A Mix of Some of My Favorite Religious and Spiritual Scholars

By Don lannone, D.Div., Ph.D.

Parker J. Palmer

Parker J. Palmer is an American author, educator, and activist who focuses on issues in education, community, leadership, spirituality, and social change. He is the founder and Senior Partner Emeritus of the Center for Courage & Renewal.

Book: A Hidden Wholeness: The Journey Toward an Undivided Life

This book addresses the challenge of living an undivided life, exploring ways to reconnect soul and role through personal stories and insights. Palmer introduces the concept of "circles of trust" to create safe spaces for individuals to explore their inner truths.

Palmer, P. J. (2004). A hidden wholeness: The journey toward an undivided life. Jossey-Bass.

Eckhart Tolle

Eckhart Tolle is a German-born spiritual teacher and author best known for his work on mindfulness and presence. After a profound personal spiritual awakening at the age of 29, he began teaching and writing about spiritual topics.

Book: The Power of Now: A Guide to Spiritual Enlightenment

This book emphasizes the importance of living in the present moment and transcending thoughts of the past and future. Tolle provides practical exercises to achieve mindfulness and inner peace.

Tolle, E. (1999). The power of now: A guide to spiritual enlightenment. New World Library.

Deepak Chopra

Deepak Chopra is an Indian-American author and alternative medicine advocate known for integrating Ayurveda with modern medicine. He has written extensively on spirituality, health, and mind-body connections.

Book: The Seven Spiritual Laws of Success

Chopra outlines seven universal principles that can be applied to achieve success in all areas of life. He combines spiritual wisdom with practical steps for personal growth.

Chopra, D. (1994). The seven spiritual laws of success: A practical guide to the fulfillment of your dreams. Amber-Allen Publishing.

Seyyed Hossein Nasr

He is an Iranian philosopher and scholar of Islamic studies, specializing in Sufism, Islamic philosophy, and the relationship between science and spirituality. He is one of the leading voices in the perennialist school of thought, which emphasizes the universal truths found across all religious traditions.

Book: The Heart of Islam: Enduring Values for Humanity

Nasr presents Islam as a faith rooted in peace, compassion, and wisdom, countering many Western misconceptions. He explores core Islamic values and their relevance in the modern world, emphasizing the importance of spiritual and ethical living.

Nasr, S. H. (2002). The heart of Islam: Enduring values for humanity. HarperOne.

Ken Wilber

Ken Wilber is an American philosopher and writer known for his work in transpersonal psychology and integral theory. He has authored numerous books on consciousness and spirituality.

Book: A Brief History of Everything

Wilber presents an accessible overview of his integral theory, exploring the evolution of consciousness and the universe. He integrates insights from science, philosophy, and spirituality.

Wilber, K. (1996). A brief history of everything. Shambhala Publications.

Don Miguel Ruiz

Don Miguel Ruiz is a Mexican author and spiritual teacher known for his teachings on ancient Toltec wisdom. His work focuses on personal freedom and transformation.

Book: The Four Agreements: A Practical Guide to Personal Freedom

Ruiz introduces four principles—be impeccable with your word, don't take anything personally, don't make assumptions, and always do your best—to achieve personal freedom and a fulfilling life.

Ruiz, D. M. (1997). The four agreements: A practical guide to personal freedom. Amber-Allen Publishing.

Dr. Kwame Bediako (Recently discovered)

A leading Ghanaian theologian and historian of Christianity in Africa, Bediako was instrumental in shaping contemporary African Christian thought.

Advocated for the decolonization of African Christianity, emphasizing that Christianity in Africa is not a foreign import but a deeply rooted faith that engages African traditions and cultures.

His seminal works, such as *Christianity in Africa: The Renewal of a Non-Western Religion*, argue for the intellectual and theological independence of African Christianity.

Black Elk (John G. Neihardt as transcriber)

Black Elk was an Oglala Lakota holy man whose spiritual visions and teachings became widely known through the work of poet and historian John G. Neihardt. His narrative provides an in-depth view of Lakota spirituality and cosmology.

Book: Black Elk Speaks (as told to John G. Neihardt)

This book recounts Black Elk's spiritual visions, rituals, and experiences as a Lakota holy man, describing Indigenous spirituality's deep reverence for the interconnectedness of all life. It serves as a seminal work in understanding Native American metaphysics, shamanic visions, and sacred traditions.

