneness of the moral law “with Science, with Beauty, and with Joy.”²¹ In Emerson’s *Gefühlsphilosophie*, identity thus speaks to sentiment as well as intellect.²² It binds the two. We *feel* the oneness of the world. This is of course the mode of perception that Peirce called “firstness,” the domain of immediate, poetic experience of the world and its qualities. Small wonder, then, that Peirce should have counted Emerson among the great “Men of Feeling!”²³

Identity is Emerson’s answer to the riddle of the Sphinx. His presentation of the riddle in the 1841 poem “The Sphinx” and elsewhere takes us right to the heart of his philosophy. Simply put, the Sphinx riddle is our experience of life as an endless, puzzling series of particular facts and events. The riddle is, in a word, *succession*, which is of course one of the “lords of life” in the essay “Experience.” The answer lies, as Emerson himself says, in the identity principle, a principle we must find *in ourselves*. Which is why Emerson’s Sphinx tells the poet: “Thou art the unanswered question.”²⁴ The solution cannot be found within succession *alone*. As Emerson learned from Coleridge, “*the solution of Phaenomena can never be derived from Phaenomena*.”²⁵ An identity principle in mind answering to identity “at the base of things” is necessary to give order and meaning to the distribution or flow of perceived particulars. Otherwise, we remain their vassal rather than their “founder.”²⁶

A contemporary philosophical source for Emerson’s answer to the Sphinx riddle was Schelling, whose *Naturphilosophie* Frederic Henry Hedge had introduced to New Englanders in a landmark 1833 article that helped launch the Transcendentalist movement. In Hedge’s summary,

Schelling, the “ontologist of the Kantian school,” produced “the most satisfactory” philosophy of all of Kant’s successors because of his “endeavours to show that the outward world is of *the same essence* with the thinking mind, both being different manifestations of *the same divine principle*.”²⁷ Hedge thus insisted on identity as the core principle of the *Naturphilosophie*. Emerson’s expressed great enthusiasm for Hedge’s article, calling it a “living leaping Logos,” an enthusiasm likely owing to Hedge’s insistence on the identity principle in Schelling’s philosophy. Nearly ten years later—and after many conversations with Hedge—Emerson said of Schelling that there was “a grandeur in the attempt to unite natural & moral philosophy that makes him a sort of hero.”²⁸ Hedge’s anthology *Prose Writers of Germany* (1848) would continue to present Schelling as an *Identitätsphilosoph* whose “Philosophy of Nature” is “also called the ‘Philosophy of Identity,’ because he holds that matter and spirit, the ideal and the real, subject and object, are identical.”²⁹ This is the image of Schelling that both Hedge and Emerson retained and that Emerson would fill in with James Elliot Cabot’s 1844 translation of Schelling’s philosophy of human freedom.³⁰

It was Schelling’s metaphysical “reconciliation”—to borrow a key term from J.B. Stallo’s *General Principles of the Philosophy of Nature* (1848)³¹—that particularly appealed to Emerson. Crucially confirming Emerson’s notion of the *gaie science*, Stallo credited romantic *poetry*—and preeminently the poet he honored as “Father Goethe,” a towering figure in the *General Principles*—with being the “parent” of the *Naturphilosophie*, a claim that has found renewed favor in recent scholarship.³² For Emerson, too, Goethe was the “pivotal man,” “the surpassing intellect of modern times,” and a decisive influence on his own intellectual development from the mid-1830s onward.³³ Goethe’s introduction of the key idea of “metamorphosis” was identified in Emerson’s mind with a modern science that “teaches unity”—that is, “one thought in the variety of forms” or the forms repeating “in a new plane the same law.”³⁴ Emerson’s bipolar metaphysics of identity and metamorphosis owes much to Goethe’s reflexions on the *Urpflanze*, or primal plant, as a manifestation of the “ideal-real,” of the ideal form preserved in the endless succession of diverse specimens. As I reiterate in my conclusion, one of the all-important lessons Emerson drew from his readings in Goethe was that the two terms, *identity* and *metamorphosis*, must be treated dialectically if we would avoid “the twin dangers of speculation”—“a too rapid unification,” on the one hand, and “an excessive appliance to parts and particulars,” on the other.³⁵ Like Goethe, Emerson wanted neither the undifferentiated lump or “huddle” of the first, where “all things confound themselves in identity,” nor the radical dispersion of the second, where “all things scatter into infinity.”³⁶ Goethe was thus a decisive influence in encouraging this metaphysical balance in Emerson’s thinking.

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At the same time, I would insist on identity as the *primary* principle. True, much of the time Emerson is considering his twin principles *together*—that is, identity *in* metamorphosis—but identity is therein because it is, in his cosmogony, the original unity, the divine principle “from which all begins” and from which issues—by a “necessity” that is “not less divine”—the flowing or “distribution, into variety & particles.”³⁷ The resulting flow does not erase but *preserves* the original identity principle in ever newer forms. Without the primacy accorded to identity, furthermore, Emerson’s religious thought becomes difficult if not impossible to understand. Faith is worship of “the Blessed Unity.”³⁸

To give some sense of the spirit and method behind this account of Emerson’s philosophy.

My primary aim is *expository* and *reconstructive*. The sprawling, multigeneric nature of the Emersonian *oeuvre* makes this sort of reconstructive effort indispensable, for Emerson’s philosophy is often to be found in places where philosophers—typically concerned with the essays—tend not to look. My guiding principle here, as in *Emerson’s Metaphysics*, is the weight of textual evidence drawn from the entire Emerson corpus, including the poetry and sermons, since there is a great deal of philosophy in those writings too. New interpretations of Emerson, by which I mean those that have appeared over the last forty years, or since his philosophical rehabilitation began in the late 1970s, have tended to focus on the major essays, when it has not been on a mere handful of favorites (“Self-Reliance,” “Experience,” “Fate”), and the result has often been a partial view of his thought. I take it for granted that the best way to gain a comprehensive view of Emerson’s philosophy is to omit none of the genres he used to body it forth. Nor can a complete account afford to omit those parts of his philosophy we might happen to dislike—most notably, for my purposes here, his core metaphysical commitment to identity or unity, a principle that has been neglected or denied in the near-exclusive scholarly emphasis on pluralism and flux.³⁹ A study like this calls for a more balanced view—especially since Emerson “never seems willing to sacrifice either unity or variety for its other.”⁴⁰ Any complete account of his thought should pay proper attention to *both*.⁴¹

When seen as a whole, then, with nothing of consequence left out, does Emerson’s philosophy form a *system*? From his day to ours the answer has typically been a resounding *no*, whether intended as a slight or a compliment or a simple statement of fact. If we may all agree that Emerson’s philosophy does not form a system in the grand German-idealist style uppermost in the minds of his contemporaries, for example, the question of its relative degree of systematicity remains open. To deny Emerson a grand system is not necessarily “to deny [him] systematic *thinking* altogether.”⁴² John Dewey found something of a “system” in Emerson’s systematic refusal of a “separated philosophy”—“in the fact that he takes

the distinctions and classifications which to most philosophers are true in and of and because of their systems, and makes them true of life, of the common experience of the everyday man.”⁴³ Idealism in the everyday is what Emerson himself called “the transcendentalism of common life.”⁴⁴ More recently, Douglas Anderson has made an excellent case for Emerson’s “Platonizing” tendency by defending the “systematic dimension” of his thought and its dialectic of unity and variety.⁴⁵ For my part, I locate the ground of that systematicity in the core principle of Emerson’s metaphysics—causation. Emerson sees reality as a causal continuum extending from Platonic unity to the diversity of everyday experience. Anderson’s dialectic of unity and variety, of concept and experience, corresponds to what I call—borrowing the term Emerson borrowed from Coleridge—*bipolarity*, which embraces Emerson’s Platonizing and pluralizing tendencies.

Another key question I should address briefly here at the outset is the place of language, which has been wildly overemphasized in rehabilitation studies—to the point of being their hallmark. Claims that metaphor goes “all the way down” in Emerson or that Emersonian selfhood has no ground outside of words can be rendered plausible only by an extremely selective reading of his works. A radical linguisticism has flourished in interpretations of the essays that consider them, above all, as dazzling writerly and readerly performances, as virtuoso enactments of a cooperative *poiesis*,⁴⁶ of mutual self-making and world-making through language. As *literary* constructions, the essays are most assuredly *that*—hence the legitimate appeal of such readings—*but not only that, philosophically*. Emerson’s philosophy cannot and should not be reduced to its literary or performative dimension, narrowly understood as supplanting or subverting traditional philosophical questions—and especially metaphysical questions. His literary style also serves broader philosophical ends that are realist and pragmatic. Emerson’s words reflect not only themselves; they also embody his vision of the external world and our place and conduct in it—a vision not only of language but of *life*, which, as the essay “Experience” reminds us, “is not intellectual or critical, but sturdy.” That much-celebrated essay shows that Emerson is also a writer of the *limits* of thought, language, and writing, notably in his criticism of “intellectual tasting of life.”⁴⁷ I shall deal with the question of language and metaphor in my chapter on esthetics, which is I believe the best way to illustrate their true place in his philosophy as a whole.

A linguisticism that makes everything in Emerson an affair of language, writing, or reading runs parallel to an epistemologism that turns properly metaphysical and ethical questions—Emerson’s reflections on the general nature of the world and on the conduct of life—into questions of knowledge and its problematic nature.⁴⁸ Emerson’s philosophy thus becomes *primarily* Emerson’s epistemology (Van Leer)—or its foil, Emerson’s skepticism (Cavell).⁴⁹ Lawrence Buell’s portrait of Emerson

the philosopher combines the dominant linguisticizing and epistemologizing tendencies when he describes “the heart of what most absorbed Emerson as a philosophical *writer*” to be the “replication in language of the motions of the mind as it thinks through how much, and how, it can know anything.” In a word, rehabilitation-era accounts of “the *kind* of philosophy in which Emerson saw himself as engaged”⁵⁰ have been the object of a lopsided, language-driven, epistemologizing consensus. What Dewey called “the industry of epistemology”—and Richard Rorty after him, “philosophy-as-epistemology”⁵¹—has largely dominated recent readings of Emerson. Such readings ignore the degree to which Emerson’s philosophy constitutes a *critique* of “epistemology-centered philosophy” (to borrow Cornell West’s phrase).⁵² As a result, epistemologizing accounts, like linguistic accounts, make it more difficult to place Emerson *historically*, as precursor of an American pragmatist tradition that criticizes what Dewey called “intellectualism,” or the tendency to reduce all experience to “a mode of knowing.”⁵³ Here too this overview strives to redress the balance by doing justice both to the idealist and the pragmatic, empirical, and esthetic dimensions of Emerson’s thought.

One important question must concern any attempt to summarize a career spanning five decades, from Emerson’s first sermon (1826) to *Letters and Social Aims* (1876), his last major collection of essays. I refer to the question of change over time. We do of course observe some shifts over the years, which I have noted in *Emerson’s Metaphysics*, but the widespread view that the late work somehow constitutes a sea change in his thought—a change often considered to be for the better *philosophically* because breaking with the Platonizing orientation of the early writings—is belied by the facts. The textual evidence points, on the contrary, to a large degree of continuity in his positions—a continuity that is grounded in his core doctrine of the moral sentiment, which he defined as “all we know of the Cause of Causes.”⁵⁴ Suggestions that Emerson has an ever-shifting rather than a stable philosophical position—for example, in embracing now Nominalism, now Realism—may be better dealt with, it seems to me, by appeal to Anderson’s “dialectic,” Dilworth’s “overarching metaphysics,” Pollock’s “synoptic vision,”⁵⁵ or my account of bipolarity. It is not that Emerson cannot decide which he position he prefers or that, as a result, he oscillates endlessly between the two. Rather, he wants them *both*, as part of a systematic, all-embracing philosophical vision of reality and the conduct of life.

One final remark concerning the historical method adopted here, where the essential question regarding Emerson’s sources is always *his* perception of them, as far as that can be ascertained from the biographical and textual evidence. Emerson’s view of Schelling as identity philosopher, for example, was mediated early on by Hedge and sustained well into the 1860s.⁵⁶ As we know now, of course, the *Identitätsphilosophie* that Hedge foregrounded was but one phase of an exceedingly complex career. For the purposes of historical and textual reconstruction, however,

that is beside the point. Emerson took Hedge's description of Schelling and ran with it, as he was in the habit of doing with "sentences"⁵⁷ from great philosophers whose thinking he found congenial.

The chapters that follow present the major branches of Emerson's philosophy: metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, esthetics, religion, and politics. I begin with metaphysics because that is where Emerson himself likes to begin—that is, with the foundation, as in these opening lines of the 1841 *Lectures on the Times*:

The Times, as we say—or the present aspects of our social state, the Laws, Divinity, Natural Science, Agriculture, Art, Trade, Letters, have their root in an invisible spiritual reality. To appear in these aspects, they must first exist, or have some necessary foundation.⁵⁸

Each of my subsequent chapters begins, likewise, with the "necessary foundation" of each "aspect" in identity, which is, for Emerson, the metaphysical principle from which an orderly universe and higher forms of human action and thought all emerge: "So only is combination, chemistry, vegetation, animation, intellection, possible. Without identity at base, chaos must be forever."⁵⁹

Notes

1. "Powers of the Mind," *LL* 2:72.
2. *L* 2:385.
3. "Woodnotes II," *CW* 9:107 (ll. 171, 160), 108 (l. 174), 109 (ll. 211–12).
4. "May-Day," *CW* 9:328 (l. 546); *JMN* 3:70.
5. "May-Day," *CW* 9:328 (ll. 548, 550). The lines reappear in the "The Harp."
6. *JMN* 15:9. "Self-Reliance" pairs "identity" and "eternal causation" (*CW* 2:40).
7. "The Relation of Intellect to Natural Science," *LL* 1:155; *JMN* 13:302.
8. "The American Scholar," *CW* 1:68; "Self-Reliance," 2:37.
9. "The Relation of Intellect to Natural Science," *LL* 1:161; "Nature," *CW* 3:106; "Plato, or the Philosopher," *CW* 4:27; "The Natural Method of Mental Philosophy," *LL* 2:95 (emphasis added).
10. I am quoting Dilworth in *CC-RWE* 55.
11. "The Natural Method of Mental Philosophy," *LL* 2:87; "Poetry and Imagination," *CW* 8:4; "The Relation of Intellect to Natural Science," *LL* 1:161; "Plato, or the Philosopher," *CW* 4:28, 27, 28. Plotinus says, likewise, that "intellectual perception could not subsist, difference and sameness not existing" (*Select Works*, 264; for Emerson's edition of this, see Harding, *Emerson's Library*, 217). In the mental dialectic of identity and difference, the perception of difference and the act of comparison bring us back to the first term: "Yet who does not see in this inevitable instinct which forces the rudest to compare, the confession of One Substance, of one Cause, of one Mind?" (*JMN* 7:311).
12. "Intellect," *CW* 2:201; "History," 2:18; "Montaigne," 4:85; "Thoreau," 10:428; "Poetry and Imagination," 8:10, 8, 10, 7; "Illusions," 6:168; "Poetry and Imagination," 8:3.

