

Beauty, virtue, and religious exemplars

IAN JAMES KIDD

*Department of Philosophy, University of Nottingham, University Park, Nottingham,
NG7 2RD, UK*

e-mail: df12ijk@gmail.com

Abstract: This article explores the beauty of religious exemplars – those special persons whose conduct and comportment marks their life out as one that exemplifies a religious life. Such exemplars are consistently described as beautiful, but it is not clear how or why. I suggest that we can make sense of the aesthetic aspect of religious exemplarity by adopting a ‘virtue-centric’ theory of beauty that understands the beautiful in terms of the expression or manifestation of virtues. Religious exemplars are those who have cultivated their virtues to an advanced degree and are beautiful for that reason. Attending to the beauty of religious exemplars can enrich exemplarist virtue theory, the aesthetics of character, and our understanding of the nature of a religious life.

Introduction

Every religious tradition recognizes certain persons as being exemplars of a religious life. Such people are the monks, nuns, saints, *gurus*, *yogis*, *bodhisattva*, or *daoshi* who exemplify a life of aspiration to, and attainment of, spiritual goodness. Such religious exemplars are described within the terms of their respective traditions as godly, saintly, wise, enlightened, or ‘attuned to *dao*’, but also as being *beautiful*. If so, one can look for beauty in religion not only in objects and practices – songs or statues, art or architecture – but also in certain *persons*. In this article, I explore and defend the claim that beauty in religion can be found in exemplary religious persons. What follows is, then, an exercise in the aesthetics of religion, the study of the place and significance of aesthetic values and experiences in religious lives and traditions. Much of the current interest in the aesthetic and the religious is inspired by the work in ‘theological aesthetics’, such as that of Hans Urs von Balthasar, but it also includes a growing body of work by philosophers,

including Roger Scruton and Mark Wynn.¹ I specifically want to secure the possibility that religious beauty can be found in these exemplars, as well as in the artistic practices and material culture of religion. If that is correct, then it is not only religious art and icons that, in Scruton's phrase, can act as 'concrete images of transcendent truths', through which the faithful can 'understand their Creator' – for, if I am right, then exemplary religious persons can do so, too.²

Religious exemplars

Instead of speaking of 'religious exemplars', I will speak more simply of 'sages', a term less irredeemably associated with any specific tradition, while still connoting a high degree of moral and spiritual attainment. Such inclusiveness is needed because I want to recognize a range of religious exemplars from culturally diverse traditions. A sage, in my sense, could be a Christian saint, a Hindu *yogi*, or a Daoist *daoshi*, and can appear in traditions that are western or Asian, theistic or non-theistic, and so on. But what unites such sages is their status in their respective traditions as exemplars of an advanced stage or form of religious life – of the 'enlightened' life, 'liberated' from the 'wheel of suffering', sought by Buddhists and Hindus, say. Such sages are, then, those whose conduct and character reflect the cultivation of what David E. Cooper calls a *religious sense*.³ This has two aspects: first, a sense of there being something (although not necessary an object or entity) transcendent of the world as ordinarily experienced – God, Brahman, or *śūnyata*, perhaps. Second, it has an allied sense that it is possible, desirable, or even imperative to align or attune or assimilate one's life to that which transcends the ordinarily experienced world. Think of the Daoist's ideal of a way of life that 'follows the way of *dao*', or a Buddhist's enlightened life illuminated by the Four Noble Truths, or the theistic comportments that Kierkegaard described as being 'in the truth'. The sage is an exemplar in so far as their life cultivates and expresses a religious sense to an advanced or superlative degree.

Sages are aesthetically, as well as morally and spiritually, impressive. The idea that they are beautiful personages connects aesthetics of religion with two other debates. The first concerns the 'aesthetics of character', the idea that a good moral character is itself aesthetically pleasing, an idea Plato developed as the 'beautiful soul'. This idea has been revived, after centuries of neglect, not least thanks to a renewed appreciation of the artificiality of rigid distinctions between the ethical and the aesthetic.⁴ Second, sages are related to the 'exemplarist' theories of virtue, recently defended by Linda Zagzebski.⁵ As the name suggests, central to those theories is the idea that moral and spiritual learning essentially involves encounters with *exemplars* of virtue (or vice). By attending to the conduct and character of exemplary people, one comes to admire and emulate their admirable qualities – their virtues – and so gain a practical mastery upon which moral theorizing can proceed. Sages are *religious exemplars* who inspire and teach others to

follow a spiritual path, such as Jesus or the Buddha, and thinking about their beauty can bring together exemplarism and the aesthetics of character.