Black Elk & Neihardt, J. G. (1932). Black Elk speaks. University of Nebraska Press.

Michael A. Singer

Michael A. Singer is an American author and spiritual teacher known for his work on mindfulness and inner peace. He founded the Temple of the Universe, a yoga and meditation center.

Book: The Untethered Soul: The Journey Beyond Yourself

Singer explores the nature of self and consciousness, offering insights on how to free oneself from habitual thoughts and emotions. He provides guidance on achieving inner freedom and peace.

Singer, M. A. (2007). The untethered soul: The journey beyond yourself. New Harbinger Publications.

Pema Chödrön

Pema Chödrön is an American Tibetan Buddhist nun and author renowned for her teachings on mindfulness and compassion. She is a resident teacher at Gampo Abbey in Nova Scotia,

Canada.

Book: When Things Fall Apart: Heart Advice for Difficult Times

Chödrön offers guidance on dealing with life's challenges, emphasizing the importance of

embracing pain and uncertainty as paths to awakening. She provides practical advice on

cultivating compassion and mindfulness.

Chödrön, P. (1997). When things fall apart: Heart advice for difficult times. Shambhala

Publications.

Kahlil Gibran

Kahlil Gibran was a Lebanese-American poet, writer, and philosopher known for his mystical

writings and poetic prose. His works explore themes of love, spirituality, and the human

condition.

Book: The Prophet

This poetic work consists of 26 prose poems delivered by the prophet Almustafa on topics

such as love, marriage, and freedom. It offers philosophical and spiritual insights into

various aspects of life.

Gibran, K. (1923). The prophet. Alfred A. Knopf.

Jiddu Krishnamurti

Jiddu Krishnamurti was an Indian philosopher and speaker who emphasized the importance

of self-inquiry and psychological freedom. He rejected organized religion and encouraged

individuals to seek truth independently.

Book: The First and Last Freedom

Krishnamurti discusses the nature of freedom, the self, and the mind,

Gerald Epstein

Gerald Epstein was an American psychiatrist and pioneer in the use of mental imagery for

treating physical and emotional ailments. He integrated Western medicine with ancient

healing practices, emphasizing the mind-body connection.

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Book: Healing Visualizations: Creating Health Through Imagery

Epstein presents techniques for using mental imagery to promote physical healing and emotional well-being. He offers practical exercises to harness the power of the mind in the healing process.

Epstein, G. (1989). Healing visualizations: Creating health through imagery. Bantam Books.

Amos Yong (Recently discovered)

Amos Yong is a Malaysian-American theologian and professor known for his work in global Pentecostalism, theology of religions, and disability theology. He serves as Professor of Theology and Mission at Fuller Theological Seminary.

Book: The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh: Pentecostalism and the Possibility of Global Theology

Yong explores the global growth of Pentecostalism and its implications for theology and practice. He examines how Pentecostal experiences can contribute to a broader understanding of Christian theology.

Yong, A. (2005). The spirit poured out on all flesh: Pentecostalism and the possibility of global theology. Baker Academic.

Lynne McTaggart

Lynne McTaggart is an American author and journalist known for her work on the intersection of science and spirituality. She investigates the power of intention and the interconnectedness of consciousness.

Book: The Field: The Quest for the Secret Force of the Universe

McTaggart delves into scientific research that suggests a unifying field connecting all things. She discusses how this field influences consciousness, healing, and the nature of reality.

McTaggart, L. (2001). The field: The quest for the secret force of the universe. HarperCollins.

Christian Smith

Christian Smith is an American sociologist renowned for his studies on religion, adolescence, and morality. He is the William R. Kenan Jr. Professor of Sociology at the University of Notre Dame.

Book: Moral, Believing Animals: Human Personhood and Culture

Smith argues that humans are inherently moral and believing beings shaped by cultural narratives. He examines how these narratives influence behavior and societal structures.

Smith, C. (2003). Moral, believing animals: Human personhood and culture. Oxford University Press.

Nicole Redvers

Nicole Redvers is a member of the Deninu K'ue First Nation and a naturopathic doctor integrating Indigenous healing practices with Western medicine. She co-founded the Arctic Indigenous Wellness Foundation.