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13. "History," CW 2:9.
14. "Society," *EL* 2:112; "Uses of Great Men," CW 4:11; *Nature*, 1:27; "Poetry and Imagination," 8:40.
15. *LL* 1:84.
16. *LL* 1:84–5; emphasis added. As Nicholas Rescher sums up Emerson's view, "the very purpose of nature is to manifest the Universal Spirit that lies at the root of its apprehension" (*Minding Matter*, 80).
17. Emerson uses the terms interchangeably (e.g., *JMN* 9:303).
18. "Power," CW 6:28; *JMN* 9:350; "Montaigne," CW 4:105; "Power," 6:29.
19. As Emerson declared in his journal in 1854, "if Minerva offered me a gift & an option, I would say give me continuity" (*JMN* 13:314). Dewey's emphasis on continuity in *Experience and Nature* recalls Emerson's in a number of significant ways, though the similarity ends with Emerson's idealist equation of continuity with identity. Thomas Alexander is certainly right in saying that in Dewey "to assert continuity is not the same as asserting identity" (*John Dewey's Theory of Art, Experience, and Nature*, 95; see also 39–40, and on continuity in Dewey's thought, Boisvert, *Dewey's Metaphysics*, 68–9). In Emerson, on the other hand, it *is* the same, since for him continuity is secured by the universal activity of the One Mind as causal-connexionist force instantiated in human experience by the moral sentiment. If "the great task of the Nineteenth Century" lay in its "endeavors to effectuate continuity," as Peirce put it in "The Logic of Relatives" (*Reasoning and the Logic of Things*, 163), then Emerson should surely be included as an early figure in the general effort, despite his lack of sophisticated categories and his tendency to run together "feeling" (Peirce's firstness) and "continuity" (thirdness). For careful examinations of the "affinities" between Emerson and Peirce, see Dilworth's two essays, "Elective Affinities" and "Elective Metaphysical Affinities," as well as Guardiano, *Aesthetic Transcendentalism* and "Charles S. Peirce's New England Neighbors and Embrace of Transcendentalism."
20. "Introductory Lecture," CW 1:182; "Montaigne, or the Skeptic," 4:103. John Lysaker (*After Emerson*, 38n11) captures the commingling of cognition and affect very nicely with the compound verb think-feel, which seems to me characteristic of the poetic experience of identity in Emerson. Joan Richardson, for her part, regards "feeling thinking" as a distinguishing trait of the American pragmatist tradition (*A Natural History of Pragmatism*, xii). One of the hallmarks of Emerson's philosophy is indeed his sensitivity both to the *felt* qualities of a thought (how it *feels* when we have it, when we experience it fully) and—to turn the question around—to the "cognitive role for an emotion or feeling," which Russell Goodman sees as part of Emerson's Romantic heritage ("East-West Philosophy," 629). What are Emersonian "moods" if not comminglings of feeling and thought?
21. *JMN* 9:431; "Morals," *LL* 2:139; Divinity School Address, CW 1:93.
22. For Cheryl Misak, "feeling" is one of the "primary links" between Emerson and the pragmatists (*The American Pragmatists*, 12). Joan Richardson, likewise, treats the "fact of feeling" as an essential part of the "fact of experience" (*Natural History of Pragmatism*, xi).
23. On Peirce's appraisal of Emerson as philosopher-poet, see Guardiano, "Charles S. Peirce's New England Neighbors," 236.
24. "The Sphinx," CW 9:8 (l. 113).
25. Coleridge, *The Friend*, 1:500; see my discussion of this in *EM* 66–8. For the same idea in Emerson, see *JMN* 5:188 (entry for 12 August 1836).
26. "Experience," CW 3:25.
27. Hedge, "Coleridge's Literary Character," 125; emphasis added.
28. *L* 1:402, 3:77.
29. Hedge, *Prose Writers of Germany*, 509.

30. I refer to Cabot's unpublished 1844 translation of Schelling's *Philosophischen Untersuchungen über das Wesen der menschlichen Freiheit*, 1809 ("Cabot"). Cabot, who had attended Schelling's lectures in Berlin, shared the translation with Emerson (for the background, see David Greenham's superbly documented article "'Altars to the Beautiful Necessity' . . ."). For my purposes here, it is worth noting (1) that Cabot confirms Hedge's description of Schelling as *Identitätsphilosoph*: "he called his system the *System of Identity*" ("Cabot," 8n); (2) that Schelling considers that "the law of Cause is equally fundamental with that of Identity"; and (3) that the "principle of Identity expresses not a Unity revolving in the circle of mere *sameness*, unprogressive, & thus itself insensible & dead. The Unity of this law is an immediately creative one" ("Cabot," 13). I am grateful to Dave Greenham for sharing his images of the Cabot manuscript.
31. Stallo, *General Principles*, 189, 210.
32. That *poets* were the first metaphysical reconcilers of the Romantic age is a key claim in Stallo's chapter on Schelling (*General Principles*, 220, 214). For recent reexaminations of the claim, see Richards, *The Romantic Conception of Life*, and Zammuto, *The Gestation of German Biology*, esp. ch. 10. See also Zammuto "Reconstructing German Idealism and Romanticism" (I thank Bill Rossi for this reference).
33. *JMN* 15:22; *LL* 1:166.
34. "The Spirit of the Times," *LL* 1:122, 120, 121, 123.
35. *CW* 4:30.
36. *JMN* 9:195, 5:138.
37. *JMN* 10:480.
38. "Fate," *CW* 6:26.
39. Dieter Schulz is a distinguished counterexample among Transcendentalism scholars in his balanced approach to metaphysics and especially in his defense of the One in Emerson's philosophy, as "the basic condition of thinking and of that which can be thought," *Emerson and Thoreau*, 86.
40. Anderson, "Emerson's Platonizing of American Thought," 204. As Robert C. Pollock had already put it in the late 1950s, Emerson's "single vision in no way caused him to turn his back on the world of multiplicity" ("The Single Vision," 31).
41. A point made in Goodman, "The Colors of the Spirit," 7.
42. Anderson, "Emerson's Platonizing of American Thought," 200.
43. Dewey, "Ralph Waldo Emerson," *Characters and Events*, 1:73, 74, 73.
44. "Circles," *CW* 2:187.
45. Anderson, "Emerson's Platonizing of American Thought," 205. Emerson defines Plato's dialectic as resting on "the observation of identity and diversity" (*CW* 4:35).
46. Lest we fondly imagine the *readerly* aspect of the Emersonian text to be a rehabilitation-era discovery, see William Ernest Hocking's discussion of Emerson's "mystic utterances" as requiring *active* participation of the reader, who must "supply the cautions and conditions for his statements" (*The Meaning of God in Human Experience*, 459).
47. Emerson, "Experience," *CW* 3:35, 34. As Anderson argues, linguisticism makes it more difficult to perceive Emerson's place in the history of American philosophy, as precursor of Dewey and James. See "American Loss in Cavell's Emerson," 219–20, and "Emerson's Platonizing of American Thought," 196. One example of linguisticism may be found in Eduardo Cadava, who makes the final pragmatic emphasis of the essay "Experience," with its "transformation of genius into practical power," into an affair of "language," *Emerson and the Climates of History*, 14. For criticism of the linguisticizing tendency, see also Friedman, "Religious Self-Reliance," 41.

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48. For Roy Bhaskar, the “linguistic fallacy”—the definition of being “in terms of language or discourse”—is a variant of the “epistemic fallacy”—“the definition of being in terms of knowledge”—in that both refuse the independence and irreducibility of ontology (*Reclaiming Reality*, 181; *The Possibility of Naturalism*, 170–1, 199). On this point, Bhaskar echoes Richard Rorty’s observation that “the contemporary notion of philosophy of language as ‘first philosophy’ is not so much a change from the older [i.e., post-Kantian] claim that epistemology was ‘first’ as a minor variant upon it” (*Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*, 134n4).
49. Van Leer, *Emerson’s Epistemology*; Cavell, *This New Yet Unapproachable America*, 79.
50. Buell, *Emerson*, 215, 206.
51. Dewey, “The Need for a Recovery of Philosophy,” 75; Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*, 136.
52. West, *The American Evasion of Philosophy*, 5.
53. Dewey, *Experience and Nature*, 28.
54. “Holiness,” *EL* 2:352.
55. Pollock, “The Single Vision,” 33.
56. See, for example, the epigraph from Hedge’s *Reason in Religion* (1865) quoted below in the final section of Chapter 1. Emerson’s library contained a personal copy of the book bearing the inscription “From Author to R.W.E.” (Harding, *Emerson’s Library*, 130).
57. “My debt to Plato is a certain number of sentences: the like to Aristotle” (*JMN* 12:115; cf. also 5:140).
58. “Introductory Lecture,” *CW* 1:167.
59. “The Relation of Intellect to Natural Science,” *LL* 1:161.

References

1. *JMN* 14:191–2. The laws Emerson lists are in fact only the two that are numbered, *Identity* and *Flowing*.
2. Randy Friedman includes this bias along with others in what he calls “the myth of the Emersonian democrat,” who is “secular, sceptical, relativist, anti-realist, and anti-metaphysical” (“Traditions of Pragmatism and the Myth of the Emersonian Democrat,” 155–6).
3. “Plato,” *CW* 4:27; *Nature*, 1:39.
4. In a note that Emerson certainly read, James Elliot Cabot took Schelling to task for confounding the two terms: “When he says Identity . . . he means Unity, which is something different” (“Cabot,” 8n).
5. *JMN* 10:480; emphasis added. Cf. also 9:123.
6. “Emerson always conceived of a unitary power publishing itself through a myriad of forms in constant flux or change,” Duncan, *The Power and Form of Emerson’s Thought*, 12. For Windolph, on the other hand, “the multiplicity and wide variety of the forms of natural bodies take metaphysical precedence,” *Emerson’s Nonlinear Nature*, 130. In the same spirit, Robert Richardson’s chapter “Identity and Metamorphosis” (*Emerson*, 332–6) presents flux—equally mistakenly in my view—as “above and governing” identity (336).
7. Frank, *Selbstbewußtsein und Selbsterkenntnis*, 99.
8. “Uses of Great Men,” *CW* 4:7. See also Susan L. Roberson’s excellent discussion of the maxim’s significance as an expression of feeling, *Emerson in His Sermons*, 95–104.
9. “Plato,” *CW* 4:28; “Art,” *CW* 2:207; “Illusions,” *CW* 6:173.
10. *CW* 9:268 (ll. 5–6); *LL* 1:155, 161; *CW* 9:297 (l. 245).
11. “Essential Principles of Religion” (1862), *LL* 2:269; for the original journal entry of this anecdote: *JMN* 8:182–3. For the background, see *EM* 131. On Emerson’s refusal of two worlds, see also Laugier, “L’importance de l’importance: expérience, pragmatisme, transcendantalisme,” 162.
12. This imagery prefigures Emerson’s closing evocation of the “instantaneous in-streaming causing power” (*Nature*, *CW* 1:7, 43).
13. *JMN* 9:431; for other versions of this passage, see the 1848 lecture “The Powers and Laws of Thought” (*LL* 1:147) and notebook ML (for “Moral Law”), *TN* 3:313. Peircean firstness exhibits a similar continuity of inwardnesses. See on this point Ibri, “Reflections on a Poetic Ground in Peirce’s Philosophy,” 283.
14. “Fate,” *CW* 6:16. For William James, one of the strong appeals of idealism is precisely that it gives “to the nature of things” a “kinship with our personal selves”: “Our own thoughts are what we are most at home with, what we are least afraid of. To say then that the universe essentially is thought, is to say that I myself, potentially at least, am all. There is no radically alien corner, but an all-pervading *intimacy*” (“The Sentiment of Rationality,” in *Writings 1878–1899*, 523). Quoting an earlier line from the same piece (521), John McDermott writes: “What could be more Emersonian than James’s remark in his ‘Sentiment of Rationality’ that ‘the inmost nature of the reality is congenial to powers which you possess?’” (“Spires of Influence,” 66n40).
15. *CW* 4:103. Judith Shklar’s reading of this line, in her well-known essay on Emerson’s politics, turns on a category mistake that betrays a deep confusion about the moral sentiment as foundation of Emerson’s metaphysics of morals, religion, and politics. On the one hand, she casts doubt on Emerson’s commitment to the moral sentiment (“Did he really believe that

sentimentality?”), construing the line as a case of democratic “inhibition” forcing a concession to the “public religion” of faith in progress. On the other, she emphasizes that Emerson “*did* believe in something more, in an Eternal Cause, a supersensible Nature, an intimation of another World” (“Emerson and the Inhibitions of Democracy,” 64–5).

