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Editorial Note

Academics sometimes lament that they are pressed to write more than they read, but what happens when we actually do that and overlook a text we should have read in our writing, and nobody points it out before it is too late? What can we learn, not only as individuals but as a community of scholars, from such incidents? These are some of the questions dealt with in the first two texts of this issue of *Temenos*, a discussion between Professor Margit Warburg, University of Copenhagen, and Dr Ruth Illman and Mercédesz Czibalmos MA from Åbo Akademi University. Illman and Czibalmos had overlooked the work of Warburg in their recent *Temenos* article (2/2020), a mistake not noticed by the reviewers or by me as the editor. As such mistakes are often silenced or blown out of proportion, at *Temenos* we are happy to see how this particular one resolved itself in a more general discussion about the visibility of research.

This issue of *Temenos* continues with last year's *Temenos* lecture, 'Legitimizing Claims of Special Knowledge: Towards an Epistemic Turn in Religious Studies', delivered by Dr David G. Robertson from the Open University, United Kingdom on 3 December 2020. In his eloquent and thought-provoking lecture, Robertson argues that rather than operating within the epistemes they should be criticizing, scholars of Religious Studies could focus on the ways in which various types of special knowledge are claimed, constructed, and maintained.

All this is followed by four regular articles. Following the principle of *ex oriente lux*, we begin in Finland with Professor Terhi Utriainen's work on otherworldly relations in complementary and alternative medicine – a topic hotly debated and contested in contemporary Finnish society. Drawing on two distinct ethnographic projects, Utriainen proposes that engagement with otherworldly relations might be understood in terms of what she calls 'possibility work', when conventional healthcare and therapy are seen as insufficient or even unavailable in complex life situations.

Moving west to our dear neighbour Sweden, we next find Professor Tomas Lindgren and Hannes Sonnenschein MA taking another look at the problematic category of 'religion', here in the context of religiously inspired conflict. While some empirical studies demonstrate that religious conflict

is more violent, durable, and more difficult to resolve than its secular counterpart, Lindgren and Sonnenschein contend that such conclusions are unreliable, as they fail to provide clear criteria for the difference between the two types of conflict. Rather, the authors argue, religious conflict is an ideologically charged concept, and the study of the religion-and-conflict nexus reinforces the current systems of power.

Remaining in Sweden, we next move back in time for Dr Paul Linjamaa's article on how the decline of the concept of Fate in late antiquity was connected with the decline of the idea of a feminine divinity, and how the disappearance of Fate from the prevailing world was seminal in the birth of a new 'technology of the self', as understood by Michael Foucault and others. Linjamaa argues that the transformations that occurred during this extremely important historical period extend to the realm of power, the view of the human body, and ethics, as can be seen in a new focus on self-governance.

Continuing with the rich field of the history of religions, we next move another step to the west, to Norway and Dr Jan Kozák's text on the idea of a literal or structural echo connecting the Old Norse cosmogony and eschatology. Kozák's thoughtful analysis sheds light on the sacrificial pattern hidden behind the two events and contextualizes the motif of the mighty sound reappearing at both the beginning and end of the world.

The topic of the end of the world may seem a gloomy one with which to end, especially given that despite several vaccines, we still cannot see an end to the Covid-19 pandemic, raging as it is with renewed fury in India as I write these lines. Nevertheless, the end is apposite on a personal level, as this issue of *Temenos* is the last that I will edit. Working with *Temenos* has been a great privilege and delight for me, not least because of the excellent team I have had: Malin Fredriksson MA as editorial secretary; Mr Rupert Moreton as language editor; Dr Sofia Sjö as review editor; and Dr Pekka Tolonen as copy editor. With the exception of Sjö, who will be replaced by Dr Alexandra Bergholm from Helsinki University, they will all continue to serve *Temenos* in the same capacities. I offer my heartfelt thanks to them, to our editorial board, to the reviewers, to the authors and naturally to you, dear reader. *Temenos* would not exist without you.

When I took over as editor of *Temenos* at the end of 2014, a senior colleague and previous editor reminded me of the phrase *noblesse oblige*. As the grandson of a small farmer from Ostrobothnia, I knew that my colleague was naturally not referring to any nobility in me personally, but to the prestige of this important journal. As editor, I have tried to take these

words seriously, and from the outset I felt that part of this responsibility was to pass on the task of editor before too long. After six years, and with funding secured for the next two, I feel that the time is right. It is therefore my great joy to introduce Dr Minna Opas from Turku University and Dr Sofia Sjö from Åbo Akademi University, who will take over as editors from the next issue. As they are both excellent scholars and well acquainted with the journal, I have no doubt that *Temenos* will flourish under their guidance. *Śubham astu!*

Måns Broo