Book: The Science of the Sacred: Bridging Global Indigenous Medicine Systems and Modern Scientific Principles

Redvers explores the connections between Indigenous medicine and modern science. She advocates for a holistic approach to health that respects traditional knowledge.

Redvers, N. (2019). The science of the sacred: Bridging global Indigenous medicine systems and modern scientific principles. North Atlantic Books.

Erie Chapman

Erie Chapman is an American healthcare executive and advocate for compassionate caregiving. He founded the Erie Chapman Foundation to promote Radical Loving Care in healthcare settings.

Book: Radical Loving Care: Building the Healing Hospital in America

Chapman emphasizes the importance of love and compassion in healthcare. He provides insights into creating healing environments for patients and caregivers.

Chapman, E. (2003). Radical loving care: Building the healing hospital in America. Gratefulness Publishing.

Wayne Teasdale

Wayne Teasdale was a Catholic monk and interfaith activist known for blending Christian mysticism with Eastern spiritual practices. He coined the term "interspirituality" to describe the shared mystic heart of all religions.

Book: The Mystic Heart: Discovering a Universal Spirituality in the World's Religions

Teasdale explores the common threads of mysticism across various religious traditions. He advocates for a universal spirituality that transcends individual religions.

Teasdale, W. (1999). The mystic heart: Discovering a universal spirituality in the world's religions. New World Library.

D.T. Suzuki

Daisetsu Teitaro Suzuki was a Japanese author and scholar instrumental in introducing Zen Buddhism to the Western world. His writings and lectures made Eastern philosophy accessible to Western audiences.

Book: An Introduction to Zen Buddhism

Suzuki provides an overview of Zen principles and practices. He elucidates the essence of Zen as a direct experience beyond intellectualization.

Suzuki, D. T. (1934). An introduction to Zen Buddhism. Eastern Buddhist Society.

Amanda Porterfield

Amanda Porterfield is an American historian of religion, focusing on the interplay between religion and American culture. She has written extensively on the history of Christianity in the United States.

Book: Healing in the History of Christianity

Porterfield examines the role of healing within Christian history. She explores how healing practices have shaped and been shaped by Christian beliefs.

Porterfield, A. (2005). Healing in the history of Christianity. Oxford University Press.

Bhante Henepola Gunaratana

Bhante Henepola Gunaratana is a Sri Lankan Theravāda Buddhist monk and meditation teacher, best known for his accessible writings on mindfulness and meditation. He has spent decades teaching Vipassana (insight meditation) and the practice of mindfulness in the West.

Book: Mindfulness in Plain English

This book is a straightforward, practical guide to mindfulness meditation, explaining the foundations of Vipassana practice and its benefits. Gunaratana offers clear instructions on cultivating mindfulness, addressing common misconceptions and challenges in meditation.

Gunaratana, B. H. (1994). Mindfulness in plain English. Wisdom Publications.

Larry Dossey

Larry Dossey is an American physician and author known for his work on the connection between mind, body, and spirit in healing. A pioneer in integrating spirituality with Western medicine, he has written extensively on the role of consciousness in health and healing.

Book: Healing Words: The Power of Prayer and the Practice of Medicine

Dossey explores the scientific evidence behind the healing power of prayer, arguing that prayer and spiritual practices have tangible effects on physical health. He presents compelling research and case studies that challenge conventional medical paradigms.

Dossey, L. (1993). Healing words: The power of prayer and the practice of medicine. HarperOne.

C. S. Lewis

C. S. Lewis was a British writer, theologian, and philosopher known for his works on Christian apologetics, metaphysics, and the nature of faith. He combined philosophical reasoning with imaginative storytelling to explore deep theological themes.

Book: Mere Christianity

Lewis presents a rational defense of Christian metaphysics, arguing for the existence of God, the nature of morality, and the divinity of Christ. He explains Christian beliefs in a logical and accessible manner, making a case for Christian faith as a metaphysical and moral truth.

Lewis, C. S. (1952). Mere Christianity. HarperOne.

Christina Puchalski

Christina Puchalski is a physician, professor, and founder of the George Washington Institute for Spirituality and Health (GWish), specializing in integrating spiritual care into clinical practice. She has been a leading advocate for compassionate, whole-person care in modern medicine.