Sages do not need to be identical in their conduct or character nor in the specifics of the religious ways of life that they exemplify. The sages of different traditions often differ from one another in their habits, demeanours, and lifestyles that reflect different ethical and soteriological visions. An enlightened Mahayana Buddhist *bodhisattva* sitting serenely in meditation is a visually and spiritually different figure from the devout Christian monk kneeling in prayer. The Stoic sage is politically and civically engaged in a way that the quietist *daoshi* or Hindu *yogi* is unlikely to be. Descriptions of sages as godly or enlightened or 'attuned to *dao*' denote genuine differences of moral and spiritual orientation, as well as doctrinal conviction and metaphysical vision. Such pluralism is obvious in the hagiography and iconography of the world's religions that depict exemplary figures – Patriarchs, *buddhas*, saints – in art, statues, and scripture.

The status of sages as religious exemplars can be accepted without a debate about religious pluralism. Sages across religious traditions obviously reflect conceptions of the nature of reality and of the good life that are mutually incompatible. But they all reflect the conviction that one's own way of life can be aligned with or shaped by the way of the world. A Daoist sage's life of virtue (*de*) is guided by the way (*dao*) that generates and sustains the world, while the Stoic sage's mind is orderly and rational in emulation of the *logos* that governs the *kosmos* at a whole. Such examples indicate that a sage's conduct and character exemplify both the possibility and the fruits that a cultivated religious sense offers. Such religious lives of course require engagement in spiritual practices and disciplined practices of *askēsis* that demand great effort and sacrifice, of a sort to which many people are naturally averse. The religious life must therefore be made attractive to non-initiates, enough, at the least, to provoke interest.

One way to make a religious life attractive is to show that those who exemplify its mature or advanced forms are themselves attractive. Sages *qua* exemplars of religious life should evince qualities that make their character and way of life attractive – such as calm, charisma, or tranquillity. In the 'lives of the saints', explains Balthasar, one finds 'faith and understanding . . . bound together', such that the saintly 'stand at the heart of the world, enjoying a life of deep confidence and profound peace'.⁶ Buddhist *sutras* describe the lives of enlightened *bodhisattva* as marked by joyfulness, wisdom, and 'radiance'.⁷ Likewise, the tranquillity and spontaneity of Daoist sages stands in stark contrast to the frenetic activity and restlessness of those 'not on the way'.⁸ One is attracted to a religious life by finding attractive those who exemplify it.

The attractiveness of sages is, however, not simply ethical or psychological. It also has a strong aesthetic aspect. A sage is not only *calm* or *tranquil*, but also *beautiful*. But what does the sage's beauty consist of and how is it related to their moral and spiritual qualities?

Beauty and virtue

Some sages were beautiful in the conventional sense of being physically attractive. Gotama and Krishna, for instance, were reputed to be extremely handsome. But this is a poor characterization of the beauty of sages. First, such erotic or sexual accounts sit badly with moral injunctions in most religious traditions to modesty, chastity, and ‘non-attachment’. Second, not all sages were conventionally beautiful in this sense. A distinguished admirer reports that Mahatma Gandhi had ‘unimpressive features’ and a ‘poor physique’ but also possessed a ‘charm’, ‘magnetism’, and sense of ‘tremendous inner . . . power’ that was beautiful.⁹ So if the sage’s beauty is not bodily in an erotic or sexual sense, in what does it consist?

The Buddha answered this question. ‘Beauty for a monk’, he explained, resides in their ‘right conduct, restraint, and perfect . . . behaviour and habits’.¹⁰ The *Prātimokṣa* or Monastic Code clarifies the beauty that *bhikkhu* and *bhikkhuni* ought to cultivate, express, and appreciate, as do the third-century BCE *Abhidharma* texts. These set out the forms of ‘beautiful consciousness’ (*sobhanā citta*) and ‘beautiful mental factors’ (*sobhanā cetasika*) that characterize the enlightened. These are not abstract mental states, however, but are consistently described in terms of moral qualities and associated forms of bodily comportment. Faith (*saddhā*) involves a ‘removal of [the] mind’s impurities’, manifested in calm and disciplined conduct, free from visible expressions of anxiety. Tranquillity (*pasaddhi*), which requires a ‘quieting [of] disturbances’, shows itself in a demeanour marked by ‘peacefulness and coolness’.¹¹ Such remarks show that inner moral or spiritual qualities are and ought to be expressed in relevant modes of bodily comportment and personal conduct, which it is a purpose of religious training to inculcate.