16. “Self-Reliance,” CW 2:41. Lee Rust Brown gives a particularly insightful summary of the image of home as empowerment in “Self-Reliance” (*The Emerson Museum*, 200–1).
17. “Uses of Great Men,” CW 4:4; emphasis added.
18. Dewey, *Experience and Nature*, 30, 28.
19. This was a lesson he had learned from Mary Moody Emerson, who taught her nephew “Waldo” that “metaphysical speculations” which “do not touch the heart are barren” (MME-L 360).
20. A further sign that Emerson was thinking of Platonism as bipolarity is his inclusion of the following lines from Friedrich Ast’s *Platons Leben und Schriften* among the final entries of *Platoniana*: “the Ideal (the Universal or Unity) stands so related to the Real (the Individual Life, Multiplicity), as the centre to the periphery: the One is necessarily connected with the other, Life also is neither the one nor the other, but the Unity of both” (JMN 10:488). Emerson borrowed the book from the Harvard Library in 1848, as he was preparing “Plato, or the Philosopher.”
21. Dewey, *Experience and Nature*, 30. I borrow the phrase “unpassable gulf” from James Murdock’s contemporary account of Kant, German idealism, and its legacy in the United States, *Sketches of Modern Philosophy*, 94. See my discussion of Murdock and contemporary perceptions of Kant in *EM* 18–22.
22. JMN 7:181–2; emphasis added; for the essay version, see “Intellect,” CW 2:201.
23. For Herbert Schneider, who argued persuasively against a phenomenological interpretation of Emerson’s philosophy in general and of *Nature* in particular, the “whole effort” of the essay “aims at making the individual at home in the world, well-disciplined for both thought and action, or rather for a type of reflection that integrates existential and mental relations” (“American Transcendentalism’s Escape from Phenomenology,” 218). David Jacobson argues, contrariwise, in an unpersuasive rehabilitation-era reading of Emerson thought, for its “phenomenological casting” (*Emerson’s Pragmatic Vision*, 9).
24. JMN 4:199–200, emphasis added; cf. also “The Garden of Plants,” CW 10:328–31, as well as Emerson’s evocation of “secret sympathy” with nature in “Woodnotes I” (CW 9:96, l. 129).
25. CW 1:10. It is significant that this description of pleasurable recognition comes just after the famous “transparent eye-ball” passage, where Emerson feels the “currents of the Universal Being” flowing through him. Three months after *Nature* was published, Emerson delivered his lecture “Humanity of Science,” which insists once again on the identity principle and the consanguinity of man and nature: “One can feel that we are brothers of the oak and of the grass, that the vegetable principle pervades human nature also” (EL 2:35).
26. “The Relation of Intellect to Natural Science,” LL 1:161–162.
27. “The Natural Method of Mental Philosophy” (1858), LL 2:89. The essay “History” also notes nature’s practical jokes on identity: “Nature is full of a sublime family likeness throughout her works; and delights in startling us with resemblances in the most unexpected quarters” (CW 2:10).

Recognition is synonymous in Emerson's mind with Platonic reminiscence, since that too is "only the perception of identity" (LL 2:87; see also his review "Plato: New Readings," CW 4:48). I shall return to Emersonian reminiscence in the next chapter.

28. In an 1837 journal entry, Emerson describes an experience of revelation where he perceives "the ground of being" or "Cause of Causes" and sees that "it is not one & I another, but this is the life of my life" (JMN 5:337).
29. The essay *Nature* identifies itself very explicitly, at the outset and in its final pages, as belonging to the class of metaphysical inquiries—that is, "inquiries respecting the laws of the world and the frame of things" (CW 1:39).
30. "Beauty," CW 6:154.
31. See Melville, *Correspondence*, 119, 121–2, and esp. 121, where he says this about Emerson: "I love all men who *dive*."
32. Melville, *Pierre*, 285. Compare Emerson: "The sceptic affirms that the universe is a nest of boxes with nothing in the last box" ("Immortality," CW 8:183).
33. Melville, *Moby-Dick*, 164. In an 1851 letter to Hawthorne, sent six months before the publication of *Moby-Dick*, Melville prefigured Captain Ahab's doubts: "And perhaps, after all, there is *no* secret. We incline to think that the Problem of the Universe is like the Freemason's mighty secret, so terrible to all children. It turns out, at last, to consist in a triangle, a mallet, and an apron,—nothing more!" (*Correspondence*, 186).
34. L 3:178; but see also 1:254. The letter is dated 7 June 1843. "Experience" would be published in October 1844. Fuller was Emerson's philosophical *confidante* in those years; see my discussion of her role in EM 135–9.
35. Emerson uses the imagery of skating, powerfully rendered by Wordsworth in *The Prelude* (1, ll. 425–63), as an example of genius using surfaces and transforming them into practical-poetic power (EL 3:77–8).
36. I refer to Stanley Cavell's use of the term in his massively influential reading of "Experience," *This New yet Unapproachable America*, 113.
37. In *Emerson and Self-Culture*, John Lysaker argues that Emerson's figures of surface "delimit the scope of efficient causality." Likewise with the figures of "casualty": "in disclosing the casualty in which the very thought of causality arises, Emerson draws the bottom out from under this would-be ontological linchpin" (85, 86). *After Emerson* persists in seeing "casual" as "opposed to 'causal'" (150). To make his case, Lysaker singles out the following passage from an early lecture to argue that the layerings and overlappings of surface and cause signify a refusal of "grounding gestures" or anything that resembles a "bottom": "We dwell on the surface of nature. We dwell amidst surfaces; and surface laps so closely on surface, that we *cannot easily* pierce to see the interior organism. Then the subtlety of things! Under every cause, another cause" ("General Views," EL 2:358; emphasis added). True, the deeper perception may not come *easily*, but we *can* and *do* have it (see the "piercing inquisition," 3:49). When the lecture is read *as a whole*, it turns out to be, like the lecture that precedes it, "Holiness" (esp. 352–3), an argument *for* the moral sentiment as perception of the causal ground of being—or the "lightnings of thought" which "reveal the moral order" (364)—and *against* the "despotism of sense" (362), or "surrender to routine" and enslavement to the "succession of particulars" (363). (I shall return to this point in the next chapter in my discussion of the Sphinx riddle.) *On the level of ordinary experience and observation*, nature *seems* to be an endless causal chain ("under every cause, another cause"), but this is simply what Emerson calls elsewhere "the round of second causes," whose existence in no way constitutes, in his thought, a negation of absolute

- causality or our experience of it. See my discussion of this in *EM* 46–7, 62, 96, 202. On “surfaces” as distinct from “illusions,” see also Jolley, “The Nexus of Unity of an Emerson Sentence,” 558–9.
38. “Chance was absent from Emerson’s universe” (McWilliams, “Emerson: The All and the One,” 45). Harry Hayden Clark emphasized the corollary of this in Emerson’s “doctrine of immutable laws and of the need for disciplining oneself to obey them” (“Conservative and Mediatory Emphases in Emerson’s Thought,” 30). It is worth remarking that pre-rehabilitation readings like these, not yet laboring under the strong anti-metaphysical bias that would characterize the next wave of scholarship, often give a more reliable sense of Emerson’s thought as a whole.
 39. “As a hint of endless being, we may rank that novelty which perpetually attends life” (“Immortality,” *CW* 8:186).
 40. *L* 3:178; emphasis added.
 41. *CW* 3:39–40, 1:43, 45; Luke 17:20.
 42. *JMN* 8:387. For a full account of this journal entry, which Emerson reused in the conclusion to “Nominalist and Realist,” see my “Bi-Polar Emerson,” 81–3.
 43. On the “one Fact,” see *L* 7:501–2, for 3 July 1842.
 44. On the Emersonian legacy in pragmatism, see McDermott, “Spires of Influence,” and Goodman, “Emerson, Romanticism, and Classical American Pragmatism” and *American Philosophy before Pragmatism*, “Epilogue.”
 45. James, *Manuscript Essays and Notes*, 318, 319.
 46. Dewey, “Ralph Waldo Emerson,” 73.
 47. Dewey, “Ralph Waldo Emerson,” 73, 74.
 48. Emerson, “Powers and Laws of Thought,” *W* 12:13, 14.
 49. Arsic, *On Leaving*, 9.
 50. Mackie, *The Cement of the Universe*, 296, ix–x.
 51. Mackie, *The Cement of the Universe*, x.
 52. Mackie, *The Cement of the Universe*, 226, 225.
 53. Mackie, *The Cement of the Universe*, 226.
 54. *CW* 4:91, 97, 105; emphasis added.
 55. *JMN* 9:223. Here is Cabot’s note on the term “ground,” which Emerson read: “The German word *Grund* signifies ground but also foundation, cause, bottom[,] also by ellipsis, chasm or abyss, in which latter sense Schelling often uses it” (“Cabot,” 32n). Something like a prefiguration of these meanings taken together may be found six years earlier in Emerson’s early lecture “Doctrine of the Soul,” which describes men thus: “Out of darkness and the awful Cause they come” (*EL* 3:14).
 56. “Self-Reliance,” *CW* 2:38. Emerson uses the verb “to flux” in “Fate,” *CW* 6:23.
 57. “Circles,” *CW* 2:179; “Montaigne, or the Skeptic,” *CW* 4:97. For another reference to the “flowing power,” which Emerson also calls the “flowing law” (*JMN* 9:295), see *LL* 1:170.
 58. *CW* 4:105. For an excellent commentary on these closing lines of “Montaigne” as an expression of Emerson’s monist faith in an Absolute, see Stievermann, *Der Sündenfall der Nachahmung*, 556.
 59. “All power appears only in transition” (Novalis, qtd. in Hedge, *Prose Writers of Germany*, 497).
 60. “The Natural Method of Mental Philosophy,” *LL* 2:91. Lee Rust Brown nicely sums up the implications of this vision of power for Emersonian selfhood: “To see ourselves, in other words, we must see historically, in terms of causality and generation” (*The Emerson Museum*, 58).
 61. “Plato,” *CW* 4:32, 31, 32.

62. CW 4:31. Emerson admired the synthesis of high and low in Plutarch as well (10:496, 508).
63. TN 2:287. Emerson kept notebook PY over a period of at least ten years, from the early 1860s (after the publication of *The Conduct of Life*) on through to the mid-1870s (see the editorial headnote, TN 2:256). Notebook PY also contains many metaphysical entries like the one I have just quoted.
64. LL 2:206; for another use of these lines on transition and power, see also 157.
65. CW 1:126. On the metaphors of flow and the concept of tendency, see my overview in EM xxi–xxii.
66. In John Michael Corrigan’s apt words, “no single event can be envisioned as a final destination” (“The Metempsychotic Mind,” 449).
67. See my discussion of skepticism and superstition (not to mention fiction, fantasy, or “romance”) as sharing doubt about the universality of the causal connection, in “‘True Romance’: Emerson’s Realism.” Emerson’s early lecture on “Demonology,” which he defines as belief in “exceptions to, if not violations of, the ordinary laws,” speaks of “supernatural favoritism”: “The insinuation is that the known external laws of morals and of matter are sometimes corrupted or eluded by this lurking gypsy principle, this Mother power, that chooses favorites, and works in the dark of the Universe for their behoof” (EL 3:151, 162, 164–5). “True romance,” or a romance of the real as manifest in the wondrous nature of lawlike phenomena, is the only kind Emerson was willing to accept.
68. CW 1:81. On Emerson’s refusal of miracles as violations of the causal order, see EM 98–102.
69. This is what Emerson calls, in an elegy to his dead son Waldo, “the blasphemy of grief” (“Threnody,” CW 9:295, l. 204). The grieving soul wants “rushing life” to “forget her laws” (296, l. 226). It wants to “freeze love’s tidal flow, / Whose streams through nature circling go” (ll. 238–9). Emerson has the “deep Heart” answer that, on the contrary, Heaven is “built of furtherance and pursuing” (295, l. 176; 298, l. 280). This is the poem’s equivalent of the exclamation in “Experience,” “Onward and onward!”
70. “Experience,” CW 3:29. In “Threnody,” as suggested in the previous note, it is, fittingly, the “deep Heart” that does the introducing into the reality beyond surface appearances.
71. Emerson would encounter the same idea in his reading of Stallo a year later, in May 1849: “The laws of the mind are also the laws of material nature. . . . Without the unity of the mind with the *true nature* of the material world, the latter would not only be incomprehensible to man, not only be no object of his intelligence, but not even an object of his consciousness. The mind would see a void in nature, if it did not recognize itself there; it would gaze upon the utterly Dark, upon an absolute night, upon an abstract vacuum. No reciprocation of any kind between the radically Heterogenous” (*General Principles*, 47–8, §26).
72. “Power,” CW 6: 28 (on success) and 30. I might also quote “Poetry and Imagination”: “In proportion as a man’s life comes into union with truth, his thoughts approach to a parallelism with the currents of natural laws.” A little farther on in the same essay, Emerson speaks of this parallelism as being “true to the poles of nature” (CW 8:39).
73. “The hardest chemist, the severest analyzer, scornful of all but driest fact, is forced to keep the poetic curve of nature” (“Poetry and Imagination,” CW 8:3).

74. The pre-“Montaigne” journal entry I referred to earlier, where Emerson first writes of the need for a “philosophy of fluxions and mobility,” bears the heading “Adaptiveness” (JMN 9:222–3).
75. In Henry Bugbee’s Emersonian words, “if we swim with necessity we discover power” (*The Inward Morning*, 100).
76. Coleridge, *Aids to Reflection*, 267; *Nature*, CW 1:43. Herwig Friedl rightly draws attention to the ambiguity of the title *The Conduct of Life*—which “leaves it undecided who or what the ‘conductor’ . . . is,” that is, “life” or the “person” conducting his or hers—and concludes that conduct is “at the same time a very individual and a very public, even cosmic, affair” (*Thinking in Search of a Language*, 141).
77. In *English Traits*, Emerson translates this as “nature is commanded by obeying her” (“Literature,” CW 5:136). For an early, 1831 example of Emerson quoting this “maxim of philosophy” borrowed from Bacon, see Sermon 114, CS 3:149.
78. *Nature*, CW 1:10; “Uses of Great Men,” 4:20.
79. “Nature,” CW 3:112; “Montaigne,” 4:103.
80. The following couplet, which Emerson copied over and over again countless times in his notebooks and journals, stands as something very like his own personal motto:

Hold of the Maker, not the made,
Sit with the Cause, or grim or glad.
(PN 384; cf. also 103)

For other occurrences, see *EM* xxxiv (n17), 104–5, 163, 197; on the redirecting movement or cause-effect reversal, see also xx–xxi, 62–3.