Book: Time for Listening and Caring: Spirituality and the Care of the Chronically Ill and Dying

This book examines the role of spirituality in caring for patients with chronic and terminal illnesses. Puchalski provides practical approaches for healthcare providers to incorporate spiritual care into patient treatment, emphasizing the healing power of compassion and deep listening.

Puchalski, C. M. (2006). *Time for listening and caring: Spirituality and the care of the chronically ill and dying*. Oxford University Press.

Rupert Sheldrake

Rupert Sheldrake is a British biologist and researcher known for his controversial theories on morphic resonance and consciousness. He challenges mainstream scientific views by exploring the interconnected nature of minds and biological systems.

Book: The Science Delusion: Freeing the Spirit of Inquiry (Published as Science Set Free in the U.S.)

Sheldrake argues that modern science is constrained by rigid materialist assumptions, limiting its ability to understand consciousness and healing. He suggests that fields of consciousness extend beyond the brain and that phenomena like telepathy and spiritual healing deserve serious investigation.

Sheldrake, R. (2012). The science delusion: Freeing the spirit of inquiry. Coronet.

Stanislav Grof

Stanislav Grof is a Czech psychiatrist and consciousness researcher who pioneered transpersonal psychology and the therapeutic use of holotropic breathwork. His work explores expanded states of consciousness, spiritual healing, and the transformative potential of non-ordinary experiences.

Book: The Holotropic Mind: The Three Levels of Human Consciousness and How They Shape Our Lives

Grof outlines his holotropic model of consciousness, arguing that expanded states—whether through breathwork, meditation, or psychedelics—can facilitate deep healing. He proposes that human consciousness extends beyond the brain, encompassing spiritual and cosmic dimensions.

Grof, S. (1992). The holotropic mind: The three levels of human consciousness and how they shape our lives. HarperOne.

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin was a French Jesuit priest, paleontologist, and philosopher who sought to bridge evolutionary science and Christian spirituality. His work influenced modern discussions on cosmic evolution, consciousness, and the divine.

Book: The Phenomenon of Man

Teilhard de Chardin presents a spiritual interpretation of evolution, proposing that life is progressing toward a higher state of consciousness, which he calls the Omega Point. He integrates Christian theology with evolutionary theory, arguing that the universe is undergoing a divine process of spiritual and material unification.

Teilhard de Chardin, P. (1955). The phenomenon of man. Harper & Row.

Alan Lightman

Alan Lightman is an American physicist, writer, and professor known for his works exploring the intersection of science, philosophy, and spirituality. He is a professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and has written extensively on the human experience of the cosmos.

Book: The Transcendent Brain: Spirituality in the Age of Science

Lightman explores the concept of "spiritual materialism," arguing that spiritual experiences—such as awe, wonder, and transcendence—can be understood within the framework of neuroscience and physics. He examines how such profound moments arise from natural processes in the brain, offering a perspective that bridges scientific understanding and the human quest for meaning.

Lightman, A. (2023). The transcendent brain: Spirituality in the age of science. Pantheon Books.

Lisa Miller

Lisa Miller is a clinical psychologist and professor at Columbia University, specializing in the study of spirituality and psychology. She is the founder of the Spirituality Mind Body Institute, the first Ivy League graduate program dedicated to this interdisciplinary field.

Book: The Awakened Brain: The New Science of Spirituality and Our Quest for an Inspired Life

Miller presents research demonstrating that spirituality is a natural aspect of human development and essential for mental health. She explores how cultivating spiritual awareness can lead to resilience, creativity, and a deeper sense of meaning in life.

Miller, L. (2021). The awakened brain: The new science of spirituality and our quest for an inspired life. Random House.

David Bentley Hart

David Bentley Hart is an American philosopher, theologian, and metaphysician known for his work in Christian theology, metaphysics, and the philosophy of religion. His writings explore the nature of God, consciousness, and the ultimate foundations of reality.

Book: The Experience of God: Being, Consciousness, Bliss

Hart argues that the concept of God, across religious traditions, is best understood through the lens of being, consciousness, and bliss (drawing from Vedantic and Christian traditions). He critiques atheistic materialism and defends a classical metaphysical view of divinity that transcends simplistic conceptions of theism.