If so, the beauty of sages – at least in the Buddhist tradition – is not a beauty of the body itself, but rather of the bodily expression of moral and spiritual virtues. But this claim is not confined to ancient Indian religion, since one finds it in other traditions. David E. Cooper dubs it the ‘virtue-centric’ theory of beauty.¹² The beautiful soul that Plato and his followers, especially Plotinus, sought and celebrated is apprehended in the forms of ‘noble conduct’ that express ethical and intellectual virtues.¹³ Nor was virtue-centrism confined to antiquity, for it is present at the birth of aesthetics in its modern form during the eighteenth century. In the *Critique of Aesthetic Judgement*, Kant argued that the ‘ideal of beauty’ should be ‘sought in the human figure’, where, ‘visible in bodily manifestation’, are the ‘moral ideas’ that ‘govern men inwardly’. Such ideas are, in effect, virtues, like purity and benevolence. Schiller, too, argued that a person is beautiful in so far as his or her conduct manifests the primary virtue of ‘self-determination’.¹⁴

The virtue-centric account also recurs throughout the world’s religious traditions. Later Buddhists followed their founder in locating the beauty of people in

an 'inner beauty', 'beauty of the mind', or 'beauty of the inner reality'.¹⁵ Rūmī – the great Sufi poet – found the best 'image' of 'beauty in the world' not in art or nature, but rather in the 'hearts of perfect men' – that is, the character of religious exemplars. A modern Sufi agrees that the 'sense of beauty' is found in an 'art of personality', understood as the cultivation and exercise of virtues, like sincerity and tactfulness. It is in personal conduct shaped by this 'art' that a Sufi beholds the 'very nature of spiritual beauty'.¹⁶ The *erōs* of Christian spiritual life is, says Balthasar, 'fundamentally ordered to the divine self-manifestation in the specific and beautiful form of Jesus Christ'.¹⁷

I need not pile up testimonies to establish further that the beauty of sages has both bodily and moral or spiritual aspects. It is a beauty of body and of virtue, where this latter term is shorthand for what those cited called 'moral ideas' or 'mental factors'. The beauty of a sage, it is emerging, consists in their bodily expression of virtues. But that claim, as it stands, poses two questions, which I address in the next two sections.

Inner beauty, virtue, and expression

The claim that the beauty of the sage is an 'inner' or moral beauty poses the question of how this inner beauty relates to outer beauties – of objects perceived through the senses, like sunrises and sonatas. If talk of inner *beauty* is to be legitimate, then it must be related in a substantive way to aesthetic experiences of the sensory world. It is through such experiences that aesthetic terms 'first get their sense and power'.¹⁸

There are bad accounts of the relation of inner and outer beauty. One is to appeal to an *analogy* between them – to say, for instance, that an orderly mind, like an orderly garden, is pleasingly calm and peaceful. But that is clearly too weak. Another may be to assert some causal relation between inner and outer beauty. Some Buddhists think that physical beauty is karmic reward for good moral conduct. But aside from the fact that such replies are only available to those who accept doctrines of rebirth, there are familiar concerns about motivating moral actions by appeal to sensual reward. A love of physical beauty is typically recognized as a vice that impairs moral growth.

Cooper develops a better account of the relation of inner and outer beauty. One can speak legitimately of inner beauty if and when inner qualities – virtue, *de*, holiness – find expression in forms of bodily comportment that are found beautiful. Smiles that express kindness, or gestures that manifest compassion, are beautiful for that reason (at least for those who recognize those qualities as admirable qualities). A cruel sneer reflects or expresses a vice – cruelty – which is why we do not find it to be beautiful. Cooper notes that this explains why beauty *matters* so much to people: who and what we find beautiful reflects not only the idiosyncrasies of subjective taste, but also our deeper sense of the nature of the good. Our sense of beauty is therefore informed by the 'economy of our most central concerns'.¹⁹