81. For occurrences of this phrase, see *LL* 1:187, 2:142 and *CW* 8:189.
82. *CW* 4:104, 6:19. On “benefit,” see also *CW* 2:67 and *LL* 2:147.
83. For a fuller discussion of these doctrines and their directional nature, see *EM* 157–65.
84. Dewey, “Ralph Waldo Emerson,” 72–3.
85. “Powers and Laws of Thought,” *W* 12:17. The new standard text of this 1848 lecture (*LL* 1:134–51) does not reproduce the Centenary Edition (which I quote here and elsewhere), on grounds that it is less the work of Emerson than of his literary executor James Elliot Cabot (the editors call it “Cabot’s Essay,” 136). Whatever its ultimate authorial status, the Schelling allusion contained in the quote is useful for my purposes since (1) elsewhere in the same lecture series Emerson names Schelling among the thinkers who “wrestle with the problem of genesis, and occupy themselves with constructing cosmogonies” (162); (2) the phrase “dead Mind” is echoed five-and-a-half years later, in a lecture that defends the principle of the “sovereignty of mind” and describes matter as mind in a “rude” form (1:306); and (3) the line quoted, like other lines I have taken the liberty of quoting from the superseded edition of the lecture, is consistent with Emerson’s metaphysics and serves as a good illustration of the influence of Schelling as mediated by Germanist contemporaries like Hedge and Cabot.
86. “The Architecture of Theories,” *The Essential Peirce*, 1:293. See also in the same volume “The Law of Mind,” where he traces the influence of “Schelling-fashioned idealism” on his own thinking back to the intellectual atmosphere of Concord and Cambridge in the Transcendentalist years: “I may mention, for the benefit of those who are curious in studying mental biographies, that I was born and reared in the neighborhood of Concord,—I mean, Cambridge,—at the time when Emerson, Hedge, and their friends

were disseminating the ideas that they had caught from Schelling” (312–13). On Emerson’s influence on Peirce, see Kruse, “Peirce, God, and the ‘Transcendentalist Virus’”; Guardiano, “Charles S. Peirce’s New England Neighbors and Embrace of Transcendentalism”; and the Dilworth articles mentioned earlier. On matter as “effete mind,” where absolute identity sinks (*sich einsenkt*) into nature, see also Tilliette, *Schelling: une philosophie en devenir*, 1:385, and *Une introduction à Schelling*, 60.

87. “Intellect,” *CW* 2:195.
88. “Powers of the Mind,” *LL* 2:77, 75. It is worth noting the similarity of Emerson’s phrasing in the passage of “Experience” (partially quoted earlier) that evokes the principle of *permanence* behind our moods: “there is that in us which changes not, and which *ranks* all sensations and states of mind. The consciousness in each man is a sliding *scale*, which identifies him now with the First Cause, and now with the flesh of his body; *life above life, in infinite degrees*” (*CW* 3:42; emphasis added). The crucial question of *scale* or *ranking* is one that Cavell-inspired representations of Emerson as a skeptical “epistemologist of moods” have neglected at their peril. Thus Emerson himself in a journal entry—contemporaneous with “Experience”—under the heading “Of Succession,” where the allusion to Hume’s “bundle of perceptions” seems obvious: “It is not enough to say that we are bundles of moods, for we always *rank* our mental states. The graduation is exquisite. We are not a bundle but a house” (*JMN* 9:70; emphasis added). I return to the question of scale or degree in my conclusion.
89. Robinson, *Emerson and the Conduct of Life*, 195.
90. *JMN* 3:292; cf. also *CPT* 338, 339.
91. One example is provided by Emerson’s lifelong friend William Henry Furness, whose *Remarks on the Four Gospels*, along with publications like Emerson’s *Nature*, marked Transcendentalism’s “annus mirabilis” (Perry Miller), 1836. Furness argued that the Christian miracles disclosed “the essential, natural sovereignty of mind over matter, of the spiritual over the physical” (*Remarks*, 164). See also *JMN* 5:217, for an 1836 journal entry under the heading “Antecedence of Spirit.”
92. “Woodnotes II,” *CW* 9:112, l. 357.
93. “Fate,” *CW* 6:27; “The Over-Soul,” 2:164; “Self-Reliance,” 2:37.
94. For Stewart’s influence on Emerson here, see *EM* 48.
95. I am quoting the Platoniana notebook, *JMN* 10:471.
96. “Circles,” *CW* 2:180.
97. “Fate,” *CW* 6:23. Thus also the Divinity School Address: “But the moment the mind opens, and reveals the laws which traverse the universe, and make things what they are, then shrinks the great world at once into a mere illustration and fable of this mind” (1:76). If the imagination or poetic thought can shrink, it can also enlarge,

Making free with time & size,
Dwindles here, there magnifies.
(*PN* 557; see also “Fragments
on the Poet and the Poetic
Gift,” *W* 9:328)

98. *CW* 9:131 (ll. 370, 371, 384), 127 (l. 245), 129 (ll. 293–6); emphasis added. In giving voice to the mountain, Emerson has it acknowledge repeatedly that it will yield to the superior power of *poiesis*:

Let him heed who can and will;

Enchantment fixed me here
 To stand the hurts of time, until
 In mightier chant I disappear.
 (CW 9:127, ll. 234–7)

For it is on zodiacs writ,
 Adamant is soft to wit:
 And when the greater comes again
 With my secret in his brain,
 I shall pass, as glides my shadow
 Daily over hill and meadow.
 (CW 9:128, ll. 270–5)

For Emerson, Monadnock is also a symbol of *identity*: “To myriad kinds and times one sense/The constant mountain doth dispense” (CW 9:132, l. 391–2).

99. PN 556; CPT 440.
100. Qtd. in Hedge, *Reason in Religion*, 21.
101. “Woodnotes II,” CW 9:111 (ll. 293–4).
102. “May-Day,” CW 9:328 (ll. 548, 550).
103. Hedge, *Atheism in Philosophy*, 337.
104. LL 2:97–98. I might also cite Emerson’s essay on Swedenborg: “The mind is a finer body” (CW 4:61).
105. See my discussion of metaphysical commitment as enabling rather than inhibiting Emerson’s philosophical daring in EM 205–6.
 1. See EM 9–17.
 2. Dewey, *The Quest for Certainty*, 125.
 3. Dewey, *Experience and Nature*, 29–30.
 4. “The fact is, To Seem you must Be” (EL 2:306); “what is, appears or, You must Be” (JMN 12:94).
 5. Robinson, *Emerson and the Conduct of Life*, 207n56. The phrase appears in a criticism of Cornell West’s inclusion of Emerson in American pragmatism’s “evasion of epistemology-centered philosophy.” I side with West on this point, since the question is less one of “overlooking” Emerson’s epistemology than of putting it in its proper *subordinate* position.
 6. “Experience,” CW 3:34, 35.
 7. Dewey, *Experience and Nature*, 21, 28.
 8. Buell, *Emerson*, 215.
 9. Cavell, “Thinking of Emerson,” 126.
 10. “Experience,” CW 3:29; emphasis added.
 11. CW 4:103, 6:107, 4:103.
 12. “Experience,” CW 3:43–7. See my discussion of “subjectiveness” in EM 2–9.
 13. Holmes, *Ralph Waldo Emerson*, 330.
 14. A position taken by Van Cromphout, for example (*Emerson’s Modernity*, 93–7).
 15. CW 9:8, l. 120. Thoreau sums up the “false reply” thus: “So far from solving the problem of life, Time only serves . . . to keep it in” (CW 9:678).
 16. “The School,” EL 3:49; emphasis added.
 17. “The School,” EL 3:49; emphasis added.
 18. Thoreau was quick to note this universalizing dimension within diversity in his description of the Sphinx as a “monster who was a riddle of herself, having a body composed of various creatures, as if to hint that she had no individual existence, but was nearly allied to and brooded over all” (CW 9:677).

See also David Dilworth's superb reading of the poem, which references the 1859 notebook entry by way of introduction, CC-RWE 246–8.

19. Qtd. in "The Natural Method of Mental Philosophy," *LL* 2:89. Emerson's other sources are Aristotle (*De anima* 430a5), Cudworth (quoting Aristotle: "that which knows and that which is known are really the same thing," *A Treatise Concerning Eternal and Immutable Morality*, 135), and Plotinus ("that which sees is itself the thing which is seen," *Select Works*, 425; Emerson quotes this line in notebook IT [for "Intellect], *TN* 1:178).
20. "The Over-Soul," *CW* 2:171.
21. *TN* 2:325. My epigraph from Sir Kenelm Digby on the double ontological-epistemological status of the soul illustrates for Emerson the identity principle at work in and through the soul, for the quotation appears in a passage on the principle of "identity at the base [of things]" and is followed by Emerson's favorite assertion that "all knowledge is assimilation to the object of knowledge" (for other occurrences, see "The Method of Nature," *CW* 1:131–2; *JMN* 7:430, 10:135, 11:11).
22. As "The Over-Soul" puts it, the soul, or "background of our being," is "not the intellect or the will, but the master of the intellect and the will" (*CW* 2:161).
23. *CW* 2:186, 4:7.
24. "Circles," *CW* 2:183; see also *JMN* 5:49.
25. Coleridge, *The Friend* 1:492; see my discussion of this in *EM* 65–6.
26. On "Montaigne" as Emerson's settling old accounts with Hume's skepticism, see my essay "'The Other,' and 'the Otherest.'"
27. Cabot emphasized that for Kant phenomena "do not claim to be *things*, themselves—but only *appearances*; that is, impressions on our minds. Hence, we cannot pretend to say whether phenomena have any existence at all, out of our perception, or not, without leaving the ground to which we are restricted by our postulate." Kant leaves "untouched, therefore, the question as to the objective existence of outward things" ("Immanuel Kant," 412).
28. Cabot, "Immanuel Kant," 415, 409. See *EM* 7–8 for my discussion of the article's impact on "Experience."
29. Cabot, "Immanuel Kant," 412, 413, 412, 414.
30. *CW* 4:31, 41, 48, and especially 36.
31. On *Representative Men* as a gallery of realists, see *EM* 166.
32. Dewey, *Experience and Nature*, 29.
33. Dewey, *Experience and Nature*, 27.
34. *JMN* 8:8. These lines also appear in *EL* 3:368 and *LL* 1:84. See also my discussion in *EM* 149.
35. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, 35, 24, 35, 36.
36. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, 35, 24, 25.
37. Dewey, *Experience and Nature*, 96; see also 75–6.
38. *Nature*, *CW* 1:40; emphasis added.
39. "Each and All," *CW* 9:15 (l. 35), 14 (l. 19), 15 (ll. 29, 34).
40. "A single object . . . may strike us as particularly picturesque: it is not, however, the object alone which produces this effect, but it is the connection in which we see it, with that which is beside, behind, and above it, all of which contributes to that effect," Goethe, *Conversations* 1:266.
41. Dewey, *Experience and Nature*, 30.
42. Dewey, *Experience and Nature*, 29, 30.
43. "Blight" serves as a counterpoint to George Herbert's poem "Man," which Emerson quotes in *Nature* to illustrate the principle of congruity or identity: "Herbs gladly cure our flesh, because that they / Find their acquaintance there" (*CW* 1:41).

44. On the shift away from domination as a change in "ontological attitude," see Anderson, "Emerson's Natures," 156–8. See also Susan Dunston's recent book-length study, *Emerson and Environmental Ethics*. Jones Very's poem "Man in Harmony with Nature" may serve as a companion piece to "Blight" and "Each and All," particularly in its urging that we learn with regard to nature "the sweet obedience of the will" (*Poems and Essays*, 93, l. 7).
45. In his early lecture on "The Present Age," Emerson says, similarly, that "the ancients were self-united" (*EL* 2:168).
46. *CW* 9:274 (ll. 42–5); emphasis added. Emerson may be echoing Jonathan Edwards's well-known definition of "true virtue," which consists most fundamentally in "consent" or "love to Being in general." Emerson extends the definition to include "health": "Wherever there is health, that is, consent to the cause and constitution of the universe, there is perception and power" ("Powers and Laws of Thought," *W* 12:28). After looking backward to Edwards, we might also look forward to William James, who defines consent as our "deepest" means of "communication with the nature of things" (qtd. in Goodman, "Emerson, Romanticism, and Classical Pragmatism," 22).
47. *Nature*, *CW* 1:40; emphasis added.
48. "Blight," *CW* 9:274 (ll. 40–1).
49. "Blight," *CW* 9:273 (l. 3), 274 (l. 48), 273 (l. 2), 274 (ll. 50, 53).
50. See my discussion of this in *EM* 139–50.
51. "The Conservative," *CW* 1:187.
52. "Powers of the Mind," *LL* 2:77.
53. "Powers of the Mind," *LL* 2:70; emphasis added.
54. Goethe, *Conversations*, 1:356.
55. *LL* 1:186.
56. "Xenophanes" *CW* 9:269 (ll. 12–13). "Xenophanes" appears two poems before "Blight" in Emerson's first (1847) collection of poems. Xenophanes is one of the "old men" to whom "Blight" refers as seeing everywhere "the footsteps of the SAME." As we saw in the last chapter, he is an identity philosopher for whom "all things / Are of one pattern made" (ll. 5–6).
57. "Thoreau," *CW* 10:428, 425.
58. "Spiritual Laws," *CW* 2:79; "New England Reformers," 3:166.
59. Plato, *The Republic*, Book 4 (433a–b), in *Works* 1:274–87. Emerson's critique of the busybody may also owe something to Proclus: "That which is according to Nature is not laborious to anything" (*The Six Books . . . on the Theology of Plato*, 1:52–3; qtd. in *JMN* 6:361).
60. "Merlin, 1," *CW* 9:225 (ll. 68, 67). Poetry is, like science, "piety of the intellect" ("Poetry and Imagination," *CW* 8:37).
61. "The Powers and Laws of Thought," *LL* 1:146.
62. Cavell, *Conditions Handsome and Unhandsome*, 39.
63. "Blight," *CW* 9:274 (ll. 37–38).
64. Emerson speaks of "dwell[ing] with causes" in another early lecture ("The Head," *EL* 2: 248). The phrase *dwell and act with* in the "The American Scholar" (*CW* 1:61) gives us a good sense of the double meaning of *converse with*.
65. *CW* 4:55; emphasis added.
66. Plato, *Phaedo*, *Works* 4:282n.
67. Klein paraphrases this as "connected in kinship," *A Commentary on Plato's Meno*, 94.
68. Plato, *Phaedo*, *Works* 4:282n. For Emerson, Taylor's translations were poetry in their own right—and "Taylor the Platonist . . . really a better man of imagination, a better poet, than any English writer between Milton and Wordsworth." Emerson saw Taylor as another exemplar of greatness through

self-abandonment, through “entire surrender” to the “spirit” of Plato and Proclus, which gave him “an author’s right in their pages” (LL 2:239; cf. also CW 8:27).