Hart, D. B. (2013). The experience of God: Being, consciousness, bliss. Yale University Press.

John Hick

John Hick was a British philosopher of religion and theologian, best known for his work on religious pluralism, metaphysics, and the nature of religious experience. He argued for a broader, universal understanding of religious truth.

Book: An Interpretation of Religion: Human Responses to the Transcendent

Hick presents a pluralistic theory of religion, arguing that different faith traditions represent diverse responses to an ultimate transcendent reality. He challenges exclusivist religious views and explores how religious experiences across cultures point toward a shared spiritual truth.

Hick, J. (1989). An interpretation of religion: Human responses to the transcendent. Yale University Press.

Vine Deloria Jr.

Vine Deloria Jr. was a Standing Rock Sioux scholar, theologian, and activist who wrote extensively on Native American spirituality, history, and rights. His work critiques Western perspectives on Indigenous belief systems and highlights the deep spiritual connection between Native peoples and the land.

Book: God Is Red: A Native View of Religion

Deloria contrasts Native American spirituality with Western religious traditions, emphasizing the Indigenous worldview's deep connection to nature, sacred places, and

communal responsibility. He argues that Native religions offer a more holistic and sustainable understanding of humanity's place in the cosmos.

Deloria, V. (1973). God is red: A Native view of religion. Fulcrum Publishing.

Mircea Eliade

Mircea Eliade was a Romanian historian of religion, philosopher, and scholar who extensively studied primitive and archaic religious systems. His work focuses on myth, symbolism, and the sacred vs. profane in early human spirituality.

Book: The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion

Eliade examines how early human societies perceived the sacred as a central organizing force, contrasting it with the mundane, profane aspects of life. He argues that primitive religions express universal patterns of spirituality, shaping the way humans relate to the divine through myth, ritual, and sacred space.

Eliade, M. (1957). The sacred and the profane: The nature of religion. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Richard Dawkins

Richard Dawkins is a British evolutionary biologist and outspoken advocate for atheism, known for his criticism of religion and defense of scientific rationalism.

Book: The God Delusion

Dawkins argues that belief in God is irrational and a byproduct of human psychology rather than divine revelation. He critiques religious faith, defends atheism, and promotes a scientific and secular worldview.

Dawkins, R. (2006). The God delusion. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.

Alvin Plantinga

Alvin Plantinga is an American philosopher known for his work on theistic epistemology, metaphysics, and the rationality of religious belief. His work defends belief in God as a properly basic belief that does not require external justification.

Book: God and Other Minds: A Study of the Rational Justification of Belief in God

Plantinga argues that belief in God is analogous to belief in other minds—both are not provable through empirical evidence but are still rationally justified. He challenges classical atheistic arguments that claim religious belief is intellectually indefensible.

Plantinga, A. (1967). God and other minds: A study of the rational justification of belief in God. Cornell University Press.

William Lane Craig

William Lane Craig is a contemporary philosopher of religion and theologian known for his defense of classical theism, the cosmological argument, and the historical evidence for Christianity.

Book: Reasonable Faith: Christian Truth and Apologetics

Craig presents philosophical and scientific arguments for the existence of God, including the Kalam cosmological argument, moral arguments, and historical evidence for Jesus. He engages with modern atheism and defends the rationality of Christian belief.

Craig, W. L. (1984). Reasonable faith: Christian truth and apologetics. Crossway Books.

Deepak Chopra

Deepak Chopra is a renowned author and alternative medicine advocate known for integrating Eastern spiritual traditions with Western approaches to well-being. His recent work delves into how AI can enhance spiritual intelligence and personal growth.

Book: Digital Dharma: How AI Can Elevate Spiritual Intelligence and Personal Well-Being

Chopra explores how artificial intelligence can revolutionize well-being and open new horizons for personal development. He discusses Al's potential to help create a more peaceful, just, sustainable, healthy, and joyful world, positioning Al not as a threat but as a catalyst for personal and collective growth.

Chopra, D. (2023). Digital Dharma: How AI Can Elevate Spiritual Intelligence and Personal Well-Being. Harmony.