The claim that actions and characters that express virtues are beautiful is supported by the testimonies of religious persons. Susanna Mrozick offers many examples from Buddhism in her book, *Virtuous Bodies*.²⁰ The *Prātimokṣa* and other Buddhist training texts – like Shantideva’s *Compendium of Training* (*Shikhasamucchaya*) – dissolve a ‘distinction between body and morality’. Actions and practices such as bowing, meditating, and walking should express virtues and are beautiful in so far as they do. Mother Teresa described her pastoral work as emotionally exhausting, but also as ‘very beautiful’, since it consisted of visible, tangible acts of love, courage, and hope. Such pastoral acts express virtues taught by Jesus and loved by God, and which are therefore beautiful as well as good.²¹

The idea that the comportment of religious initiates ought to express virtues is also evident in systems of religious training and practice. The disciplines of bodily, moral, and spiritual training undergone by monks, nuns, and others are intended not only to cultivate their virtues, but also to train them to express them – how to sit at prayer, how to eat a meal, how to sit before an icon, and so on. Such disciplined expression is itself facilitated and amplified by the material culture of religious life, such as ritual, art, music, and the use of sacred spaces and places, like temples. But it is not only in religious communities that people express their character in bodily comportment. An obvious way we learn about the virtues and vices of others is by attending to how they speak and act and move – kind smiles, earnest tones of voice, warm demeanour. Indeed, it is otherwise difficult to see how we could form impressions of people.

The claim that one’s ‘inner’ character expresses itself in ‘outer’ comportment raises two worries: first, a skilled dissimulator could successfully express virtues they in fact lacks; second, a person may fail to express their virtues properly – if, say, they are naturally shy or retiring. Both challenge the relation between inner and outer beauties: one could express a false character, or fail to express one’s real character.

Starting with dissimulation, the claim that a certain bodily action is expressive of a virtue is perfectly compatible with the occurrence, on certain occasions, of that action being faked. If a certain type of smile is recognized in a culture to be expressive of kindness, it does not, and need not, follow that kindness motivates every such smile. That is no more puzzling than the fact that a word retains its typical meaning even if on certain occasions it is used to signify something different. The word ‘good’ keeps its meaning even if I sardonically describe a morning of calamities and an afternoon of disasters as ‘a good day’. So forms of action or behaviour express virtues even if, on some occasions, those acting lack those virtues (although an interesting question remains about whether one’s perception of, say, a smile as *kind* remains once one discovers that the smiler was, at that moment, thinking cruel thoughts).²²

Moving on to inexpression, it is true that some people are less animated than others. Some people are lively and expansive, others reserved and demure,

although certain personal qualities are expressed in each case, even if they are reserved, not bubbly. But the inexpression worries primarily apply to laymen, meaning those who have not undergone religious training, therefore not to sages qua religious exemplars. For religious instruction, as noted earlier, involves training novices how to cultivate and to express their virtues through disciplined conduct. Novices typically live in a small community with other aspirants led by a religious exemplar – an abbot or *guru*, say – whose conduct and comportment they scrutinize and emulate. Such sages provide both practical demonstration and theoretical instruction in the conduct of a religious life in different situations and among different people – monks in the temple, say, or laymen in the marketplace. Such communities include the small informal groups that gathered around Jesus and Epicurus, or larger institutional bodies like the Buddhist *saṅgha* or Sikh *gurdwārā*.²³

A religious initiate is trained both how to express their own character and to perceive better that of others. This includes appreciation of the subtleties and significance of symbols, words, colours, vestments, and timing, refining the initiate's powers of moral and spiritual resolution and discernment (a theme of much recent work in the phenomenology of the spiritual life).²⁴ The religiously exemplary are therefore adept both at expressing their own 'inner moral reality' and at identifying that of others; as with art scholars, their trained powers of discrimination enable them to spot not only nuances and subtleties, but also *fakes*. Moreover, an ability to discern the expression of virtues by religious persons will be present, at least to some degree, among many of the members of societies with a religious heritage – young Britons can still perceive in the figure of the Buddha his virtues of tranquillity and equanimity.