69. “Self-Reliance,” CW 2:41. “Sitting home with the cause” is synonymous with “holding of the Maker,” as I have been arguing, for the endlessly recopied verse I referred to earlier is actually the first line of a couplet that treats the two actions as equivalent:

Hold of the Maker, not the made,
Sit with the Cause, or grim or glad.
(PN 384; CPT 374)

- 70 On the search for a “hard” or “solid” bottom as a thematic framing device for *Walden*, see the end of “Where I Lived and What I Lived for” and the “Conclusion,” 97–8, 330.
71. Dewey, *Quest for Certainty*, 236.
72. Dewey, *The Quest for Certainty*, 236, 237.
73. “Powers of the Mind,” LL 2:75; emphasis added.
74. JMN 14:82–3; 10:113. See my discussion of this in EM 146–50.
75. CW 1:55. For the identity of self and world in Goethe and Schelling, see Richards, *The Romantic Conception of Life*, 488, 134.
76. In an 1841 journal entry, Emerson suggests that the Joyous Science practiced by certain minds like Plato and Plotinus—he has just been reading the *Enneades*—takes us back to “the sowing of the seed of the world,” before conventional generic divisions and disciplinary boundaries, when philosophy, science, and poetry were still one (JMN 7:413).
77. I borrow the term from Richards, who cites Schlegel’s famous *Kritische Fragmenta* 115: “All art should become science and all science art; poetry and philosophy should be made one” (*The Romantic Conception of Life*, 466; cf. also 114–15).
78. “Fate,” CW 6:14.
79. On “usefulness” as the highest “measure of greatness,” CW 8:176–7.
80. CW 3:5; CS 4:166; CW 3:56.
81. LL 2:139; CW 7:14.
1. “Montaigne,” CW 4:103; “Introductory Lecture,” 1:182.
 2. CW 4:103; emphasis added.
 3. L 7:501–2.
 4. Hedge, “Coleridge’s Literary Character,” 125.
 5. On the divine “Causal Motive,” see Parker, *Theodore Parker’s Experience as a Minister*, 80.
 6. Murdoch, “Metaphysics and Ethics,” 64, 65.
 7. Van Cromphout, *Emerson’s Ethics*, 35. Despite this admission, Van Cromphout attempts to force Emerson’s ethics into a Kantian framework, as does Cladis in “Religion, Democracy, and Virtue.”
 8. I quote John Rawls’s convenient summary of Kantian heteronomy, *Lectures on the History of Moral Philosophy*, 227.
 9. EL 1:370, 2:144. The phrase echoes the language of Samuel Clarke and Richard Price, who loomed large in Emerson’s Unitarian cultural background. See Clarke, *Discourse concerning the Being and Attributes of God*, prop. XII, in *Works* 2:571–2; and Price, *Review of the Principal Questions of Morals*, 11. See also Cudworth’s similar phrasing in *A Treatise concerning Eternal and Immutable Morality*, 19, 118, 143.
 10. Schneewind, *The Invention of Autonomy*, 3.

11. The young Emerson saw the reason-versus-sentiment problem posed starkly by Hume himself in the *Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals*, which attacks the “abstract theory of morals” in Clarke and Cudworth because it “excludes all sentiment, and pretends to found every thing on reason” (Hume, *Philosophical Essays*, 2:449n).
12. Richardson, *Emerson*, 16; see also *EM* 208n11.
13. There is another explicit reference to the Categorical Imperative in “Fate,” *LL* 1:257; see also “Character,” *CW* 10:448, as well as my discussion in *EM* 191.
14. Very, “Lead Me to the Rock That Is Higher Than I,” *Poems and Essays*, 338.
15. Kant, *Grundlegung*, 45 (421:19).
16. “We have the strict analogy of the moral force in our use of universal material force” (“Morals,” *LL* 2:133).
17. As we have already seen, “there is no chance in results” (“Power,” *CW* 6:29).
18. For early examples of Emerson’s reframing skepticism as a *practical* question, see *CS* 2:30 and 4:138.
19. Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*, 138.
20. *EL* 2:86. “Being and Seeming” offers another example of the world as “guarantee” for the virtuous deed (295).
21. Stanley Cavell observes quite rightly that “the power invoked” in the phrase “hitch your wagon to a star” is “not that of leading but of being drawn” (*Little Did I Know*, 533).
22. “Spiritual Laws,” *CW* 2:92.
23. “Success,” *CW* 7:148.
24. “Morals,” *LL* 2:134; emphasis added.
25. Edwards, *The Nature of True Virtue*, 99. Edwards’s notion of virtue, which is the highest form of beauty, is restricted to “*intelligent* being in general”: “Not inanimate things, or beings that have no perception or will; which are not properly capable objects of benevolence” (5, my emphasis). Edwards does see a “secondary” form of beauty in the “mutual consent and agreement” of inanimate things among themselves, but this is not virtue, properly speaking (27–8). Emerson’s post-Romantic notion of consent extends to Nature as a whole and contains a strong element of *reciprocity*—that is, not only consent *to* but also consent *of* being.
26. I quote Cabot’s edition of the late lecture “Powers and Laws of Thought” (*W* 12:28), which, although no longer authoritative, I treat as loosely Emersonian in its consistency with the other quotations on “consent.”
27. I am not trying to present Edwards as an anti-realist; I am simply pointing to Emerson’s greater emphasis on the consent *of* being. It is worth noting, as a sign of Edwards’s commitment to the objectivity of moral distinctions, that *The Nature of True Virtue* ends with a critique of Hutcheson. Edwards feared that appeal to a moral sense might lead to a vision of moral distinctions “not at all determined by the nature of things, but by the sentiments of men with relation to the nature of things” (105). He wanted a “foundation in nature” (107). Emerson quotes Hutcheson’s *System of Moral Philosophy* in *JMN* 6:88–9.
28. Edwards, *The Nature of True Virtue*, 4.
29. Edwards, *The Nature of True Virtue*, 2, 3.
30. See *City of God*, bk.11, ch. 9 and ch. 22, pp. 440 (and n19 on the same page, for references in Plotinus), 454.
31. *CS* 2:89, 3:19; on duty as “universal” and “immutable,” cf. also 4:137.

32. In the late essay "Morals," Emerson historicizes the meaning of "virtue," fitting it into a meliorist narrative of human history illustrating a long rise from physical to moral terms (*LL* 2:140).
33. "Self-Reliance," *CW* 2:29.
34. "Plato," *CW* 4:34; emphasis added. Emerson replaced the phrase "endeavour to live in reality in the best manner I am able" in the Sydenham-Taylor edition (*Works of Plato*, 4:458–9), with "endeavour in reality to live as virtuously as I can." The change highlights the equation of truth, reality, and virtue in Socrates's call to "self-reliance."
35. "Experience," *CW* 3:46; "The American Scholar," 1:63. Self-trust in Emerson functions rather like self-command in Adam Smith's moral theory, which constitutes (as Knud Haakonssen describes it) "a sort of meta-virtue that is presupposed in all the other virtues" (Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, xx).
36. *CW* 2:139. On prudence and courage as "reconcilable" in the early lecture, cf. *EL* 2:318.
37. *EL* 2:322; *CW* 2:141.
38. *CW* 1:63–4; emphasis added.
39. See *CW* 2:149 and 7:128. I am treating the terms indifferently here, since Emerson defines heroism as "wild courage" (*CW* 2:147).
40. *CW* 7:136, 134; emphasis added.
41. *CW* 7:140; *EL* 2:156; emphasis added.
42. *CW* 3:46; emphasis added.
43. In the Lord's Supper Sermon, Emerson publicly asserted *his own*—"my own objection," "my own feelings," "my desire" (*CS* 4:192, 194)—as the *ultimate* reason for his decision to cease administering the sacrament of the Holy Communion and to resign from the ministry.
44. *CW* 8:168, 4:36; for Emerson's early (1836) adoption of Goethe's maxim, see *JMN* 5:187–8. I have benefited from Christine Korsgaard's illuminating discussion of "meddling" and of Platonic justice as the constitutive, unifying principle of moral agency (*Self-Constitution*, 146–8, 178–9). Emerson considered "objections" to Platonic justice to be "shallow": "He keeps a cobbler a cobbler but that is only illustration to show that each passion & action should keep its orbit" (*JMN* 9:214).
45. "Moral Sense," *LL* 2:145.
46. Dewey, *Art as Experience*, 35.
47. This is a point Emerson also makes in "Self-Possession": "To every soul that is created, is its path, invisible to all but itself" (*LL* 2:122).
48. "Ethics," *EL* 2:155; emphasis added.
49. *EL* 2: 147; see also "Spiritual Laws," *CW* 2:82. To designate the "direction" of the constitution, Emerson also uses the term *temperament*, which he likens, in the late lecture "Perpetual Forces," to animal instincts ("the remains of wolf, ape, and rattlesnake in [man]"). In human development, temperament "rules" as long as "the Reason is yet dormant": "As the reflective faculties open, this subsides" (*LL* 2:293). Temperament is also, of course, one of the "lords of life" in the essay "Experience," where Emerson calls it "the veto or limitation-power in the constitution" (*CW* 3:32). In saying this, however, he makes it abundantly clear that he is describing temperament's law and power as seen from the "platform of ordinary life," "of physics" (31), or "in view of nature," where "temperament is final" (32)—so much so that it "puts all divinity to rout." Though in this low state of human development the moral sentiment manages to "impose" improvements on our conduct, temperament still "holds its dominion" in limiting the power of our "moral judgements"

(31). The whole burden of the “Temperament” chapter, however, is to show that this power is ultimately “subordinate” to virtue, that there is a “creative power” in us higher than brute temperament (32), which the motto to “Experience” describes fittingly as “without a tongue” (25). One sign of our development, then, is that the “direction” of our constitution becomes *moral* and therefore less “temperamental.”

50. “Success,” CW 7:148.
51. “Power,” CW 6:38.
52. CW 4:147, 163; cf. also 10:115.
53. “Holiness,” EL 2:345; cf. also JMN 5:337.
54. “The Over-Soul,” CW 2: 161, 160; “Character,” CW 10:449.
55. “Walter Savage Landor,” CW 10:143, 144.
56. See CS 3:21.
57. UE 22. Emerson cites Cato as another pagan exemplar of virtuous character, CS 2:32.
58. UE 27–8; see also “Ethical Writers,” EL 1:358.
59. Matthew 5:48. The phrase “attainment of a perfect character” comes from Sermon 138, CS 4:39; cf. also CS 3:76 and JMN 3:190. On this theme, see Roberson, *Emerson in His Sermons*, 135–42.
60. Plotinus, *Select Works*, 259, qtd. in JMN 5:385.
61. JMN 3:290, 291; CPT 337.
62. CS 1:227; Emerson’s emphasis.
63. JMN 3:292; CPT 338.
64. “Essential Principles of Religion,” LL 2:267; “Self-Reliance,” CW 2:47.
65. “Self-Reliance,” CW 2:35; emphasis added.
66. Dewey, “Ralph Waldo Emerson,” 77.
67. “Worship,” CW 6:114. “Experience” provides another example of character as spiritual power acting without “mediate organs” (CW 3:43).
68. Lee Rust Brown speaks insightfully of Emerson’s “unyoking of character from personality,” in an ethics “at once individual and impersonal” (*The Emerson Museum*, 192). See also Sherman Paul on “true character” being “public” (*Emerson’s Angle of Vision*, 160).
69. CW 3:53, CW 10:463; emphasis added in both quotations. James Mackintosh is a likely source for Emerson’s idea that spiritual power acts “without means.” Compare *A General View of the Progress of Ethical Philosophy*, 120–3, and JMN 6:206.
70. “Spiritual Laws,” CW 2:90. Manners are the “silent and mediate expression of character” (EL 2:129).
71. “Spiritual Laws” criticizes the requirement of “visible” action as one of the “superstitions of sense” (CW 2:93). Duncan calls this “the relative superiority of integrity to action” (*The Power and Form*, 76). Dilworth notes that Emersonian self-trust “consists in striving toward a true relationship to the universe, independent of external feats of performance” (CC-RWE 254).
72. “Martin Luther,” EL 1:120–1.
73. Hedge, “Martin Luther,” *Hours with German Classics*, 69.
74. See “The Transcendentalist” for another criticism of activism and another exhortation to patience: “Cannot we . . . await our turn of action in the Infinite Counsels?” (CW 1:212).
75. “Civilization,” CW 7:15. William James remarked, in his “Address at the Centenary of Ralph Waldo Emerson,” on Emerson’s strictures against the “vanity of all super-serviceableness” (*Writings, 1902–1910*, 1122).

76. "Spiritual Laws," CW 2:78. Thus too "Trades and Professions": "I have aimed in the preceding lectures to show the omnipresence of a spiritual law subordinating all wilfulness and all chance to its restless will" (EL 2:126).
77. In the early lecture "Manners," Emerson also equates character with the will (EL 2:129).
78. "Character," CW 3:56.
79. CS 1:182; emphasis added.
80. Of the collections of major essays up to 1860, *The Conduct of Life* contains the most occurrences of the word *freedom*, which is perhaps to be expected, given Emerson's definition of one of the title's keywords: "Life is freedom" ("Fate," CW 6:21).
81. See also "Being and Seeming" on "merging [our] private nature in the world" (EL 2:299).
82. I borrow the terms from Schneewind, *The Invention of Autonomy*, 4. See my discussion of this in "Cavell's 'Moral Perfectionism' or Emerson's 'Moral Sentiment'?" (50).
83. "Moral Sense," LL 2:147.
84. "Fate," CW 6:2; emphasis added.
85. See Mackintosh, "Stewart's *Introduction*," 253.
86. CW 6:15, 13; cf. also CS 3:206.
87. "Morals," LL 2:134; "Character," CW 10:448. In this last passage, Emerson traces the categorical imperative back to Marcus Aurelius.
88. Qtd. in the 1866 essay "Character (CW 10:464) and in the 1862 lecture "Essential Principles of Religion" (LL 2:273). As Phyllis Cole observes, that line was one of his aunt's favorite sayings (*Mary Moody Emerson*, 303).
89. On "resolving" or "destroying" the individual, see EL 2:298, CW 4:14.
90. "Uses of Great Men," CW 4:20.
91. Sermon 104, CS 3:88.
92. "More and more the surges of everlasting nature enter into me, and I become *public and human* in my regards and actions" ("The Over-Soul," CW 2:175; emphasis added).
93. CW 6:19; emphasis added.
94. "Self-Reliance," CW 2:40.
 1. "The Poet," CW 3:9. *The Conduct of Life* reiterates the claim ("Beauty rests on necessities"), as does the second essay "Art" (6:156, 7:26).
 2. "Plato . . . gave us many important words. *Poet* or *Maker* was one" (LL 2:86). Emerson is surely thinking of the *Banquet* 205 b-c (*Works of Plato* 3:504).
 3. CW 5:136. Emerson names Spenser among Great Britain's "many disciples of Plato" in a long list including both philosophers and poets (134). The two lines I have quoted here and elsewhere from the "Hymne" illustrate Aristotelian *entelechy*: "the form which the soul gives the body," or "causative form" (to give the definition Emerson recorded in 1848, JMN 11:11).
 4. This is why Emerson also writes that "all that we call sacred history attests that the birth of a poet is the principal event in chronology" (CW 3:9, 7).
 5. "Being and Seeming," EL 2:308.
 6. "Poetry and English Poetry," LL 1:304; cf. also "Poetry and Imagination," CW 8:14.
 7. "Poetry and English Poetry," LL 1:306. See also JMN 13:285 (for 1854, the same year as the lecture), on Plato's "theory of Poetry" as "the generation of matter from thought."
 8. "The Powers and Laws of Thought," LL 1:139; "Poetry and Imagination," CW 8:19; JMN 8:8.
 9. "Memory," LL 2:114; "The Natural Method of Mental Philosophy," 87.