Rabbi Andrew Bloom

Rabbi Andrew Bloom is a Conservative Rabbi and AI ethicist who explores the intersection of ancient religious wisdom and modern AI, focusing on how they shape our moral and social landscape.

Book: Technology and Theology: How AI is Impacting Religion

Rabbi Bloom addresses theological questions—like free will, human uniqueness, and moral responsibility—through Jewish concepts such as B'tzelem Elohim (Image of God) and Tikkun Olam (repairing the world) while drawing insights from other faiths. The book examines Al's influence on worship, education, social justice, privacy, governance, and work, offering ethical frameworks for responsible use.

Bloom, A. (2023). *Technology and Theology: How AI is Impacting Religion*. Independently published.

Dan Scott

Dan Scott is a theologian and author who explores the intersection of Christianity, technology, and artificial intelligence. His work examines how AI challenges and reshapes traditional Christian beliefs, urging believers to reflect on the implications of emerging technologies for faith and spirituality.

Book: Faith in the Age of AI: Christianity Through the Looking Glass of Artificial Intelligence

Scott analyzes theological and ethical questions posed by AI, considering how advancements in machine intelligence impact human identity, morality, and religious belief. He explores whether AI can participate in faith, the potential for spiritual automation, and the future of Christianity in a tech-driven world.

Scott, D. (2023). Faith in the age of AI: Christianity through the looking glass of artificial intelligence. Wildhouse Publications.

John Lennox

John Lennox is a professor of mathematics at Oxford University and a Christian apologist known for his work on science, philosophy, and religion. He writes extensively about the relationship between Christian faith and technological advancements, particularly AI and its implications for humanity.

Book: 2084: Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Humanity

Lennox examines how AI is reshaping human identity, ethics, and the concept of God, addressing concerns about human dignity, free will, and the limits of technology. He critiques transhumanist ideologies and argues for a Christian perspective on AI that upholds the uniqueness of human beings.

Lennox, J. (2020). 2084: Artificial intelligence and the future of humanity. Zondervan.

Suzan Stephan

Suzan Stephan is an author who explores the historical and biblical connections between astrology and Christianity, aiming to uncover how astrological practices were integrated into early Christian beliefs.

Book: Astrology for Christians: Astonishing Evidence from History and the Bible

In this book, Stephan traces the roots of astrology from Abraham through the life of Christ and the surrounding Roman Empire, providing evidence that astrology once held an essential position within early Christian beliefs and traditional monotheistic Hebrew culture. She examines powerful proofs from history and the Bible, addressing the reasons behind the defamation of astrology by Roman church authorities, and explores original horoscopes for King David and the eclipse preceding the birth of Jesus.

Stephan, S. (2019). *Astrology for Christians: Astonishing evidence from history and the Bible*. Schiffer Publishing.

Donald T. Iannone

Donald T. Iannone is an author and poet with a background in economic and community development, higher education, and complementary medicine. His work explores the intersection of digital technology and spirituality, examining how the digital age influences spiritual identity and practice.

Book: Digital Spirituality: Its Rise and What It Means for Spiritual Identity, Belief, and Practice

lannone examines the influence of digital culture and technology on religion and spirituality in the 21st century. He explores concepts such as digital consciousness and the digital soul, discussing how digital spirituality offers new ways to live beyond our physical presence on earth.

lannone, D. T. (2020). *Digital spirituality: Its rise and what it means for spiritual identity, belief, and practice*. Wisdom Work Press.

Donald T. Jannone

Donald T. Iannone is an interfaith minister, author, and poet with a diverse background in economic development, environmental planning, higher education, and healthcare. His work often explores the integration of spirituality into everyday life, drawing inspiration from various traditions, including Lakota spirituality.

Most Recent Book: In Sacred Relationship: A Spiritual Compass for Today's Turbulent Times Inspired by Lakota Wisdom

In this book, Iannone provides a spiritual compass to navigate the challenges of contemporary life, emphasizing the importance of finding sacredness in everyday experiences. Inspired by Lakota Indian spirituality, the book offers insights and guidance to cope with issues such as the COVID-19 pandemic, economic uncertainties, and personal hardships, encouraging readers to cultivate a deeper spiritual connection.

lannone, D. T. (2020). *In sacred relationship: A spiritual compass for today's turbulent times inspired by Lakota wisdom*. Blurb Publishing.