The claim that the beauty of sages consists in their bodily expression of virtues can therefore be secured against concerns about dissimulation and inexpression. It might even be the case that such worries could only obtain if the 'expression' account – as Cooper calls it – is true. For we would only worry that people could deceive us about their moral character by dissimulative actions if we trusted that one's conduct does reflect one's character. Compare this with lying, which is only possible where it is an established practice that what we say accurately reflects what we sincerely believe.²⁵ Similarly, we could only worry that some people might *fail* to express their character through their conduct if we suppose that most people generally do so successfully – a point reflected in our disdain for liars, fakers, and 'bullshitters'.²⁶

Beauty and sages

The beauty of sages, I have suggested, consists in their bodily expression of virtues in perceptible modes of bodily comportment. But a second question is this: why speak, here, of *beauty*, rather than the sage's *goodness* or *holiness*? Use of an aesthetic term requires some justification; otherwise its use may seem, to a critic,

to be merely figurative. The worry expressed here is apt to be amplified by the fact that the concept of beauty fell into neglect in the last century, when many obituaries reported the ‘death of beauty’. If ‘beauty belongs nominally to aesthetics’, judged one commentator, then it seems that it has been ‘disowned’ by that discipline.²⁷

Happily, cultural and intellectual tastes change and such obituaries were revised. A new *kalliphilic* mood, more sympathetic to talk of beauty, has emerged.²⁸ But the task still remains to show that what sages evince or manifest is a genuinely *beauty*.

My strategy for doing so will be to show that the comportment of sages fulfils all of the features that characterize an experience of the beautiful. I rely on Mary Mothersill’s book, *Beauty Restored*, in which she identifies a consistent concept of beauty in the western philosophical tradition that has four features.²⁹ An experience, she argues, is one of beauty if it (i) is a kind of good, (ii) linked with pleasure, delight, or joy, which (iii) inspires love or longing, and (iv) depends on perception.

First, what a sage expresses in their conduct and comportment is a good. Indeed, in the relevant religious traditions, it is typically the highest or primary good, whether that is godliness, enlightenment, or ‘*profond de*’. The *daoshi*’s life and demeanour evince the virtues (*de*) that mark out a person attuned to the Way (*dao*), harmony with which is the ultimate Daoist imperative: a point evident in the title of one of their main texts, the *Daodejing*, or ‘The Classic of the Way and its Virtue (or Power)’. The Christian saints manifest virtues like piety and humility that are both necessary for and constitutive of the relationship with God on which one’s salvation depends. The goods that the sage manifests naturally differ by tradition, but they are all the fundamental good to which human beings can aspire – so different goods generate different beauties.³⁰

Second, a sage’s conduct, to be beautiful, must inspire joy and delight. That it does so is attested to by a huge body of testimonies from those who encounter them. Aquinas defined beauty as ‘that which pleases through being seen’, while Augustine added that it was the quality which ‘attracts’ us to ‘things we love’.³¹ For both men, what ultimately ‘pleases’ and ‘attracts’ are the ethical and spiritual qualities that are loved by God and present in spiritually exemplary persons. The sages described in Daoist texts – like the titular figure of the *Zhuangzi* – are lively and spontaneous and inspire pleasure and delight in those who read them. Buddhist monks and nuns are, as noted earlier, trained to comport themselves in ways that will attract people to the Eightfold Path to enlightenment. And think, too, of popular western enthusiasm for the delight occasioned by the cheerful glee of the Dalai Lama.³²

Third, an experience of beauty must inspire longing and love. The objects of this longing vary across religious traditions. The beautiful ‘noble conduct’ of a Plotinian sage inspires a powerful ‘yearning’ for the One, the mystical source of all things. The gentle spontaneity of a rustic *daoshi* instils a desire for a life free from the pressure and artifice of everyday life – and so on. Sages aim to inspire in others a longing for or love of the religious modes of life that are, variously,

wise, godly, or enlightened – for these are lives purified of or liberated from fear, sin, or suffering. Indeed, a sage’s life can inspire joy and delight precisely because it is free of such things.

And finally, an experience of beauty must depend on perception. That the sage’s beauty does so was established earlier when it was explained that it is perceived in modes of bodily comportment – posture, gestures, smiles, and tone of voice. One *sees* the sage’s humble posture, *hears* the sincerity as they intone prayers – and so on – both during ritual activities, like singing, and everyday activities, like eating. Indeed it is truer to say that a sage’s life is one in which the distinction between the religious and the everyday is elided. The beauty of a sage is therefore not an abstract property that is apprehended through some special spiritual sense, but a perceptually available aspect of their bodily comportment.