10. "Poetry and English Poetry," *LL* 1:302; emphasis added.
11. "Poetry and English Poetry," *LL* 1:303; emphasis added. Cf. also "Poetry and Imagination," *CW* 8:12.
12. Herwig Friedl claims that the vocation of the Emersonian poet, whom he describes anachronistically as already living in "postmetaphysical times," is to replace "the philosopher as metaphysician" (*Thinking in Search of a Language*, 123), whereas in point of fact Emerson sees the vocations as *one* and appeals to poetry to revitalize a cold, lifeless, abstract metaphysics, not to invalidate metaphysical thinking altogether.
13. "The Poet," *CW* 3:12.
14. William James, Centenary Address, *Writings, 1902–1910*, 1120.
15. *L* 3:216–17; "The American Scholar," *CW* 1:68.
16. "Nominalist and Realist," *CW* 3:137–8.
17. *CW* 1:68. For another instance of polarity or magnetism transforming miscellanies into order, see *CS* 2:21.
18. "Plato," *CW* 4:31–2.
19. "Plato," *CW* 4:31, 30.
20. "Art," *CW* 2:216.
21. "Poetry and Imagination," *CW* 8:8.
22. "Love," *CW* 2:105.
23. "Beauty," *CW* 6:155.
24. "Art," *CW* 2:215. Hopkins's account of Emerson's esthetics comes to the same conclusion concerning the Emersonian symbol, where "spirit"—or the flowing idea or cause—is emphasized over effect in the symbolic object (*Spires of Form*, 130–1).
25. In Hedge, *Prose Writers of Germany*, 517. Cabot was the translator for Schelling's essay (iv).
26. "Plutarch," *CW* 10:496.
27. *CW* 2:198–9. For Lee Rust Brown, Emerson is suggesting that "natural objects *are* the artist's hand—not only the artist's characteristic style but also his practical grip, in a fully bodily sense, on common or communicable truth" (*The Emerson Museum*, 242).
28. Alcott, *Journals*, 485.
29. Alcott, *Journals*, 82.
30. Alcott, *Ralph Waldo Emerson*, 31; emphasis added.
31. Alcott, *Journals*, 82. On the question of "slime," I would echo John Kaag's Peircean effort to defend—against the exclusion of such lowly things from the realm of the imagination—"the continuity between human creativity and the emergent creative forces of the physical world": "Like Peirce, the story that I would like to tell about the imagination also includes slime molds" (*Thinking through the Imagination*, 24). This continuity accords well with Emerson's.
32. Alcott, *Journals*, 82.
33. Emerson's depiction of Alcott as utterly indifferent to practical life and the natural world, though perhaps true of the early period of their friendship, is belied by Alcott's activities in the later years; see the headnote to Alcott, *Journals*, 463.
34. *JMN* 5:178, for 22 June 1836.
35. *L* 2:198; *JMN* 5:328, 14:82–3. Goethe, as poet and thinker who prized sensation, stood as Alcott's foil. See for example *TN* 2:338.
36. *Nature*, "Prospects," *CW* 1:44.
37. Dewey, *Experience and Nature*, 70, 73, 74. For an overview of Emerson's influence on Dewey's esthetic thought, see Shusterman, "Emerson's Pragmatist Aesthetics."

38. CW 1:203.
39. *EL* 2:48. Thus in Shakespeare and Homer, "their individuality vanishes" (CW 10:92).
40. On vascularity, see "Literary Ethics," CW 1:104.
41. "Shakespeare," CW 4:110.
42. See also "Poetry and Imagination" on poetry as "a new work of Nature" (CW 8:21).
43. "Plato," CW 4:27. On Emerson and defining, see Anderson, "Emerson's Platonizing of American Thought," 194–8.
44. On the role of the will and technique, see Hopkins, *Spires of Form*, 41–8. Hopkins finds Emerson to be "on the whole indifferent to technique" (59).
45. On "genius" as what "makes fingers" capable of drawing, cf. CW 1:128 and *LL* 2: 223.
46. As the first essay "Art" puts it, "in our fine arts, not imitation, but creation is the aim" (CW 2:209; for Goethe as an influence on Emerson's anti-mimetic stance, see Van Cromphout, *Emerson's Modernity*, 57–63; on imitation, see also Hopkins, *Spires of Form*, 137–9). In the late lecture "Art," however, Emerson seems less hostile to imitation, seeing it there as a teaching method of nature that moves us from "the casual and the individual" to "the majestic rhymes" (*LL* 2:221). Cf. also Schelling's denunciation of "servile imitation," as opposed to "genial imitation," which seizes on and emulates the "spirit of Nature working at the core of things" ("On the Relation of the Plastic Arts to Nature," in Hedge, *Prose Writers of Germany*, 511, 512).
47. "Nature," CW 3:104. *Natura naturans* is "the secret of form," or "that new activity which needs to roll through all things, and is impatient of counterfeits, and things not alive" ("Art," CW 2: 216). In Robert Corrington's "anti-foundational" reading, Emerson's "nature naturing . . . has no beginning and no ending" (*Deep Pantheism*, 13). Such a reading seems inconsistent with Emerson's general commitment to a *causa causarum*.
48. On the "aesthetics of *natura naturata*" as distinct from the "aesthetics of *natura naturans*," see Guardiano, *Aesthetic Transcendentalism*, 6–20.
49. On the child's world of fancy, see also "Illusions" (CW 6:166–7).
50. Of course, *estate* also has the meaning of "state" or "condition," as in Florio's translation of a famous passage in Montaigne's "Apology of Raymond Sebond" (*Essays* 2:12): "I will take man even in his highest estate" (448). But the interpretation of "I seem to have lost a beautiful estate" in a financial sense seems amply justified, in view of Emerson's explicit talk, in the sentence that immediately follows, of "bankruptcy," "debtors," and "property" (CW 3:29).
51. Lest the plural ("the innate universal laws") be seen as undermining unity, here is a line taken from the essay's initial presentation of the principle, which Emerson describes as "the guiding identity [that] runs through all the surprises and contrasts of the piece, and characterizes every law" (CW 3:106).
52. Change is in CW 3:107–12, identity in 113–14. As Danielle Follett puts it, "immanence has the last word" ("The Tension between Immanence and Dualism in Coleridge and Emerson," 218–19).
53. *JMN* 3:291; *CPT* 337.
54. The same rule applies in Emerson's theory of reading or interpretation, with its emphasis on the spirit rather than the letter. See *Nature*, CW 1:23.
55. CW 3:112; emphasis added.
56. "Every author, as far as he is great and at the same time *original*, has had the task of *creating* the taste by which he is to be enjoyed" (*Lyrical Ballads*, "Essay Supplementary to the Preface of 1815").
57. "Power," CW 6:30.

58. "Poetry and Imagination," CW 8:10; emphasis added.
59. LL 2:296–7. As "Plato: New Readings" puts it: "The mind does not create what it perceives, any more than the eye creates the rose" (CW 4:46).
60. "Introductory Lecture," CW 1:182. In "Montaigne," Emerson equates truth with the causal connection: "Truth or the connection of cause and effect alone interests us" (CW 4:96).
61. Emerson treats *veracity* and *realism* as synonyms. See LL 2:218.
62. "The Natural Method of Mental philosophy," LL 2:87; emphasis added.
63. For other instances of Emerson's love of "chemical nature" (LL 2:139), see CW 1: 22, 79, 133, and JMN 4:359.
64. "The Relation of Intellect to Natural Science," LL 1:161. In the late lecture "Art," Emerson calls this an "organic sympathy" in the artist, whereby "he lived in the lion, the horse, the bird; he crowed in the cock, he swum in the trout, he ran in the lizard, or basked in the mud turtle, as if he had occult memories of the pre-existence there before he had ascended the spiral line of metamorphosis, and come to man" (LL 2: 221). "Poetry and Imagination," in an explicative paragraph leading up to the celebration of metonymy that we have already referenced above, traces the sympathy back our cosmic origins ("The atoms of the body were once nebulae," CW 8:12).
65. Cf. "Swedenborg," CW 4:62.
66. "May-Day," CW 9:328 (ll. 550–1).
67. "Power," CW 6:29.
68. "The fine arts have nothing casual or arbitrary" ("Art," LL 2:218). The same late lecture sees the choice of the artist's subject as "constitutional" (220).
69. "Power," CW 6:28.
70. On the calico print, see also EAW 137.
71. On metonymy, see Meehan, "Ecology and Imagination," esp. 304–10. Meehan sees it as the "figure of natural metamorphosis" (305) and ties it to Emerson's early enthusiasm for Goethe's theory of plant metamorphosis (307–8).
72. "Poetry and Imagination," CW 8:10–11.
73. "Poetry and English Poetry," LL 1:302; emphasis added.
74. Julie Ellison has noted this tendency to overlapping in Emerson's poetic terms (*Emerson's Romantic Style*, 195).
75. CW 8:7–8; emphasis added. To quote "The Natural Method of Mental Philosophy": "all thought analogizes" (LL 2:88); cf. also TN 1:179 for Emerson's quote from Plato's *Timaeus*: "Analogy is identity of ratio, the most beautiful of all bonds."
76. In Dilworth's apt phrase, "Emerson was a poet-metaphysician whose method was analogy" ("Elective Affinities," 44). For much different approaches to analogy, less hospitable to metaphysics, see also Lysaker, *After Emerson*, 140–4, and Greenham, *Emerson's Transatlantic Romanticism*, chap. 4.
77. "The Natural Method of Mental Philosophy," LL 2:86. Emerson copied the definition of analogy as "identity of ratio, and the most beautiful of all bonds" not from Plato but from Thomas Taylor's footnote to Book VI of *The Republic* (Sydenham-Taylor edition, 1:355n; the note refers the definition to the *Timaeus*, but the wording does not appear there). Taylor's note gives a long explanation of Plato's use of the image of the "twice bisected line" (as Emerson calls it in the Swedenborg essay, referring specifically to the "sixth book of the Republic," CW 4:66; *Republic* 1:352–6). Taylor explains that the analogy of the line represents "the progression of all things from *the one*" as a "continuity" (354n). The passage in the note devoted to analogy is worth quoting in full, for its metaphysical implications in Emerson: "For analogy is identity of ratio, the most beautiful of all bonds, as we learn in the *Timaeus*,

- and is the judgment of Jupiter, as we are informed in the Laws. As therefore *the universe was fabricated according to analogy*, all things receiving an indissoluble friendship with each other, so all things proceed bound, and in mutual consent through analogy" (355n; emphasis added).
78. CW 5:135. It is worth noting here that on the page that follows, Emerson cites—as one of modern intellectual history's great generalizations that illustrate "a kind of filial respect to Plato and the Greeks"—Bacon's motto *imperat parendo* ("nature is commanded by obeying her," 136).
 79. CW 1:54, 8:20; LL 1:299.
 80. As Sherman Paul rightly observes, the "reconcilers" are "bringers of the meta-physical relief of identity" (*Emerson's Angle of Vision*, 204).
 81. CW 4:163. Leon Chai argues, however, that Emerson and Goethe were in agreement on goodness as the highest form of beauty. See *The Romantic Foundations of the American Renaissance*, 379–80.
 82. CW 4:124.
 83. "Poetry and Imagination," CW 8:20. Emerson savored Jonson's description of good poetry as "rammed with life" (CW 10:117, 497).
 84. "Art," CW 7:26. As Dilworth points out, the essay "Beauty" also rises to "the moral element," as an expression of Platonic "Unity" and "Mind" (CW 6:163; CC-RWE 41–2).
 85. "Art," CW 2:213; "Thoughts on Modern Literature," 10:101.
 1. James, *Writings, 1902–1910*, 1122, 1120.
 2. James, *Writings, 1902–1910*, 1124, 1125, 1124. For an overview of scholarship on the moral sentiment, see David Robinson's "Historical Introduction" to the sermons, CS 1:24n55.
 3. Robinson, *Emerson and the Conduct of Life*, 195.
 4. CW 3:40; cf. also 7:138 (on the moral sentiment as what is "always new," what "leads and surprises").
 5. JMN 5:337.
 6. "Montaigne," CW 4:103.
 7. JMN 9:431; LL 1:147.
 8. For the moral sentiment as compelling belief or thought, see also "Character," CW 10:448.
 9. "Moral Sense," LL 2:149.
 10. James, *Writings, 1902–1910*, 36.
 11. Divinity School Address, CW 1:77–80, paragraphs 5–10.
 12. CW 1:79. In the "Introductory Lecture" to his *Lectures on the Times*, delivered two and a half years after the Divinity School Address, Emerson asserts similarly that the moral sentiment "makes by its presence or absence right and wrong, beauty and ugliness" (CW 1:182).
 13. James, *Writings, 1902–1910*, 37–8.
 14. "Self-Reliance," CW 2:37; "Fate," 6:27. See also the concluding paragraph of "The Method of Nature," where Emerson equates "the mighty and transcendent Soul" with wisdom (1:135–6).
 15. James, *Writings, 1902–1910*, 1125.
 16. "George Fox," EL 1:167. Emerson's view of the "Religious Sentiment" here as a feeling of intimate union with the *causa causarum* is consistent with his position thirty-five years later in the essay "Works and Days" (1870), where he will describe piety as alone capable of detecting "the ligaments . . . which attach the dull men and things we know to the First Cause" (CW 7: 91).
 17. James, *Writings, 1902–1910*, 1121.
 18. JMN 5:356–7; emphasis added.
 19. James, *Writings, 1902–1910*, 1124.