These four aspects of the experience of beauty are illustrated by Balthasar’s account of the Christian saint. These men and women express in their conduct various ‘marks of spiritual credit’ that reflect an ‘interior rightness’ – a purity of the spirit – understood in terms of virtues like piety, faith, and humility. Such saints therefore manifest an ‘attractive charm’ that can enthuse others into a ‘state of rapture’ through which one is ‘captivated and transformed’ by a powerful sense of being in the ‘presence of . . . spiritual beauty’.³³ Already one sees the first three features – the good, delight, and longing – and the fourth appears when Balthasar emphasizes that a saint’s beauty is necessarily *embodied*. ‘Only though [bodily] form . . . can the lightning-bolt of eternal beauty flash.’³⁴

One might ask whether Mothersill’s concept of beauty is confined to the western religions, such as Christianity, which after all were shaped by the very concept of beauty she traces. The answer is that the four-part concept of beauty she describes applies perfectly well to describe and explain reports of the beauty of the sages of other traditions, including those discussed earlier in the article. *Bodhisattvas*, *daoshis*, *gurus*, and *yogis* all perceptibly conduct themselves in ways that exemplify a vision of the good life in ways that can inspire delight and longing. The art and literature of religious traditions carefully describe the character and the conduct of sages, many now familiar to our cultural imagination. There is anyway no reason why a concept of beauty that emerged within one tradition cannot be applied to explain experiences of beauty in another. That the beauty of exemplary religious figures *is* explained by this concept is a testament to that.

Conclusions

I suggest that the beauty of religious exemplars – of sages – can be understood using the virtue-centric account. Beauty expresses or manifests virtues, and those exemplary people who have cultivated their virtues to a high degree are therefore beautiful. The aesthetics of religion should recognize religious exemplars as interesting and unique objects and sources of beauty – and so, too, should exemplarist virtue theory.³⁵

References

- BALTHASAR, H. U. VON (1982) *The Glory of the Lord: A Theological Aesthetics, I: Seeing the Form* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark).
- BUDDHA, THE (1995) *The Long Discourses of the Buddha*, M. Walshe (tr.) (Boston, MA: Wisdom, 1995).
- CHAWLA, N. (2003) *Mother Teresa: The Centenary Edition* (New Delhi: Penguin), 285–286.
- COOPER, D. E. (2008) 'Beautiful people, beautiful things', *British Journal of Aesthetics*, **48.3**, 247–260.
- (2010) 'Edification and the experience of beauty', in W. Keping (ed.) *Diversity and Universality in Aesthetics* (Beijing: Institute for Transcultural Studies), 62–80.
- (2014) 'Religion without faith?', paper read at the workshop *Faith, Trust, and Religious Belief*, Durham University, 16 July 2014.
- (forthcoming) 'Buddhism, beauty, and virtue', in S. Sikka, S. Maira, & K. Higgins (eds), *The End of Art and the Promise of Beauty* (Dordrecht: Springer).
- COTTINGHAM, J. (2005) *The Spiritual Dimension: Philosophy, Religion, and Human Values* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
- DAVIES, O. (2004) 'The theological aesthetics', in E. T. Oakes & D. Moss (eds) *The Cambridge Companion to Hans Urs von Balthasar* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 131–142.
- FRANKFURT, H. (2005) *On Bullshit* (Princeton: Princeton University Press).
- HARCOURT, E. (2001) 'Nietzsche and the "aesthetics of character"', in S. May (ed.) *On the Genealogy of Morality: A Critical Guide* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 265–284.
- INAYAT KHAN, H. (2013) *The Heart of Sufism: Essential Writings of Hazrat Inayat Khan* (Boston: Shambhala Press).
- KIRWAN, J. (1999) *Beauty* (Manchester: Manchester University Press).
- MOSS, D. (2004) 'The saints', in E. T. Oakes & D. Moss (eds) *The Cambridge Companion to Hans Urs von Balthasar* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 79–92.
- MOTHERSILL, M. (1984) *Beauty Restored* (Oxford: Clarendon).
- MROZICK, S. (2007) *Virtuous Bodies: The Physical Dimensions of Morality in Buddhist Ethics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).
- NĀRADA, M. (ed. and tr.) (2007) *A Comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma: The Abhidhammattha Sangha of Ācariya Anuruddha* (Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society).
- NEHRU, J. (1962) *An Autobiography* (Bombay: Allied Publishers).
- NOVITZ, D. (1991) 'Love, friendship, and the aesthetics of character', *American Philosophical Quarterly*, **28.3**, 207–216.
- RŪMĪ, J.-D. (2012) *Selected Poems of Rūmī* (New York: Dover).
- SAMUELS, J. (2010) *Attracting the Heart: Social Relations and the Aesthetics of Emotion in Sri Lankan Monastic Culture* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press).
- SARTWELL, C. (2004) *Six Names of Beauty* (London: Routledge).
- SCRUTON, R. (2009), *Beauty* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).
- (2014) *The Soul of the World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press).
- SHERMAN, N. (2005) 'Of manners and morals', *British Journal of Educational Studies*, **53.3**, 272–289.
- WIJAYARATNA, M. (1990) *Buddhist Monastic Life: According to the Texts of the Theravada Tradition*, C. Grangier & S. Collins (trs) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
- WILLIAMS, B. (2002) *Truth and Truthfulness: An Essay in Genealogy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press).
- WYNN, M. (2013) *Renewing the Senses: A Study in the Philosophy and Theology of the Spiritual Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).
- ZAGZEBSKI, L. (2010) 'Exemplarist virtue theory', *Metaphilosophy*, **41**, 41–57.