20. "Montaigne," CW 4:85.
21. Notebook XO insists, likewise, that play, illusions, surfaces, and particulars are educational (TN 1:248), as does an 1843 letter to Margaret Fuller: "The events & thoughts among which we play, look small & tangible when they arrive in our hands & understandings, but their pedigree has a million links & their parentage is as old as Heaven & the First Cause" (L 3:222). See also LL 2:96 and CW 6:113.
22. "Nominalist and Realist," CW 3:144.
23. L 7:403; 26 October 1840. Emerson befriended Sturgis in the fall of 1839. In their correspondence, as Robert Richardson notes, Sturgis, sixteen years younger than Emerson, became "Bettina" to his "Goethe" (*Emerson: The Mind on Fire*, 327–30).
24. On never passing out of the vision of the "Holy of Holies," see also JMN 5:307.
25. As Hocking puts it, "the religious consciousness is *evanescent*; faith is unstable as empirical knowledge is not," *The Meaning of God in Human Experience*, 144.
26. "The Over-Soul," CW 2:159; emphasis added.
27. "I am struck with nothing more than the disproportionate power of certain hours: with the fact that years cannot compare with the force of moments" ("Reform," LL 2:154; cf. also "Powers of the Mind" on "weighty" experiences, 73).
28. Or perhaps I should say, "metaphysico-religious." Under the heading "My Method," Emerson noted in his journal: "I write Metaphysics, but my method is purely expectant" (JMN 11:267).
29. Bartol, *Radical Problems*, 73, 223.
30. James, *Writings, 1902–1910*, 1121.
31. Divinity School Address, CW 1:79; Emerson's italics.
32. Divinity School Address, CW 1:83, 82.
33. "Worship," CW 6:128; "Men of Thought," LL 1:189.
34. With his firm faith in spontaneity as a measure of sincerity, Emerson tends to disregard or minimize the possibility of "perversion of sentiment" (Smith, *The Theory Moral Sentiments*, 382), which he limits to the surface level of social contact and external pressure to conform. Hence his counter-emphasis on the "private" heart or "inmost" conviction as the ground of self-reliance (CW 2:27).
35. Bartol, "Emerson's Religion," 117.
36. On feeling as the final word in religious matters, see Mott, "The Strains of Eloquence," 105. For the Lord's Supper Sermon as a declaration of personal independence, see Roberson, *Emerson in His Sermons*, 194–209.
37. *Nature*, CW 1:37–8.
38. As the Divinity School Address puts it: "That which [man] venerates is still his own, though he has not realized it yet" (CW 1:77).
39. CW 6:114; on motherwit and self-reliance, cf. also 71.
40. "Worship," CW 6:108.
41. See for example Parker, *Theodore Parker's Experience as a Minister*, 52, and Furness, *Remarks on the Four Gospels*, 114–15.
42. "The Transcendentalists decisively abandoned that part of Edwards' thought which linked him most closely with Locke but clung to that part which linked him with Enthusiasm and evangelical Christianity. . . . [T]hey clung to the Edwards of the *Religious Affections*" (White, *Science and Sentiment in America*, 78). The writings of Orestes Brownson and George Ripley confirm White's second point in their appeal to Edwards and to the American tradition of experimental religion, in their polemical replies to the "Pope" of Unitarianism, Andrews Norton. See Brownson, "Norton on the Evidences of Christianity," 206–7; for Ripley, see his first *Letter* to Norton (87–9) and *Philosophical Miscellanies*, 1:220–2.

43. For the emphasis on religious feeling in the writings of Constant and Schleiermacher, see Ripley, "Schleiermacher as a Theologian" (esp. 4, 11, and 17) and Brownson's *New Views of Christianity, Society, and the Church*, which warmly recommends both Schleiermacher's *Über die Religion* and Constant's *De la religion* (110). Brownson had already championed Constant's conception of the religious sentiment two years earlier in his *Christian Examiner* review article "Benjamin Constant on Religion." Ripley, for his part, would include in volume two of *Philosophical Miscellanies* one of Constant's writings on religion which emphasizes that the religious sentiment is "an essential element in the nature of man," as distinct from the different cultural and institutional forms it takes (2:280; cf. also 313–4, 316, 318–9; for a contemporary, rationalist-Unitarian critique of Constant's religion of feeling as a form of skepticism about religious truth, see Bowen's *Lowell Lectures*, 205–9). Ripley also devoted over two-thirds of his 154-page *Third Letter* to Norton entirely to Schleiermacher, whose position he summarized thus: religion, "as a sense of God on the soul, has its seat, neither in knowledge, nor in action, but in feeling" (25–6). Hedge was translating "good things out of Schleiermacher" to Emerson in 1834 (*JMN* 4:360).
44. *JMN* 9:381; on the "cold correctness" of Unitarianism, see also 12:528. The accusation was not entirely fair, as David Robinson points out in his "Historical Introduction" to *CS* 1 (18–21).
45. Wordsworth, "Ode: Intimations of Immortality"; qtd. in *EL* 2:85.
46. Qtd. in Cole, *Mary Moody Emerson*, 152.
47. Cole, *Mary Moody Emerson*, 17. Supporters of the Awakening were "New Lights"; their opponents, "Old Lights."
48. For proof of Mary Emerson's decisive influence through "the depth of her religious sentiment," see Waldo's 1837 journal entry on his "ancestral religion" (*JMN* 5:323–4).
49. Edwards, *Treatise Concerning the Religious Affections*, 101.
50. *CW* 1:93. The early lecture "Religion" also gives "joy" the final word (*EL* 2:97). For the "Stoic" side of this emotion, see also Woelfel, "The Beautiful Necessity," 124–5.
51. Robinson, "For Largest Liberty," 21.
52. Parker, *Theodore Parker's Experience*, 106; cf. also 113 on the distinction between piety ("unselfish love towards God") and morality ("the keeping of his Natural Law"). For Parker, piety is "not dependent on conscience" (106).
53. Bartol, "Emerson's Religion," 119.
54. Sermon 170, *CS* 4:236, 237.
55. *JMN* 3:166, for 15 October 1829.
56. "Worship," *CW* 6:115; emphasis added.
57. "Worship," *CW* 6:108. Thus too "Private Life": "I think a man's conviction of the perfectness of the Divine Justice the best measure of his culture" (*EL* 3:252).
58. In an 1861 lecture "Celebration of Intellect," which recalls "The American Scholar," Emerson describes the "prosaic" and atheistic attitude as one that does not perceive the place of *miscellanea* within the "system and connection of things" (*LL* 2:250).
59. James, *Writings, 1902–1910*, 39.
60. *JMN* 8:194. To quote Emerson's notebook XO (for "Inexorable"), "Life [is] a perpetual instruction in Cause & effect" (*TN* 1:238).
61. "Worship," *CW* 6:117, 118. For an early use of "police" to describe the operation of the moral sentiment as law, see *CS* 1:195, as well as *JMN* 3:134–5.
62. "The boundary line or stone betwixt man and his Maker, he thinks, was never found. He can scarce say *Thou* to Him of whom he is part" (Bartol, "Emerson's Religion," 113).

63. Dugald Stewart observes that prior to Hume, who was following “the example of the French metaphysicians,” the use of *sentiment* “as synonymous with *feeling*”—rather than with “opinion” or “conviction”—was “quite unprecedented” in English (*Works* 4:399n). For Stewart, the works of Adam Smith and the “best English writers” on ethics show that in correct usage *sentiment* means “those complex determinations of mind, which result from the cooperation of our rational powers and of our moral feelings” (398n). However, in the formation of this “*compounded sentiment*” of head and heart, Stewart gives primacy not to feeling but to “intellectual judgment” as “the ground-work of the feeling, and not the feeling of the judgment” (80).
64. Mackintosh, *A General View of the Progress of Ethical Philosophy*, 123.
65. *CW* 1:77; emphasis added.
66. *EL* 2:344; *JMN* 5:362.
67. The architectural metaphor does not connote *fixity*, for the moral sentiment requires enactment as part of the process: “The sentiment never rests in vision, but wishes to be enacted. It does not pause, but must flow” (*TN* 3:266).
68. *CS* 1:191 (Sermon 21). The text of the sermon was Romans 2:14–15: “These . . . are a law unto themselves; which show the work of the law written in their hearts.”
69. *CW* 1:68, *CS* 2:20, 21.
70. This verse, which I call the “motto” of Transcendentalism’s “ontological turn” (*EM* 51), was also quoted by Peirce in his argument for metaphysical realism in *Reasoning and the Logic of Things* (“Lecture Three,” 161).
71. Emerson gives a homelier rendering of the etymology in a late journal entry: “there is no such cord in nature for fagoting thoughts as well as actions, as *religion*, which means *fagoting*” (*JMN* 16:204–5).
72. *CW* 10:473.
73. *EL* 2:83, 84; cf. also 181.
74. Butler, *Works* 2:181, 180. On this experience in Emerson, see also Jan Stievertmann, *Der Sündenfall der Nachahmung*, 415–16.
75. Whitehead, *Religion in the Making*, 15–16.
76. “Spiritual Laws,” *CW* 2:79. This line needs to be understood in the context of Emerson’s ongoing critique of the fetishism of action, or the “White Devil” of *Works*, which I discussed in Chapter 3.
77. Taylor, *The Secular Age*, 351.
78. Taylor, *The Secular Age*, 383, 387, 764. Bruce Ronda enlists Taylor in an effort to overturn Perry Miller’s verdict on the essentially religious character of Transcendentalism. For Ronda the movement was, despite its “backward glance” towards religion, *already* secular (*The Fate of Transcendentalism*, 34). This view seems to me anachronistic (as Ronda’s title suggests). Ronda also overlooks the fact that, for Taylor, Emerson’s cosmic religion of “impersonal order” is *still* a religion. I think the younger Henry James was much closer to the mark in asserting that Emerson was “not in the least a secularizer, but in his own subtle insinuating way a sanctifier” (“Ralph Waldo Emerson,” 253).
79. Bartol, *Radical Problems*, 85.
80. Whitehead, *Science and the Modern World*, 234.
81. Harris, “Emerson’s Philosophy of Nature,” 339.
82. “Holiness,” *EL* 2:354.
83. For the original journal record of the conversation, which took place two decades earlier, see *JMN* 8:182–3; cf. also 15:93. James quotes Emerson’s

- "Other World!" exclamation in the Centenary Address (*Writings, 1902–1910*, 1124).
84. Sermon 133, delivered in 1831, is one of Emerson's most vigorous and sustained early expressions of realism in religious matters: "these things which Religion teaches and does are real and eternal" (CS 3:258–9). For a late, explicitly "causationist" defense of this realism, see "Immortality," CW 8:190.
 85. "We are natural believers; Connexionists; Causationists" (JMN 9:350).
 86. Brown, *Inquiry into the Relation of Cause and Effect*, 210.
 1. "Introductory Lecture," CW 1:167; "The Conservative," 186, 184; "Address to the Citizens of Concord," EAW 58; "Fate," CW 6:18–19, 17.
 2. "The history of mankind interests us only as it exhibits a steady gain of truth and right, in the incessant conflict which it records, between the material and the moral nature" ("An Address on the Emancipation of the Negroes in the British West Indies," EAW 8).
 3. "Introductory Lecture," CW 1:168; "Fate," CW 6:1.
 4. Emerson, "Address at the Woman's Rights Convention," LL 2:29. For criticism of Emerson's stand on the women's rights issue, see for example, Steele, "The Limits of Political Sympathy."
 5. "Fate," CW 6:2. Emerson uses this method in his defense of Quakerism, as a necessary first step before turning to criticism of the sect, "George Fox," EL 1:179–80.
 6. "Nominalist and Realist," CW 3:142, 145, 143.
 7. "The Transcendentalist," CW 1:207.
 8. Bugbee, *The Inward Morning*, 131.
 9. CW 1:79; cf. also EAW 58, where the moral sentiment is called "the basis of human society."
 10. "Civilization," CW 7:16–17.
 11. Dewey, *Experience and Nature*, 189, 188. I am quoting the concluding paragraphs of chapter 6, "Nature, Mind and the Subject."
 12. Bacon, *The Advancement of Learning*, Bk. 2, in *Francis Bacon*, 187.
 13. JMN 11:273.
 14. EAW 119.
 15. "The Oversoul," CW 2:161. Emerson's punning on *soul* in the opening paragraph of "New England Reformers"—"the soul of the soldiery of dissent" (CW 3:149)—provides yet another instance of the philosophical seriousness of his wordplay.
 16. Qtd. in Todorov, *Benjamin Constant*, 63.
 17. Kateb, *Emerson and Self-Reliance*, 194.
 18. Pollock provides an excellent account of "authentic individualism" in Emerson's philosophy ("The Single Vision," 34–41).
 19. LL 1:116, 309. For Emerson, arithmetic was "the French muse" (314). Cf. also JMN 16:125, as well as Packer, "Emerson and the Terrible Tabulations of the French," and, on the French statistician Adolphe Quetelet, whom Emerson surely also has in mind, Walls, *Emerson's Life in Science*, 188–92.
 20. JMN 7:407. Notwithstanding Emerson's high-minded disdain for arithmetic, his refusal to join the community was not innocent of calculation, as evidenced in an exchange of letters with his brother William, the family businessman, whom he consulted on the financial viability of the project (EB-L 338–40).
 21. Channing, *Works*, 140. For Channing, "our social nature and connections are means. Inward power is the end,—a power which is to triumph over and control the influence of society" (*ibid.*).
 22. "Society," EL 2:107.

23. *LL* 1:119, 2:157.
24. In “New England Reformers,” Emerson renders the idea of ambivalence with a bit of wordplay on the individual who “is not *individual*, but is dual” (*CW* 3:157).
25. “Reforms,” *EL* 3:260; emphasis added.
26. Emerson certainly knew the rest of the quotation, in which Goethe declares his maxim to be “more necessary than ever” (*notwendiger als je*) for the individual under intense partisan pressure (of the very sort I emphasized in the passage just quoted from “Reforms”): “*Beharre wo du stehst!—Maxime, notwendiger als je, indem einerseits die Menschen in große Parteien gerissen werden; sodann aber auch jeder Einzelne nach individueller Einsicht and Vermögen sich geltend machen will*” (Goethe, *Werke*, vol. 50, 145).
27. Moral or spiritual quality is the only real multiplier: “Napoleon was called by his men *Cent Mille*. Add honesty to him, and they might have called him Hundred Million” (*CW* 6:132–3). Lacking this quality, Napoleon, as Dan Malachuk rightly observes of this passage, is for Emerson “just numbers” (*Two Cities*, 149; see also the contrast with John Brown, 160–1).
28. The beauty of a bird, for example, “is not in its ounces and inches, but in its relations to nature” (“Beauty,” *CW* 6:150), as we have seen in the poem “Each and All.”
29. For the historical and political background of the term in 19th-century Germany, see Ute Frevert, “La politique des sentiments au XIXe siècle,” esp. 51–3, as well as her *Gefühlspolitik*. Frevert uses the term in a neo-Weberian approach to describe the appeal to emotion as a technique of political communication and domination in the period, and not to designate a self-reliant politics motivated by individual feeling, which is the sense I am giving it here.
30. “Politics,” *CW* 3:128. The “power of love as the basis of a State” may seem less wildly unrealistic and unpolitical if we consider that for Emerson love is the “force” or “power” that “equalizes” (Sermon 35, *CS* 1:274, 276; cf. also the political appeals to love in the “Introductory Lecture” and “New England Reformers,” *CW* 1:168 and 3:155).
31. “Politics,” *CW* 3:129, 128.
32. In the lower orders of animal life, Emerson does see physical survival power in numbers: “no rescue for flies and mites, but their spawning numbers, which no ravages can overcome” (*EAW* 31). With human races, on the other hand, the saving (moral) power must come from an idea, and not sheer numbers. Hence Emerson’s emphasis on the “powers and native endowments” of the “blacks”: “I think this a circumstance of the highest import. Their whole future is in it” (30).
33. The essay “Fate” returns to a stark representation of races as “guano”—placing the “German and Irish millions,” let us note well, *on the same plane as “the Negro”*—as subjected to the implacable laws of numbers (*CW* 6:9). It should be pointed out too, however, that this is the *negative* dialectical moment of the essay, the moment of “Fate as natural history” (12), *before* Emerson turns to the topic of freedom and the moral sentiment.
34. In an egregiously unfair reading of this moment of the speech, John Lysaker finds—after deliberately excising the most admirable lines from a long quotation—nothing positive in it, assimilating Emerson’s final reference to playing “the master’s part” to “supremacist” thinking (*After Emerson*, 101–2).
35. “The Transcendentalist,” *CW* 1:203.
36. Emerson also names Frederick Douglass in the journal entry that was first draft of this passage of the Emancipation in the British West Indies speech (*JMN* 9:125). Cornell West has called this Emerson’s “most enlightened statement of

- 1844" (West, *The American Evasion of Philosophy*, 30). Field calls the speech "a major imaginative triumph," "containing the most generous and egalitarian statements on race he ever pronounced" (*Ralph Waldo Emerson*, 198, 185).
37. "Among Emerson's many tributes to Self-Reliance, none was nobler than this" (Buell, *Emerson*, 254).
 38. For Emerson, surprise is always of the domain of the "incalculable" (cf. *JMN* 15:19).
 39. For a groundbreaking treatment of the unwelcome consequences of "detranscendentalizing" Emerson's politics, see Malachuk, "Emerson's Politics, Retranscendentalized."
 40. "Racialist racist" is John Lysaker's term, *After Emerson*, 106. For balanced treatments of Emerson's thinking on the race question, see Gougeon (*Virtue's Hero*, 178–86 and "Race"), Field, *Ralph Waldo Emerson* (chap. 6), and especially Buell, *Emerson*, 249–70. Classical critical readings include Nicoloff, *Emerson on Race and History* and West, *The American Evasion of Philosophy*, 28–35. More recently, Lysaker has presented what is almost entirely a *dossier à charge* (*After Emerson*, 88–108). For an assessment of other recent readings in the same spirit, see Gougeon's overview in "Race" (197). Gougeon is particularly useful in pointing out problems of scholarly and readerly method in such interpretations. For my part, I would agree with Buell that "a 'glass half full' interpretation seems fairer than a glass half empty, especially with regard to Emerson's increasing participation in antislavery efforts during the 1850s" (*Emerson*, 260). Adversarial readings have a deplorable tendency to downplay, dismiss, or ignore the importance of Emerson's antislavery activism, as if that were somehow a separate issue with no bearing on our assessment of the man and his thought.
 41. See for example *JMN* 2:44–49, 13:198. Buell notes that the Emancipation speech closes "ominously" with one of Emerson's characteristic "tribalist" celebrations of the superiority of the "Saxon race" as constitutionally "friendly to liberty" and "inconsistent with slavery" (Buell, *Emerson*, 261; *EAW* 33; see also "Fate" for a reference to the "imperial Saxon race," *CW* 6:17). Buell's general conclusion on the race controversy is exemplary for its combination of scholarly rigor and intellectual fairness: "The exact degree to which, finally, the liberationist thrust of Emerson's antislavery thought was compromised by Anglocentrism, sometimes amounting even to racism, is not likely to be resolved anytime soon" (269).
 42. With the metaphor of "higher steam," democratic society becomes "no less—and no more—than a justice machine" (Malachuk, *Two Cities*, 137)—that is, a technical means to a higher end. On Emerson's "reassessment" of the machine as a useful means to a moral end, see also 173–6.
 43. For moments in *The Philosophy of History* where Emerson appeals explicitly to the principle of identity or unity (as one "mind" or "soul" or "essence"), see, for example, *EL* 2:13, 15, 19, 35, 50, 70, 73, 112, 115, 159, 167, 178, 181, 188. In the closing lines of "Society," Emerson calls this the "Identical Nature" that we all share (112). In the winter 1839–40 lecture series *The Present Age*, delivered three years after *The Philosophy of History*, identity (as One Mind or Soul) continues to be a structuring principle, by Emerson's own admission (see *EL* 3:224, 233, and 302).
 44. *EL* 2:186. To quote John Michael Corrigan's useful summary: "The historical series of being exists prior to individual consciousness, but its order and laws are reconstructed by a consciousness that attempts to turn back upon itself and remember the entire history of its amelioration" ("The Metempsychotic

- Mind," 443). Corrigan speaks of the individual's "realizing history's progression in himself" as an instance of his use of metempsychosis (444).
45. After *The Philosophy of History*, the essay "History" gives us, in concentrated form, the continuation of Emerson's identity philosophy, as we see in his bold opening declaration: "There is one mind common to all individual men. Every man is an inlet to the same and to all of the same" (CW 2:3; see also 4: "universal mind," "universal nature"; 9: "identity of history"; 15: "the eternity of man, the identity of his thought"). The essay ends on an appeal to "our central and wide-related nature" (23).
 46. CW 1:177; emphasis added. See Field's discussion of "thoughtful inaction" in *Ralph Waldo Emerson*, 211–14.
 47. Cf. JMN 7:384. The phrase appears in *Lyrical Ballads* (which Emerson knew well), in a dialogue poem entitled "Expostulation and Reply," where Wordsworth defends himself against a friend's reproach of idleness.
 48. "The Baptist and the Christ; or Reformers and Humanity," in Hedge, *Sermons*, 143.
 49. "Politics," EL 3: 244. As the EL editors explain, the passage between brackets completes the sentence but comes from a later, nonconsecutive leaf of the manuscript, written on different paper.
 50. The image of home appears also in the second early lecture "Politics," where Emerson describes the "Wise Man" as sovereign (EL 3:242).
 51. "Politics," CW 3:128, 129.
 52. "Politics," CW 3:125; "Politics," EL 3:246.
 53. "The Young American," CW 1:231.
 54. EAW 84. On Emersonian self-reliance as God-reliance, see Levine, "Skeptical Triangle?," 239–43. On the "higher law debates" in the period, see Malachuk, *Two Cities*, chap. 3.
 55. "That which all things tend to educe . . . is character" ("Politics," CW 3:126).
 56. "Culture," CW 6:74; "Politics," CW 3:126.
 57. "Progress of Culture," CW 8:113.
 58. "History," CW 2:7; emphasis added.
 59. CW 3:121; EL 2:71.
 60. For a good framing of this issue, in a way that is respectful of Emerson's own emphasis on "ends," see Malachuk, "Democracy," 123–4.
 61. "Politics," EL 3:241. See also CW 3:118.
 62. "Fortune of the Republic," LL 2:335. As Dewey put it, in an insight well worth pondering: for Emerson "democracy is neither a form of government nor a social expediency but a metaphysic of the relation of man and his experience to nature" ("Maurice Maeterlinck," 43).
 63. "Morals," LL 2:133.
 64. Kateb uses the term *mental self-reliance* in his first chapter entitled—tellingly—"Self-Reliance and the Life of the Mind" (*Emerson and Self-Reliance*, 10).
 65. For a reading accentuating the positive dimension of the speech and its appeal to higher law, see Specq, "Emerson's Rhetoric of Empowerment."
 66. Neal Dolan has rightly emphasized "what might be called the emotional physicality of moral reason" in the Emancipation Address, *Emerson's Liberalism*, 207.
1. "Works and Days," CW 7:88, 87.
 2. CW 4:95 ("no superlative"), 5:66 ("avoids the superlative"), 4:95, and 2:171 ("the positive degree").
 3. JMN 7:83. A "Gunter" is a scale.
 4. JMN 9:295. Xavier Tilliette surmises that Goethe might have been thinking of Schelling in these cautionary lines, *Schelling: une philosophie en devenir*, 1:468.

5. For the *Urpflanze* as embodiment of *process*, see Zammito, *The Gestation of German Biology*, 293.
6. "In Botany especially have I come upon an *εν και παν*" (Goethe qtd. in *JMN* 5:128). Beiser calls Schelling's presentation of his *Naturphilosophie*, in the 1801 *Darstellung meines Systems*, the first "technical exposition of the '*εν και παν*,' that pantheistic *credo* that had become so popular in Germany in the 1790s" (*German Idealism*, 553). For the sources of Emerson's thinking on *εν και παν*, not only in Goethe but also Xenophanes, Cudworth, and Degérando, see *JMN* 5:128n393 and 12:277n11. In this last journal entry, Emerson explains *εν και παν*, which he usually translates by "All in Each," as follows: "Nature is too thin a screen: the glory of the One breaks through everywhere." See also on this theme Paul, *Emerson's Angle of Vision*, 118–19.
7. Zammito, *The Gestation of German Biology*, 294.
8. Qtd. in Stallo, *General Principles of the Philosophy of Nature*, 334–5n.
9. Van Cromphout, *Emerson's Modernity and the Example of Goethe*, 51.
10. Duncan, *The Power and Form of Emerson's Thought*, 12.
11. For one such claim, see Friedl, *Thinking in Search of a Language*, 35–6, 112–3.
12. *JMN* 11:386; emphasis added.
13. *CS* 4:230. See my discussion of the "round of second causes" in *EM* 46–7, 62–3.
14. Goodman, "Ralph Waldo Emerson," 182. Cf. also "Epilogue," 241.
15. Rescher, *Process Philosophy*, 6.
16. Rescher, *Process Metaphysics*, 35; for convenience, I have numbered Rescher's original list and combined his two forms of activity in nature and persons.
17. "Moral Sense," *LL* 2:145. See also Paul, who reads the berry as an instance of both process and "intimacy" (*Emerson's Angle of Vision*, 91). The example of the berry well illustrates a sentence in Stallo that Emerson copied in his journal ten years earlier: "Every individual existence is but a living history, and its truth, its real being, is its entire development through all its phases, taken as a unity" (*General Principles*, 58–9; *JMN* 11:200).
18. "The Powers and Laws of Thought," *LL* 1:149; cf. also *JMN* 10:479. Emerson is drawing a parallel between the "idealizing" teachings of science and the power of the Platonic dialectic ("the science of sciences").
19. *JMN* 11:200; Stallo, *General Principles*, 93.
20. Rescher, *Process Metaphysics*, 58. See also Rescher's example of process philosophy's realism about the existence of trees (59), which resembles Emerson's vision of the berry.
21. Richardson, *First We Read*, 25.
22. This is Emerson's point in the "Idealism" chapter of *Nature*, where he describes the higher pleasure given by the poet, who "unfixes the land and the sea," "who 'delineates, as on air, the sun, the mountain, the camp, the city, the hero, the maiden, *not different from what we know them*, but only lifted from the ground and afloat before the eye'" (*CW* 1:31; emphasis added).
23. Pollock, "The Single Vision," 33.
24. Marquet, *Liberté et existence*, 27.
25. *CW* 4:163; *JMN* 4:301 (and 7:367); *CW* 10:115.
26. *CW* 10:115. There is of course a *political* dimension to Emerson's criticism: "No man was permitted to call Goethe brother" (*ibid.*). Goethe's aristocratic egotism fails him not only in religion (i.e., all that concerns the "holy" and the "divine") but also in common "sympathy with humanity" (*JMN* 5:306). Emerson saw Goethe's inability to surrender self to the public or universal as of a piece with his "dislike or contempt for common virtue standing on common principles" (4:300–1).

27. CW 4:165–6; emphasis added. On the impersonalizing effect of culture, see also *EL* 3:253.
 28. CW 4:164; emphasis added. Cf. also *TN* 3:230 for Emerson's quotation of the original German.
 29. Van Cromphout, *Emerson's Modernity*, 127. On fluid selfhood, see also Constantinesco, "Emerson and William James, ou les vertus de la croyance," 65–6.
 30. James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, in *Writings, 1902–1910*, 438.
 31. Putnam, "The Moral Life of a Pragmatist," 88n1.
 32. Rescher, *Process Metaphysics*, 82.
 33. Hartshorne, "Emerson's Secularized Calvinism," in *Creativity in American Philosophy*, 45.
 34. *LL* 1:123. On Emerson and creativity, John McDermott, John Michael Corrigan, and Roger Lopez seem closer to the mark, because more receptive (at least implicitly) to Emerson's compatibilism and to the empowerment he saw in the causal order. See McDermott, "Spires of Influence," 54; Corrigan, "The Metempsychotic Mind," 446; Lopez, "Art," CC-RWE 35.
 35. Hopkins, *Spires of Form*, 2.
 36. "The Poet," CW 3:12.
 37. Hopkins, *Spires of Form*, 130, 131.
 38. *TN* 1:121, 3:213.
 39. "Beauty," CW 6:155. As we recall, power likewise "resides in the moment of transition from a past to a new state, in the shooting of the gulf" (2:40).
 40. Emerson makes Goethe's quoted words his own in the late lecture "Art," *LL* 2:221.
 41. McDermott, "Spires of Influence," 51.
 42. Hocking, *The Meaning of God in Human Experience*, xxvi–xxvii. Hocking echoes the "unfinished world" William James describes in *Pragmatism (Writings, 1902–1910)*, 530).
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