Notes

1. Balthasar (1982); Scruton (2014); Wynn (2013).
2. Scruton (2009), 189.
3. Cooper (2014).
4. See, for instance, Novitz (1991); Harcourt (2001); Sherman (2005).

5. Zagzebski (2010). Exemplarist virtue theory was also the theme of her October 2015 Gifford Lectures at the University of St Andrews.
6. Quoted in Moss (2004), 80.
7. The latter terms (joyfulness etc.) are some of the ten (sometimes fourteen) *bhūmis* or 'grounds' through which an aspiring *bodhisattva* must proceed, as described in the *Avatamsaka Sūtra* and *Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra*.
8. The 'way of *dao*' is described in *Daodejing*, ch. 25, and the lives of people who 'lost the Way' are criticized in *Zhuangzi*, chs 2 and 4.
9. The admirer is Jawaharlal Nehru (1962), 129–130.
10. The Buddha (1995), 405.
11. See Nārada (2007), 85–87 *passim*.
12. See Cooper (2008) and (2010).
13. *Ennead*, §I.6.1.
14. Quotations are from Kant, *The Critique of Aesthetic Judgement*, §17, and Schiller, *Kallias Letters*, referenced and discussed in Cooper (2008), 248–249ff.
15. These and other examples are referenced and discussed in Cooper (forthcoming).
16. Rūmī (2012), poem XV, 'The truth within us', 11; Inayat Khan (2013), ch. 11 *passim*.
17. Quoted in Davies (2004), 134–135.
18. Cooper (forthcoming), §3.
19. See, e.g., Cooper (2008), §3, and (2010), §3.
20. Mrozick (2007).
21. Quoted in Chawla (2003), 285–286.
22. I am very grateful to David E. Cooper for guiding my response to this objection.
23. A detailed study of Buddhist monastic life is Wijayaratna (1990).
24. See, for instance, Cottingham (2005), 99f., and Wynn (2013), 94f.
25. This point about dishonesty and practices of truth-telling is developed by Williams (2002).
26. A cheerful discussion of this point is Frankfurt (2005).
27. Kirwan (1999), ix.
28. Two good examples of this new kalliphilic mood are Sartwell (2004) and Scruton (2014).
29. Mothersill (1984).
30. On the idea that different conceptions of the good can give rise to a plurality of conceptions of beauty, see Cooper (2010), §§1–2, and Sartwell (2004).
31. Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I-II, 27, 1; Augustine, *Confessions*, book 4, ch. 13, sect. 20.
32. A rich source for the delight etc. inspired by contemporary Buddhists is Samuels (2010).
33. Balthasar (1982), 188, 200, 32, 34, 33.
34. *Ibid.*, 32.
35. I am very grateful to David E. Cooper for inspiring and informing my interest in this topic. Thanks also to Rachel Muers, Victor Durà-Vilà, Sara Uckelman, Mark Wynn, Linda Zagzebski, an audience at Leeds, and an anonymous referee.